



UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
POLITICAL SCIENCES SPECIALIZATION

Revista de Științe Politice.
Revue des Sciences Politiques
No. 76 • 2022

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Email: cepos2013@gmail.com. Website:<http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/revistadestiintepolitice/>

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(Online) - ISSN 2344 – 4452

ISSN–L 1584 – 224X

No. 76 • 2022

Revista de Științe Politice.
Revue des Sciences Politiques



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NOTE of the EDITORIAL BOARD: *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques* is abstracted by / indexed in:



EBSCO

Political Science Complete (accessed **March 30, 2022**)

Database Coverage List: <https://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/poh-coverage.htm>

Category Social Sciences & Humanities/ Area Studies/ European Studies:

<https://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/poh-subject.htm>

Central & Eastern European Academic Source (accessed **March 30, 2022**)

Database Coverage List: <https://www.ebscohost.com/titleLists/e5h-coverage.htm>



ProQuest Database: Political Science Database

ProQuest Political Science Database Title list accurate as of **26 March 2022 (position 1082)**

http://tls.search.proquest.com/titlelist/jsp/list/tlsSingle.jsp?productId=1005684&_ga=2.52655656.1051237904.158630685-491238151.1586630685



INDEX COPERNICUS

ICI Journals Master list, <https://journals.indexcopernicus.com/search/details?id=29570>

ICV 2020: 91.36; ICV 2019: 94.31; ICV 2018: 97.28; ICV 2017: 88.23; ICV 2016: 78.07;

ICV 2015: 65.59; ICV 2014: 65.01 • Standardized Value: 6.55; ICV 2013: 5.04



ERIH PLUS

<https://kanalregister.hkdir.no/publiseringskanaler/erihplus/periodical/info.action?id=486286>

ERIH PLUS disciplines: Interdisciplinary research in the Social Sciences
Political Sciences and International Relations

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<https://reseau-mirabel.info/revue/3046/Revista-de-Stiinte-Politice>

Clasificación Integrada de Revistas Científicas – CIRC 2021

Clasificación Ciencias Sociales: C

https://clasificacioncirc.es/ficha_revista?id=42634

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ORIGINAL PAPER

The Influence of Media in Constructing and Deconstructing Political Imagery

Maria-Magdalena Lăpădat¹⁾

Abstract

Mass-media and the internet have long surpassed their meagre prerogative as being just a simple purveyor of information, transitioning towards its new objectives of establishing trust, influence and even intimidation or control in its relation with its citizens, with the receivers of what is now strategic and weaponised information. The media is no longer a vector of objectivity, nor does it formulate that assertion any longer. Media conglomerates have become quite outspoken in embracing or rejecting one ideology or the other, one candidate or the other. Therefore, objectivity has been abandoned to the detriment of subjective purpose. Major media players will choose to either carefully construct the positive image of a candidate or a party while at the same time, often viciously and unjustifiably, attacking the opposite candidate or the rival political movement. Simply supporting one candidate is no longer the norm and the so-called dirty adds and biased reporting of our contemporary political era expose an intricate mechanism that, however, has a simple purpose, namely, to lower certain percentages and elevate others in terms of public perception and favourability.

Keywords: *media, internet, imagery, message.*

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The generative infrastructure responsible for the construction of the public political image resides in the paradigm of interaction between the transmitter of the political message and the collective receiving mass. These two independent communicative instances would be deeply detached and dislocated in the absence of a coagulation factor able to facilitate and secure the informational transfer. The phatic guarantor of the functionality of the entire communication paradigm is conferred by the multiplicity of dissemination methodologies resulting from scientific advances or correlation perspectives through which individuals have decided to interact or receive ensembles and subsets of strategically correlated messages. Whether we are talking about the mass media or the Internet, political culture has undergone profound metamorphoses and implicitly recalibrations of political campaign strategies.

The primary duty of the media communication infrastructure would be, at the level of deontology, an informational dissemination to citizens to facilitate their control or at least the premises of an ideological authorization by virtue of being aware of ideological challenges or platforms before formulating an electoral opinion.

A definition of the associative contextuality between the concept of media and the relevance of the spectrum of political communication states, from the perspective of Jacques Gerstlé, the following analysis of the mediatization of the political image from a communication point of view: “In the general theory of communication, the term designates any means of communication, natural or technical, that allows the transmission of a message. In current language, the term is more restrictive, referring to a situation characterized by the dominance of mass media and which allow the spread of information among a larger, heterogeneous and anonymous audience. Even if we speak of the media without any further clarification, the discourse refers to the mass media and not to other recognized channels of political communication, such as organizations or interpersonal relationships.” (Gerstlé, 2002: 46)

The mass media often surpasses its condition as a simple courier of information, facilitating a heritage of trust and relevance even between governing structures and citizens, starting from the premises that only by maintaining a stable connection between political actors will it be possible to achieve, improve and strengthen the responsibility and assumption of the act of governance. If we go into the depth of the specificity of the dissemination vectors, we will conclude that an important part of the news programs that assemble the discussion agenda is based on the transmission and proliferation of a multiplicity of ideological contexts and economic strategies, with the aim of providing the final choice or at least the illusion the notion of option.

The new methodology of disseminating political information was assembled by activating an automatic pragmatism of adapting political image strategies to the new technological realities that have radically changed the paradigm of mass communication, speed, quantity and exponential growth in the number of receivers. This synchronicity between the communication of the desired and the ideological imagery based on the new methods of dissemination was explored and understood by Jacques Gerstlé who stated the following: “In general, developments in broadcasting, telecommunications, computing, and audio and video technologies, as well as the possibilities offered by their mixing, have applications or implications within political practices. The increased role of the information media in society is therefore presented as a consequence of the technological revolutions that appeared, above all, in the electronic information media and which tend to reveal the fact that the traditional forms of political communication are obsolete.” (Gerstlé, 2002: 47)

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In a modern and consolidated democracy, the phatic dissemination facilitator has the role of providing a platform that will facilitate the access to communication of a multiplicity of ideational, political, as well as citizen instances, consolidating the emergence of civil society and civic analytical identity. The watchdog of democracy has essentially acquired an institutional functionality, being from all perspectives and points of view the fourth power in the state, a regulatory and normalizing entity designed to guarantee communication and the consolidation of normality, and where appropriate, has the role to oppose, regardless of inherent forms of partisanship or ideological affiliations, substantial abuses that can be a danger to the healthy functioning of democracy, of the complementary relationship between those who have reached power and those who facilitated that transfer of power following the vote electoral freely expressed.

The channels of mass transmission of information come to overcome their humble condition of informational aqueduct, becoming, without any reservations or hesitation, themselves democratic institutions, similar in importance to the mechanisms of justice, the executive or the legislature. If the three traditional powers have the role of mutual supervision and regulation, the unofficial fourth power acquires an almost meta-institutional role, with the assumed objective of checking and keeping the entire democratic system in check.

The new dimension of mass media and the Internet stands under the sign of a destruction of deontology and objectivity, affirming increasingly consolidated forms of partisanship. This partisanship, however, is a moderate one that would not tolerate, in a healthy democracy, abuses or serious transgressions of morality or the legislative framework.

A number of researchers deplore this propensity towards the de facto adoption of subjectivity and partisanship in political communication and in the sphere of opinion-formers' concerns. This clear affirmation of specific preferences, of affiliations towards one candidate or another, towards an ideological spectrum considered more performing and correlated to society's needs, simply represents an honest assumption of the condition of normality in the universe of information distributors. This pseudo-lability does not in any way mean an elimination of deontology in journalism, but rather an adaptation based on the correlation of this deontology with the spectrum of socio-political realities of our society. There was always partisanship or there were certain interests in the way the press did its duty, but those interventionist impulses were hypocritically concealed precisely in the context of an underdevelopment of the media meta-structure. Today's public actually benefits from a superior media education generated by the very often capricious diversity and multiplicity of instances of communication in the public space.

The approach of any contemporary journalist to assert with maximum hypocrisy a sacrosanct independence of the analytical self in relation to the economic and political complexity of social reality would be derided even by the most uneducated or unspecialized recipient of media messages. The current dimension of the dissemination of image structures and political ideology means a proliferation of the complexity of the social space through the subjective and pragmatic intermediation of the anticipation of the audience's desired reception. Simplifying this paradigm, we can say that the media has come to give people what they need to see or hear in relation to their sentimental or ideological affinities. It is precisely this potential vulnerability of the integrity of the objective identity of journalism that represents its greatest source of legitimization and

substantiation. Media conglomerates, blogs or websites obviously belong to individuals or groups of individuals who, naturally, could try to consolidate or assert a singular unitary point of view, which could contravene the interests and purpose democracy.

Sociological and pragmatic realities, however, dictate an impossibility of consolidating this danger through the prism of an inherent unprofitability of such an approach. If, in a free and democratic society, there is a group or coalition of individuals who adhere to a certain set of values or principles, capitalist financial pragmatism will ensure that there is also a media voice for those people. As long as people think differently, there will also be a capitalization of the diversity of dissemination structures, which in itself is synonymous with a legitimization of democracy through the voice of the people. If a politician feeds on the strength and authority established by the freely expressed vote of the citizen, the media trusts will be the product of the same healthy representativeness of the functions that activate the merits of putting the citizen to the service, in this instance through the related financing of all media channels as an economic consequence materialized by circulation, audience or number of hits.

There is a strong predilection for the adaptations of the mechanisms of social evolution through the lens of the evolution of the communication society. Explosive mutations in the area of media dissemination paradigms have substantially reconfigured and enhanced the integrity and diversity of the act of political communication. Media transformation actually means the decisive transformation of social systems, a revolution in communication methodologies, both at the individual and social level. Jacques Gerstlé agrees with this framework of argumentative relevance, noting that: “To describe the social changes related to this modernization, sociologists use various expressions: media revolution, information revolution, technotronic revolution , communication society, information society, digital society, telematic society... whatever their merits, these expressions cover common themes which structures the half-prospective, half-normative discourse on the information and communication society. These themes are organized around three axes: the quantity of messages in circulation, the quality of the content and the restructuring of social relations. [...]. The instantaneous transmission of information at a distance illuminates space and time, which is reflected in political conduct. Not only can information travel at very high speed from one end of the planet to the other, thus overcoming territorial constraints, but social memory can expand thanks to very large capacities for preserving information, such as databases.” (Gerstlé, 2002: 47-48)

The evolution of the democratic superstructure was realized in an interdependent relationship with the development of the dissemination infrastructure in the context of designating an institutionalized dimension of the mass media's role in society as a defender of the immutable principles of democracy. The mechanisms for assuming media responsibility involve a series of restrictive measures aimed at the sustainability of the foundation of media independence vis-à-vis leading institutions based on the premises of the independent provision of financial resources necessary for operation and profitability of free access to information. The ideal structures of the operating objectives provide for the allocation of normative priorities on all levels of the information dissemination structures. The analysis of media realities, however, indicates certain functional inconsistencies that could peripherally compromise the desired fulfilment of the ideal objectives of the media apparatus. A first functional dissociation of media ideals resides in the protocol for choosing the relevance and authority of journalistic sources. There is often an artificial narrowing of information circles to perform an affiliation with a hypothetical legitimacy provided by high-level politicians

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or highly popular opinion leaders. This can lead to a dangerous disregard of the broad framework of diversity provided by legitimate representatives of civil society whose only discursive authority is their sincere connection to the collective psyche of the social groups they represent. The complicated connection between journalists and their operating sources or resources has often led to a lack of trust in media channels through the lens of a whimsical exaggeration of subjective connections or inherent forms of partisanship. The symbiotic dimension of the link between the vectors of political dissemination and the channels that facilitate this often puts under the spectre of doubt the level of commitment of journalists or journalistic institutions to the receiving groups who are, after all, the final beneficiaries of the entire communication effort.

The contemporary relevance of the media context is determined by an extended synchronicity towards the previous problems that society faced from the perspective of the development of a consolidated and independent infrastructure of the media universe and implicitly of the information dissemination methodologies: “theories about media and culture are best developed through the study of concrete phenomena and contextualized through the vicissitudes of society and contemporary history . So, to query the media culture that belongs to the present requires a critical approach involves studying how the cultural industry produces certain artifacts specific that in turn give rise to the social discourses found in conflicts and in the difficulties of everyday life.” (Kellner, 1996:3-4)

The opportunity to institutionalize the entire media apparatus as a guarantor of consolidated, democratic structures can be endangered even by certain indirect mechanisms of censorship or self-censorship. This turn of events comes as a confirmation of human nature which, organically or instinctively, automatically rejects certain points of view or divergent critical perspectives. Even the most enlightened democratic leader will seek to use his political power or economic influence to strike at those who disseminate information or opinions contrary to his own political activity. Some level of backlash is a normal part of the political or democratic game, but the moment a hypothetical disproportionate imbalance of forces of any kind is reached, the powerful will seek and effectively be able to exert pressure on the weak that can even flirt with the morbid spheres of censorship or communicational-ideological abolition.

The most important method of disseminating the political message and image is definitely television. Beyond a shadow of a doubt: “television became the main source of information at the expense of media and even radio. Moreover, it is the television that dictates priorities in public space, imposing strategies on political actors. Television is regarded as the most agreeable way of information, the easiest to understand, the place where political figures can best assert themselves” (Lăpădat and Lăpădat, 2019:69). Despite the spectacular development of the online environment, the Internet cannot yet compete with the wide range of individuals and variability, especially from the age perspective offered by the versatility of television as a means of communication. Television has the great advantage of being new enough not to be outdated or worn out as a vector of synchronicity, but not old enough to be superseded by a powerful global medium.

The emergence of television led to a paradigm shift in the dissemination and composition of the structural components of political communication. If before the consolidation of this effective means of mass communication, the battle of electoral discourses was fought based on ideological foundations presented in a limited, truncated way, through transmission channels that only partially activated the senses (newspapers,

magazines, radio, electoral flyers, etc.), with the advent of television, it moved to a totally changed strategic communication framework. In the early period of political communication, the message was strictly focused on political arguments, platforms of ideas or, in the most fortunate case, electoral slogans with some subjective appeal to the public. Television did not simply change the amount of information provided to the public or the speed of its proliferation, but meant a transition, a metamorphosis of the struggle to communicate ideas into a subjective contest of popularity and eloquence. The synaesthetic quality of television, its ability to activate a whole set of senses simultaneously, meant that the political image would become more important than political ideas, that form trumped substance in terms of the impact of ideological empowerment. Viorica Roșca believes that: "Television redefined political action seen today as a theatrical performance. Subject to a commercial logic, specific to the show, political activity has become synonymous with the management of visibility and the star-system. Representative politics, as the foundation of political action, is no longer a resource for the legitimization and action of political man. Today, the importance of apolitical elements (style, charisma, rhetoric, clothing, notoriety, etc.) in the perception of the politician increases and these become forms of political action. Television has changed the condition of the politician who can no longer legitimize himself with political programs and projects. Politics has become personalized action. The value of public policies has been replaced by the value of political leaders, value resulting from image and notoriety." (Roșca, 2007:44)

There are a number of elements that can influence the structure of information disseminated through media networks. A first element that would be able to produce a residual impact at the level of information transmission would be generated by the deontological standard of journalists and the way in which they relate to the public reception system. The existence of a prototype of journalistic professional ethics does not, however, constitute the prerogatives of a democratic press. Of course, there is a desirability of ascendancy in this regard, however, the propensity to use and manipulate the message for profit will lead to a pragmatic shift in the exploratory reporting agenda.

A direct method of putting political communication into perspective constituted by the creation of a framework of analysis and debate through which the mass media end up transforming from a factor of disseminating communication into a shaper of opinion. Objective reports end up turning into descriptive, subjective judgments that end up being interpreted and reinterpreted in accordance with the pragmatic interests of the trust or the opinion maker, still remaining within certain limits of responsibility and professional integrity. The entire staging reflects a theatricality of the act of political communication, a commercial-artistic adaptation intended to function as a *captatio benevolentiae* in a modern society where the time for analysis and attention is getting shorter, emphasizing images or short subjective perspectives anchored in impressions that have the potential to resonate with the ideological fragmentations that still motivate the sphere of public discourse.

The relevance of the applicability of information dissemination through mass media focuses on relational frameworks at the level of social psychology. The way potential receivers communicate and relate to each other expresses a contextual processualism associated with the availability of receptive cooperation regarding the media message. The development and consolidation of relational structures can even generate pseudo-ideologies or coalitions within society, being thus formulated the premises of a predictability of the availability of understanding and assuming the

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message through the prism of relational interdependencies adapted to the infrastructure of communication and reception of the political message with the help of the mass-media. Constantin Sălăvăstru states that: “The availability of individuals to relate to others, while imperative, remains different from individual to individual. Interesting studies in the field of group psychology, but also everyday experience show us quite clearly that there are individuals who feel more at ease in terms of fulfilling the goals of an activity when they relate (cooperate) with others, they even seek this relationship because in the company peers seem to give the maximum yield in the activity. However, they show us with the same force that there are also individuals who, without refusing communication and cooperation, have greater productivity when they work individually on a problem, on a course of action, on a future projection.” (Sălăvăstru, 2009:73)

The construction of the political image in relation to the relevance of the association of media coercion was generated based on the foundation of a dual, complementary control system. The first element of the generative dualism was constituted by the discursive component of the transmitter. Any political communicator who built a message had as his primary objective the generation of a grid of persuasion, manipulation and control, with the aim of empowering the electoral mass. The second element of relevance in the composition and formulation of a coherent political image explores as the main factor of emergence the ideological desideratum provided by the collective mind of the receivers. The broadcaster was thus forced to generate a communication act deeply contextualized and adapted to the requirements of the electoral market. Self-image became nothing more than an echo of public desires, an adaptive response, a reflection in the public mirror of the intrinsic link between the communicator and the people for whom he communicates.

The complexity of the means of disseminating information, the generation of multiple instances and areas of transmission and understanding has led to an artificial, even anomic reality, through the prism of formulating the political discourse based on public desires that are outside any ideological or strategic spheres. The communicator ends up refusing responsibility towards himself, as well as the adaptive consideration at the level of the ideology of reception in order to listen to temporary trends of perception, to media voices that are transient, but with a strong impact on the present. These trends in communication are not under anyone's control and are the product of an unintentional and haphazard collaboration between the public and the disseminating media structures. The natural consequence of this image trajectory was also a contamination in the area of political marketing, as a counterweight to the artificiality beyond the control of the candidates. The promotion of the political image through marketing techniques means a new strategic dimension of taking control in the context of a chaotic political complexity through its quantitative-representational dimension. The use of this methodology in advertising constitutes a pragmatic move in a context of communication where the image has come to exceed the relevance of the proposed social message or strategy. From the point of view of researcher Viorica Roșca: “The evolution of the media has stimulated the emergence of the event agenda, which distances political actors from the ideal of representative politics. Programmatic policy has been replaced by momentary actions that must satisfy a horizon of expectation at the level of public opinion. Reporting the politician to the median state of mind measured at a given moment cancelled the autonomy of the politician because he has to conform to the media voices, favourable and unfavourable to a trend of the moment, in order to posit his image. Since the image is built over time, marketing has become a set of communication techniques

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used, especially, in extra-electoral periods. Therefore, his contributions to electoral success are very high. Maintaining a positive image (as a long-term competitive resource), however, is not enough to win elections. Electoral voting is influenced by many other psychological and social factors, some of which even operate at the unconscious level.” (Roșca, 2007:38-39)

The new paradigm of political values in the media context portrays a mercantile formatting of the electoral product. There is a structural concern according to which the media space becomes a vector of intellectual simplification of the collective mind detached from investigations and deontological rigor, following easy stories presented in the most artistic way but devoid of substance, thus exposing the public space to a shortage of concrete political information or relevant. The real problems of a society have come to be replaced by reports that are easy to obtain, without controversy, but which bring an audience or hits if we are talking about the online environment.

This lack of intellectual consistency in the transmission of communication and political reality is far from a dangerous phenomenon, but rather an organic adaptation to the public's informational desires. Complex issues, reports or investigations also have an extremely well-established target audience, especially among intellectuals or savvy media consumers. The simplistic, tabloidizing side of the political scene should not be investigated or subjected to analytical contempt, but simply understood even as a facilitator of a positive order because through its spheres of subjective, simplistic and primary exploration of political and public life it is the only facilitator able to enable the public with a low level of mental training. If we have the pretext of a media space that proposes and supports the undesirable elements of an abusive plutocracy, then indeed, tabloid reports must be eliminated as quickly as possible from the area of information proliferation. But if the aspiration of a free press is to be the structure of communication, the voice of a consolidated democracy that speaks to all, for all and on behalf of all, then tabloidization and even pathological simplification are a positive sign of social unification and inclusion.

The main perspective of the analysis of the media dissemination framework involves an identification of the mediating dimension of the interaction between the sender and the receiver of the political message and image. The intrinsic status of political struggle involves a competitive confrontation between a certain number of candidates. The result of this confrontation, of this competition, will be decided by the voters who have a role as referees or determinants in assigning the vote and implicitly to the authority of the most persuasive communicator. If the politicians represent the combatants, and the public is the supreme court of arbitration, by default the media infrastructure represents the courthouse, the arena for the entire political event, the facilitator that mediates the entire relationship framework between the generator and the receiver of the political message infrastructure.

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Article Info

Received: November 07 2022

Accepted: November 14 2022

How to cite this article:

Lăpădat, M.-M. (2022). The Influence of Media in Constructing and Deconstructing Political Imagery. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 9 – 17.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Impact of Education and Income Inequality on Per Capita Income Amid COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract:

The present research study is an attempt to analyse the effects of various levels of education and income inequality on real GDP per capita, in the COVID-19 pandemic era, including 70 countries. We found empirical evidence that the relationship of various levels of education with growth of real income per capita remained the same in 2020 as it was in 2010, except for the slight difference in the magnitudes of the coefficients. The primary school enrolment of the two decades earlier has revealed as the increasing factor to the income per person. However, when we took a decade early or so values the relationship became converse indicating primary school enrolment as the decreasing factor to the income per capita. The empirics indicated that the secondary school enrolment remained contributing factor to the growth of income per capita, and it is the most effective level of education to increase the real GDP per capita. Moreover, there is no empirical evidence in the favour of relationship between tertiary education and the income per person. The income inequality has also provided insignificant results in our analysis.

Keywords: *economic growth; income inequality; COVID-19 pandemic; social exclusion; poverty; education; income per capita; GDP per capita; human capital.*

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1. Introduction

Solow (1956) and Swan (1956) indicated the effectiveness of labour or the technology as the black box to increase the economic growth (Romer, 2012). These exogenous growth theories provided the foundation of the investment on the labour or the human capital to increase the productivity of the country for economic growth. Later, Romer (1990), Grossman and Helpman (1991), and Aghion and Howitt (1992) emphasised on the role of research and development in economic growth. These endogenous growth models takes the knowledge production as the engine of economic growth. However, most of these studies are based on past data and recently the role of technology is more highlighted with human capital. Both of these are considered education as a base and the ultimate goal is to enhance the incomes per person (as a measure of well-being). Hence, education has considered as a contributing factor to incomes per person (Barro, 1991).

Education can be taken as investment in humans and human capital consist of educated people. The increase in human capital has more implications for technological progress than physical capital (Nelson and Phelps, 1966). Increasing education was considered a major source of high productivity from 1960 to 1990. Over the long run social returns on education for 1990 were about 40% on average (education level of 5.3 years), which raised productivity level as well (Teulings and Van Rens, 2008). In order to investigate the impact of education on the economic growth various researches have introduced different levels of education like primary, secondary and university level education (Sylwester, 2000; Keller, 2006).

However, such division of education in different levels has created unclear decisions regarding personal incomes, the different levels of education may have positive or negative impact on the income per capita of the country (Kalaitzidakis et al., 2001; Keller, 2006; Gylfason and Zoega, 2003). The present study expands this work further by investigating the nature of relationship of various levels of education on the per capita income in 2020, during the period of COVID-19, by comparing the results with dataset of the same nature in 2010.

COVID-19 was a natural disaster, and evidently a negative shock, for all countries. The educational institutions were closed, due to lockdowns, leading to high enrolment and learning losses. In the period of 2019-2021, GDP of almost every country suffered. Later, after COVID-19 lockdowns were lifted the recovery period started in economies. However, the education would act as the latent variable which could affect the economies even in the long run, might be over decades.

Hence, there is a possibility that COVID-19 have changed the nature of relationship in education and real GDP per capita, at least for the period in which the crisis was continued, and the present study is an attempt to test this hypothesis using the empirical data. In general, the role of education has remained positive for economic growth; but the role of income inequality has remained ambiguous for economic growth. Some researchers found that income inequality is negatively related to the economic growth (Alesina and Rodrik, 1994; Persson and Tabellini, 1994); so the conclusion emerged that higher level of income inequality could hamper the growth process. However, it was not true in all studies. Many researchers have found higher income inequality, an increasing factor to growth (Li and Zou, 1998). Barro (2000) indicated the positive role of income inequality for growth in case of rich countries and negative in case of poor countries. Here arise a question, what takes them into different conclusion? It could be econometric technique, data set under study or the nature of relationship in

these variables that could be subject to change by time. Further, how the relationships among income per person, income inequality and levels of education has changed in COVID-19 era?

The present study explains the impact of both income inequality and various levels of education on per capita income including the comparative analysis for the COVID-19 pandemic era. It is a cross country analysis, including 70 countries, using data from the World Bank Database for three periods: 1990, 2010 and 2020. The ordinary least square (OLS) is used for the empirical analysis. This study proceeds in sections. Section 2 highlights literature review. Section 3 is based on economic and econometric analysis. Section 4 is based on empirical results of our study with a brief discussion. Section 5 consists of diagnostic tests for checking our estimated results. Section 6 concludes our whole study.

2. Literature Review

Education is the road by which the human capital journey is supposed to be attained. Although the structure of educational institutions and study plan differs, they all are trying to increase the productivity of the labour force that in turn could be translated into the economic growth of the countries. The relationship of education, income inequality and economic growth is well- established and has an extensive literature which could not be described into one section of this study alone, so we are discussing the most relevant analysis aligned with our study. Barro (1991) investigated the growth of real GDP per person in 98 economies over 1960 to 1985. His study found positive impact of school enrolment on incomes per person. The economies having large amount of human capital (proxy by education) were found to have large investment in physical capital. His study concluded that catch up for poor economies is possible only if their individuals possessed higher levels of human capital. Kalaitzidakis et al., (2001) investigated relation of human capital to growth of economy incorporating education. Their results revealed linear impact of enrolment to economy's growth, whereas such relationship is non-linear in case of mean years of education. They observed different implications of attainment and levels of education for growth. Their results revealed direct relationship of primary education to economic growth. Its impact is larger in case of low levels than for high levels of human capital countries. Castelló and Doménech (2002) found human capital inequality inversely impacting to economic growth while analysing 108 countries over 1960 to 2000. The inclusion of human capital inequality made the coefficient of income inequality positive indicating its direct relation to economic growth; this relation became even insignificant for explaining investment (physical capital). The study found economies that tend to decrease inequality in human capital over the period showed convergence.

Analysing panel of countries from 1960 to 2000, Keller (2006) had found the negative role of primary enrolment in increasing the GDP per capita globally. Secondary enrolment was found more effective among other education levels for contributing in GDP per capita. The increased primary and secondary enrolment lowered fertility and attract investment that indirectly increased GDP per capita. Gyimah-Brempong et al., (2006) analysed the effects of education on economy's growth for African countries over 1960 to 2000. They found education at every level to have positive relationship with growth in income per person. Higher education had revealed more elastic for growth than investments in assets. But, they could not separate higher education impact from other levels, which results in overestimation. They suggest considering various levels of

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education for further researchers analysing growth of economies. In explaining impact of human capital on economic growth, Papageorgiou (2003) analysed 80 economies for the period of 1960 and 1987, for investigating the role of primary and post primary education. Human capital was introduced as the number of years of education and adjusted for mortality and drop outs. The study concluded that primary education remained helpful for the output. The post primary education revealed contributing for adopting innovations. Overall education was found necessary for growth process. In addition, Naeem et al. (2021) conducted an empirical study and suggested that income inequality highlights a direct influence on mortality.

Easterly and Rebelo (1993) found those increased education expenditures contributes in economic growth. The study analysed the impact of income inequality on education expenditures and growth rate from 1970 to 1985 (by cross-section analysis). They concluded that higher inequality increases education expenditures, which impacted negatively on growth. The expense of increasing human capital was an immediate decrease in economic growth. However, these expenses could become future increasing factor to economic growth. Sylwester (2000) had taken education to explain the interrelationship of income inequality and economic growth. The higher income inequality was found increasing education expenses. The immediate effect of education expenditures was negative on economic growth. In future such expenditures have found to be positively impacting economic growth. This was the reason that human resource development had sluggish effect on economic growth. Moreover, Spulbar et al. (2021) investigated the impact of sample taxes on the dynamics of GDP at EU-28 level.

Gylfason and Zoega (2003) made regional distinction through dummies for Asia, Africa Central and South America and analysed data from 87 industrial and developing countries from 1965 to 1998. The study concluded education increases the effect of income inequality on economic growth. Asian countries found particularly more equitable and large education promoting (due to statistical significance) and so have rapid growth. The study concluded education enhanced economic growth directly through effectiveness of capital (both human and physical) that in turn decreased inequality. Li and Zou (1998) analysed the relationship of income inequality with the growth of economies. The estimated results showed positive relationship between them given the inclusion of consumption into utility analysis. They concluded that income inequality and growth relationship is complex. Therefore, causality could not be assigned for the presence either direct or inverse association empirically on the basis of its simple analysis. Later, Barro (2000) analysed economies over 1965 to 1995 for investigating relation of income inequality and growth. The high level of income inequality was found slowing economy's growth process for poor economies. Converse relationship existed for rich economies. He did not found such relationship helpful in explaining large differences across nations considering full sample.

Teulings and Van Rens (2008) concluded education explains well cross countries GDP growth and productivity differences from 1960 to 1990. They estimated 2.7% average annual increase in productivity growth due to rise in education from 1970 to 1990, whereas the actual growth rate was 2%. However, their results showed that economies which do not raise education level of labours were worsen over the time. Muysken and Nour (2005) analysed Gulf countries for making less dependence on oil exports and implications of their educational system. They pointed the inadequate educational facilities as a cause of less skilled labour, hindrance in research and development that in turn became a major problem in restructuring their economies. The

present infrastructure and enrolment in tertiary education were found fewer than required (by international standards). However, those results were based on the survey data (Nour, 2002b).

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 require the, UN members, countries to ensure all the boys and girls to complete their secondary school with the meaningful learning level by 2030 (Azevedo et al. 2021). The school closure during COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation as it has interrupted the students' attachment to schooling (Azevedo, 2020; Azevedo et al. 2021; World Bank, 2020). In amidst of the crisis the loss of students, Azevedo et al. (2020) has indicated that COVID-19 has resulted loss of 0.6 years of quality of schooling. The study highlighted that this gap in education has the potential of reducing \$872 in yearly earnings on average that will accumulate to \$16,000 over the working life students. Tarkar (2020) has indicated that the shutdown of universities has also affected the students' learning in universities. Ultimately, the education sector has hit hard by the pandemic. This research would try to escort the impact of various levels of enrolment in education on the real income per capita, and their nature of relationship by the COVID-19 era. Spulbar et al. (2022) argued that digital development and new technologies can contribute to poverty alleviation in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The exiting literature indicates income inequality as the midway between the education and economic growth, so we have included the income inequality in the analysis as well.

3. Economic Theory and Econometric Methodology

Solow (1956) and Swan (1956) paved the way of explaining economic growth by introducing a black box which is named as the Solow's Residual. Although at that time the researchers were not very clear about what could define this residual in the better words, they were sure it is not the labour and capital. The earlier theories attached the name of effectiveness of labour or the progression in technology with the residual of growth model (Romer, 2012). Later, the research and development were used to explain the economic growth developed by Romer (1990), Grossman and Helpman (1991), and Aghion and Howitt (1992). These models have the distinguished perspective about the education and they discuss the knowledge production as the engine of economic growth. Grounded somewhere in these theories is the role of education on the economic growth as education provides the human capital which in turn creates knowledge and make labour effective. The empirical work of Barro (1991), Easterly and Rebelo (1993) and Teulings and Van Rens (2008) also supports the importance of education in determining the economic growth. Following the work, the present study attempts to check the effect of various levels of education on the economic growth. Education is treated as the human capital that explains the growth of countries. The same, human capital, has been given the name of the Solow residual or the productivity in the exogenous growth models.

Further studies expanded the work of earlier researchers, Romer (2012) elaborated various aspects of this growth model in which the savings are brought to light as the increasing factor to the steady growth path. The Engels' Law indicate that the poor spends more proportion of their income on necessary goods than the rich. Keynes consumption theories also indicate the similar fact that the large part of savings came from rich. These savings, in turn, lead toward the investment and hence results in economic growth. The income inequality is picked because it is a variable attached to the propensity to save and invest, and both of these variables are indicated as the crucial

for determining the economic growth from both the exogenous and endogenous growth theories (Romer, 2012). Therefore, it can be said that the relationship among national income, education and income inequality is evident from economic theory. However, the shocks, like economic recession and COVID-19, always create the diversion in the economic growth path. This study is exploring, this aspect of economic growth where, how the income per person has affected by the income inequality and various level of education- primary, secondary and tertiary- amid shock of COVID-19 pandemic.

The next step after identifying the variables is to take a good proxy for them. In order to select the appropriate measure of education, we take guideline from Gylfason and Zoega (2003). They took three measures of education namely: a) gross secondary school enrolment; b) government spending on education related to national income; and c) expectation of number of schooling years for females. However, secondary school enrolment is found to have higher impact on inequality and growth among other education indicators. Gyimah-Brempong et al., (2006) recommended inclusion of different education levels. Keller (2006) had used various enrolment ratios to population for explaining the economic growth. Using previous literature as a guide line for the selection of variables, the present study takes primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment to the percentage of population. Similarly, we used the gini coefficient, which is widely used, to measure the income inequality. Further, we use logarithm of real GDP per capita for identifying economic growth, which describes the percentage rise in the GDP per capita over time. However, there must be other factors that differentiate the growth of high countries. Accounting these facts, Papageorgiou (2003) divided the countries into high income, middle income and low income countries on the basis of per capita GDP for explaining economic growth. We also made this distribution based on Nielsen (2011), but we have just introduced the dummy variable for the high income countries. Adding this dummy variable would allow us to capture other factors that have been contributed to the progress of the high income countries. Hence, we made equation staking logarithm of real GDP per capita as dependent variable (the brief description of variables and data sources is in appendix A1; the list of countries included in analysis are in appendix A4). Briefly, the equations we are estimating are as follows:

$$\text{LRGDPpc2010} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{PSE1990} + \alpha_2 \text{SSE1990} + \alpha_3 \text{TE1990} + \alpha_4 \text{Gini1990} + \alpha_5 \text{Dhigh} + \varepsilon_1 \quad (1a)$$

$$\text{LRGDPpc2010} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{PSE2010} + \beta_2 \text{SSE2010} + \beta_3 \text{TE2010} + \beta_4 \text{Gini2010} + \beta_5 \text{Dhigh} + \varepsilon_2 \quad (1b)$$

$$\text{LRGDPpc2020} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \text{PSE1990} + \gamma_2 \text{SSE1990} + \gamma_3 \text{TE1990} + \gamma_4 \text{Gini1990} + \gamma_5 \text{Dhigh} + \varepsilon_3 \quad (2a)$$

$$\text{LRGDPpc2020} = \mu_0 + \mu_1 \text{PSE2010} + \mu_2 \text{SSE2010} + \mu_3 \text{TE2010} + \mu_4 \text{Gini2010} + \mu_5 \text{Dhigh} + \varepsilon_4 \quad (2b)$$

$$\text{LRGDPpc2020} = \eta_0 + \eta_1 \text{PSE2020} + \eta_2 \text{SSE2020} + \eta_3 \text{TE2020} + \eta_4 \text{Gini2020} + \eta_5 \text{Dhigh} + \varepsilon_5 \quad (2c)$$

The education is taken as the enrolment to test the hypothesis that which level of education provides the far reaching impacts on the growth of income per capita. We have taken the year 2020 in order to test that the nature of per person growth has observed how much changes due to the COVID-19. If the equations 2a, 2b and 2c portray the same nature as the 1a and 1b then we could conclude that the role of education levels has remained same on growth of income per person in 2020. Similar position holds for the income inequality hypothesis as well. As far as the estimation

method is concerned, we are using cross section data so, OLS using robust standard deviations is employed.

4. Empirical Results and Discussions

The results of OLS with robust standard deviations are reported in table 1 (the coefficient and their robust standard deviations; t-statistic and p-value are reported in appendix A2). The primary school enrolment of 1990 turned out to have positive, and highly significant (at 1% level of significance), impact on growth of per person income in 2010 and 2020. The primary school children take some years to reach the market where they can earn and contribute in the growth of their economy. According to the estimates, an increase of enrolment by one percentage of population in 1990s primary school enrolment increases real GDP per capita by 1.9 percent. Further, the same, rise in primary enrolment effects remain significant in 2020 as well when they contribute by 1.6 percent in real GDP per capita growth. This result indicates the far reaching impacts of primary school enrolment in 1990 which could be seen even after 30 years in 2020. Kalaitzidakis et al., (2001) also found the primary school enrolment as an increasing factor to the per capita income in low income economies. However, the primary school enrolment of 2010 tells the different story in both 2010 and 2020. Its contribution became negative and significant, at 5% level of significance, in regressions for both the periods. The one percent (of population) rise in primary school enrolment lowers real GDP per person by 1.5 percent (after rounding-off) in both 2010 and 2020. This result might indicate that the children reading in primary schools are not yet contributed significantly in the labour market even by 2020. Although, some of them would have joined the labour force, many of them would be still busy in continuing their studies and hence would not be earning at all. Keller (2006) found the similar relationship between primary enrolment and real GDP per capita in global analysis. The negative relationship exist even in the 2020 primary school enrolment and the same year real GDP per capita. Therefore, it can be concluded that the primary school enrolment pose the negative impact on the current real GDP per capita, and it takes about twenty years to translate this negative relationship into the positive one. However, after the span of many years the primary school enrolment provides positive spill-over effects to real GDP per capita growth over decades.

On the other hand, the secondary school enrolment of 1990 do not play a significant role in determining real GDP per capita growth in both 2010 and 2020. It is because majority of the students at the secondary school age would enter the labour market sooner than a decade and start playing their positive role in the growth of their country. For the same reason, the secondary school enrolment of 2010 has revealed significant, at 1% level of significance, in both 2010 and 2020 regression for the real GDP per capita growth. The estimates reveal that the an increase of enrolment by one percentage of population in secondary school gives 3.1 percent, approximately in both 2010 and 2020, increase in the real GDP per person growth. This estimate is showing that the impact of secondary education enrolment is the highest among the other education levels on the real GDP per capita growth. This impact also survives in case of 2020 secondary school enrolment, but with the decrease in magnitude. The estimate revealed that an increase of secondary enrolment of 2020 by one percentage of population increases the growth of GDP per person in 2020 by 2.5 percent approximately. This result also highlight the possibility of child labour in both the past

and the present periods. In other words, the secondary school students would have been contributing to the income of the country by earning as the part time employee or home workers. Certainly, the further research could be done to explore such possibilities, but the present study remained limited in this scope and does not explore this hypothesis. However, the researchers like Gylfason and Zoega (2003) also indicated that secondary enrolment has positive and significant impact on income per capita. Hence, we find that the relationship of secondary school enrolment to the real GDP per capita is positive, for nearly one decade, but it might not remain effective over two decades or so.

The estimation of 2010 real GDP growth per person revealed that the 1990 tertiary education enrolment had contributed positively in the income per person. The estimate indicates that one percent population more enrolled in the tertiary education would lead to increase the real GDP growth by 1.3 percent; however, this coefficient is significant at the 10 percent level of significance. Although researchers like Gyimah-Brempong et al., (2006) revealed that higher education affects significantly and positively to income per person, our analysis found no such evidence in estimating 2010 and 2020 income per person growth based on the tertiary enrolment of both 2010 and 2020. It seems unlikely when we consider the endogenous growth hypothesis because the tertiary education is the highest step toward the research and development. However, if we consider the access to the tertiary education then it would be clearly available to the limited population in the countries. Further, the enrolment in tertiary education might be attached to the study of traditional subjects that yield fewer job opportunities for the graduates. The income inequality has revealed positive and significant in only the equation 1b estimation. It indicates that a rise of one percent in the gini index would result in increasing the real GDP per capita by 2.9 percent. This result indicating positive relationship between income inequality and real GDP per capita is in accordance to Li and Zou (1998). However, this result is not consistent as no other equation reported in its approval. The gini index turned negative and insignificant while we took its 1990 value to explain the real GDP per capita growth of 2010 (equation 1a). The other equations reported insignificant and positive impact of income inequality on the real GDP per capita. Hence, we cannot declare the exact nature of relationship between the income inequality and the real GDP per capita based on our data analysis.

The equations 2a, 2b and 2c provided the impact of education levels and income inequality on the real GDP per capita growth in 2020 within the COVID-19 era. The estimated results indicated the similar patterns of primary school enrolment: the positive in case of 1990 enrolment and negative and significant in case of 2010 and 2020 enrolment. The secondary school enrolment remained positive in both 2b and 2c, with lower magnitude impact of 2020 secondary school enrolment. Tertiary education did not provide any significant results in all three equations (2a, 2b and 2c). Perhaps the study indicates that the secondary school education could be a key to lead the real GDP per capita growth to its higher levels. On the other hand, the primary school enrolment is a pre-requisite for the secondary enrolment; therefore, it is a necessary cost to bear for the future rising incomes. Moreover, tertiary education enrolment has failed to provide its trickle down effects on the real GDP per capita growth of the country. It might be possible that, using different proxy like, the quality of tertiary education or the completion of enrolled program could provide a different result. The gini index remained insignificant that indicates no statistical evidence in the favour of the hypothesis that widening the income gaps could help in rising the real GDP per capita of the country. Overall, the nature of relationship among the variables remained intact amid

the period of COVID-19 pandemic. The differences occurred briefly in magnitudes of the estimated variables.

Coefficient of dummy variable attached with higher income countries is positive and significant in all equations. It describes the role of other factors, not included exclusively in our study, in raising the income per person of the high income countries. The constant in each equation is large and significant that elaborates many other economic and social factors impact on altering the incomes per persons, those can be included in future analysis. The F-statistic is highly significant in all the models indicating that the models are good fit. The value of coefficient of determination (R-square) is over 0.81 in all the equations that highlight education levels along with income inequality and a dummy variable for high income countries can explain at least 80 percent variation in incomes per person of the sample economies.

Variables	Equation 1a LRGDPpc2010	Equation 1b LRGDPpc2010	Equation 2a LRGDPpc2020	Equation 2b LRGDPpc2020	Equation 2c LRGDPpc2020
Gini 1990	-0.0093 (0.0127)	--	-0.0128 (0.0127)	--	--
PSE 1990	0.01927*** (0.0050)	--	0.0160*** (0.0045)	--	--
SSE 1990	0.0067 (0.0062)	--	0.0084 (0.0058)	--	--
TE 1990	0.0133* (0.0078)	--	0.0114 (0.0074)	--	--
D high	1.8246*** (0.02003)	1.5139*** (0.2360)	1.5380*** (0.1927)	1.2193*** (0.2418)	1.4775*** (0.2181)
Gini 2010	--	0.0292** (0.0113)	--	0.0150 (0.0123)	--
PSE 2010	--	-0.0149** (0.0058)	--	-0.0148** (0.0070)	--
SSE 2010	--	0.0312*** (0.0056)	--	0.0323*** (0.0059)	--
TE 2010	--	0.0063 (0.0059)	--	0.0034 (0.0059)	--
Gini 2020	--	--	--	--	0.01775 (0.0108)
PSE 2020	--	--	--	--	-0.0150** (0.0061)
SSE 2020	--	--	--	--	0.0247*** (0.0045)
TE 2020	--	--	--	--	0.0045 (0.0051)
Constant	5.9629*** (.5826)	5.8359*** (0.6235)	6.5738*** (0.5678)	6.6406*** (0.6401)	6.7817*** (0.6815)
F-statistic (p-value)	117.81*** (0.0000)	138.25*** (0.0000)	100.69*** (0.0000)	128.98*** (0.0000)	99.41*** (0.0000)
R-square	0.8302	0.8826	0.8162	0.8684	0.8666
No. of Observation	70	70	70	70	70

Table 1: Results of estimated equations

Note: Robust standard errors are reported in parenthesis, and related t-statistics and p-values are shown in appendix A2. * indicates 10 percent significance level, ** indicates 5 percent significance level and *** indicates significance at 1 percent level respectively.

5. Diagnostic Testing

Diagnostic testing solely depends upon the type of data and the technique applied for the empirical analysis. Since we are dealing with cross sectional data, so heterogeneity is a rule. In order to correct the standard deviations, models are estimated using robust standard deviations. The estimation technique is OLS that demands diagnosing of multicollinearity and normality of residuals in order to make the inferences reliable. For checking multicollinearity among regressors we used variance inflation factor (VIF) and it's reciprocal (results are shown in appendix A3). The estimates show no signal of multicollinearity in our regressors. Hence, the interpretation of variables is acceptable. For analysing the normality in the residuals, we check histogram with the curve showing estimate of normality (the results are presented in appendix A5). The analysis diagnose no problem of multicollinearity and indicates that errors are normally distributed. In a nutshell, the estimates are reliable.

6. Conclusion

This study investigates the effects of various levels of education and income inequality on real GDP per capita, in the COVID-19 era by comparing its results with the similar equations from 2010. The empirical evidence highlighted that the relationship of various levels of education with growth of real income per capita remained the same in 2020 as it was in 2010, except for the slight difference in the magnitudes of the coefficients. We take data on 70 countries and did cross-sectional analysis, using the OLS with robust standard deviations. Multicollinearity is tested using variance inflation factor and residual plots are used for checking normality of the residuals. The results affirm normality, and no multicollinearity has detected among the regressors. The primary school enrolment of 1990 turned out to have positive impact on growth of per person income in 2010 and 2020 indicating that the primary school enrolment is beneficial for the growth of income per person even after decades. However, in the short span of time, about a decade or so, the contribution of primary school enrolment remained negative and significant in both 2010 and 2020 when we have considered the same period. Therefore, primary school enrolment can be considered as the latent variable which is a liability for the short period of time but provides fruits after a very long time, taking about twenty years. Besides, the primary school enrolment is crucial to proceed the children towards the secondary and tertiary enrolment. The results show that secondary school enrolment has become significant and increasing factor to the real income per person growth in the same year of analysis or a decade earlier from it (in equations 1b, 2b, 2c). The empirical estimate of secondary school enrolment has indicated it as the most effective level of education to increase the real GDP per capita. The enrolment in tertiary education and the income inequality has not provided the significant and consistent results in our analysis; therefore, we cannot indicate the particular direction of relationship between these variables and the growth of real GDP per capita.

While real incomes per person remained high in developed countries far more than in developing countries due to other factors not included in our study. The models

are well fitted because estimated R-square is quite high for all of them, which elaborate at least 81 percent of variations in real GDP per person growth, are explained by the variables included in the models of our study. Constant terms in all regression equations remained large and significant which emphasize the role of various other factors in explaining income per capita across countries that should be included in further researches. The study emphasizes to focus on education particularly primary and secondary levels by enhancing the enrolment.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Appendix

A 1: Variables and Data Description:

- LRGDPpc2010=Logarithm of GDP per capita 2010 (constant 2010 US\$)
- LRGDPpc2020= Logarithm of GDP per capita 2020 (constant 2015 US\$)
- PSE1990=School enrollment, primary 1990 (% gross)
- PSE2010=School enrollment, primary 2010 (% gross)
- PSE2020= School enrollment, primary 2020 (% gross)
- SSE1990=School enrollment, secondary 1990 (% gross)

SSE2010=School enrolment, secondary 2010 (% gross)
 SSE2020= School enrolment, secondary 2020 (% gross)
 TE1990=School enrolment, tertiary 1990 (% gross)
 TE2010=School enrolment, tertiary 2010 (% gross)
 TE2020= School enrolment, tertiary 2020 (% gross)
 Gini1990=GINI index 1990
 Gini2010=GINI index 2010
 Gini2020= GINI index 2020
 Dhigh= 1, for high income countries
 Dhigh= 0, otherwise.

Gross enrolment ratio is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. Dhigh is a dummy variable identifying that countries are high income that distribution of countries is based on Nielsen (2011).Data on all the variables is taken from the World Bank database (World Development Indicator website). For the missing values near most value is taken as proxy.

A 2:

Variables	Equation 1a LRGDPpc2010 t-statistic (p-value)	Equation 1b LRGDPpc2010 t-statistic (p-value)	Equation 2a LRGDPpc2020 t-statistic (p-value)	Equation 2b LRGDPpc2020 t-statistic (p-value)	Equation 2c LRGDPpc2020 t-statistic (p-value)
Gini 1990	-0.73 (0.470)	--	-1.01 (0.318)	--	--
PSE 1990	3.89 (0.000)	--	3.54 (0.001)	--	--
SSE 1990	1.09 (0.280)	--	1.45 (0.153)	--	--
TE 1990	1.72 (0.090)	--	1.53 (0.131)	--	--
D high	9.11 (0.000)	6.42 (0.000)	7.98 (0.000)	5.04 (0.000)	6.78 (0.000)
Gini 2010	--	2.59 (0.012)	--	1.23 (0.225)	--
PSE 2010	--	-2.56 (0.013)	--	-2.12 (0.038)	--
SSE 2010	--	5.52 (0.000)	--	5.49 (0.000)	--
TE 2010	--	1.07 (0.290)	--	0.58 (0.562)	--
Gini 2020	--	--	--	--	1.65 (0.105)
PSE 2020	--	--	--	--	-2.44 (0.017)
SSE 2020	--	--	--	--	5.53 (0.000)
TE 2020	--	--	--	--	0.89 (0.375)
Constant	10.24(0.000)	9.36 (0.000)	11.58 (0.000)	10.37 (0.000)	9.95 (0.000)

A 3: Test Results for Multicollinearity

Variables	Equation 1a VIF(1/VIF)	Equation 1b VIF(1/VIF)	Equation 2a VIF(1/VIF)	Equation 2b VIF(1/VIF)	Equation 2c VIF(1/VIF)
Gini 1990	1.94 (0.515)	--	1.94 (0.515)	--	
PSE 1990	1.75 (0.571)	--	1.75 (0.571)	--	
SSE 1990	4.55 (0.220)	--	4.55 (0.220)	--	
TE 1990	2.60 (0.384)	--	2.60 (0.384)	--	
D high	1.88 (0.532)	2.29 (0.437)	1.88 (0.532)	2.29 (0.437)	1.86 (0.537)
Gini 2010	--	1.80 (0.556)	--	1.80 (0.556)	
PSE 2010	--	1.48 (0.677)	--	1.48 (0.677)	
SSE 2010	--	4.23 (0.236)	--	4.23 (0.236)	

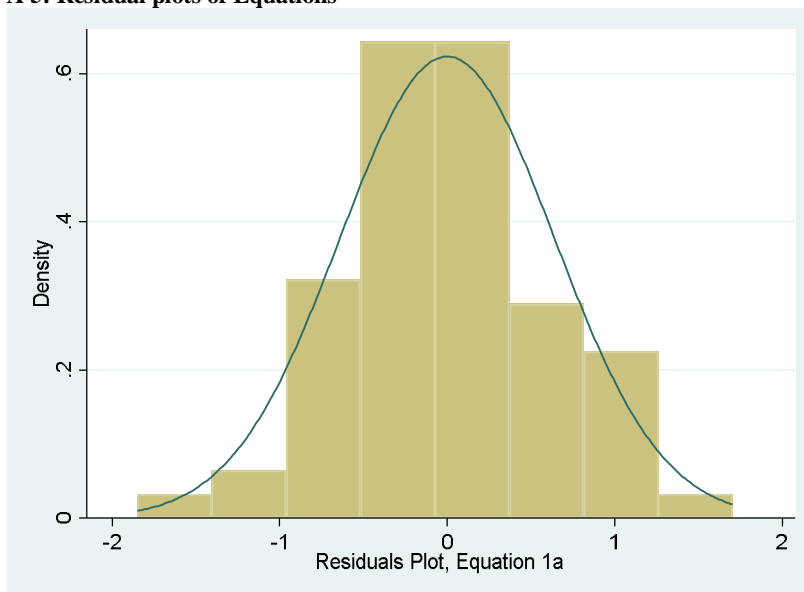
Impact of Education and Income Inequality on Per Capita Income Amid COVID-19 pandemic

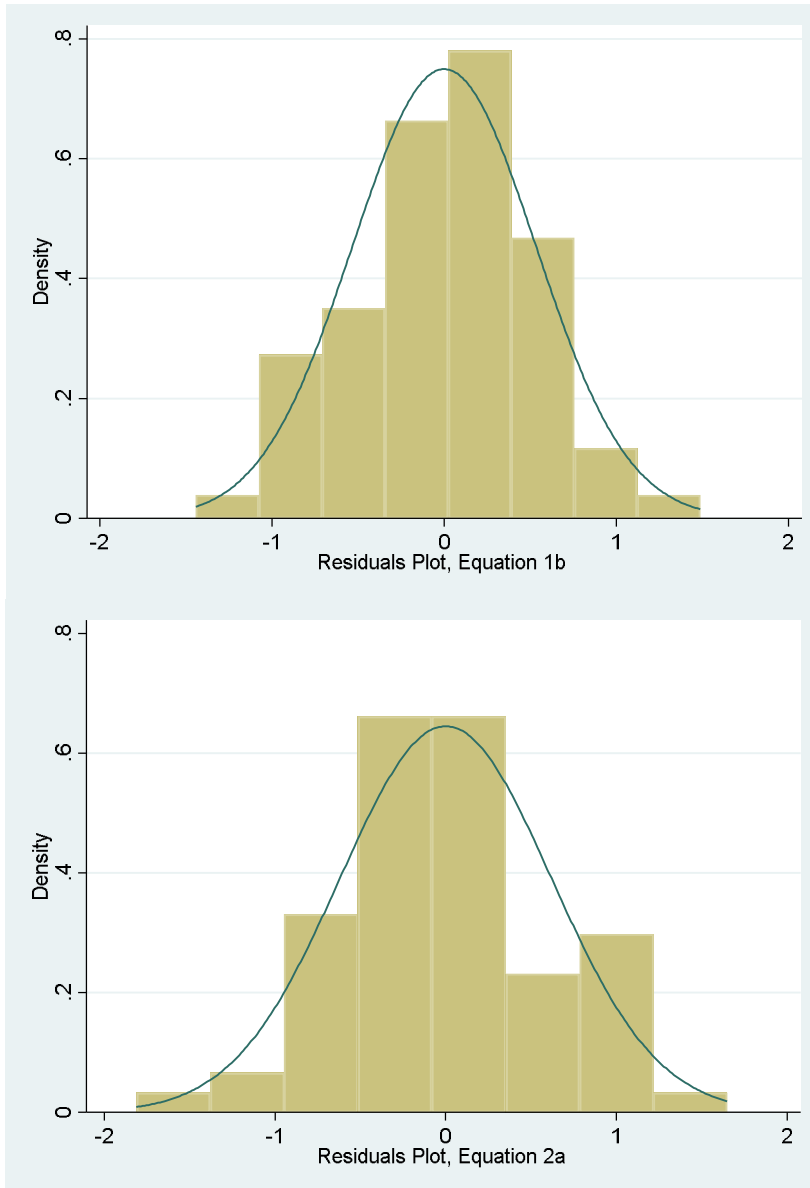
TE 2010	--	3.52 (0.284)	--	3.52 (0.284)	
Gini 2020	--	--	--	--	1.45 (0.687)
PSE 2020	--	--	--	--	1.15 (0.873)
SSE 2020	--	--	--	--	3.04 (0.329)
TE 2020	--	--	--	--	2.79 (0.358)
Mean VIF	2.54	2.66	2.54	2.66	2.06

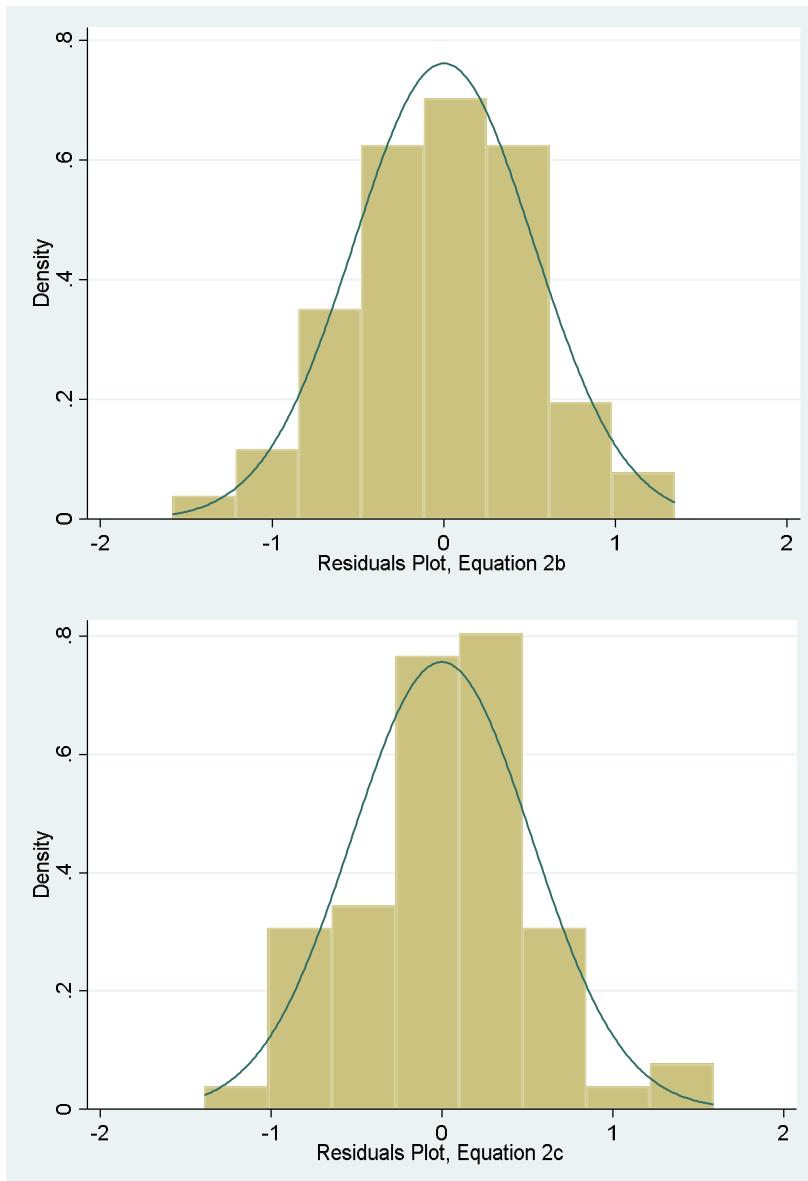
A4: Countries included in Analysis

Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt(Arab Republic), Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay

A 5: Residual plots of Equations







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Article Info

Received: October 14 2022

Accepted: October 22 2022

How to cite this article:

Arshad, S., Naeem, M. Z., Spulbar, C., Birau, R., Ninulescu, P. V. (2022). Impact of Education and Income Inequality on Per Capita Income Amid COVID-19 pandemic. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 18 – 33.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Data Analysis and Documentation on Environmental Security and Social Resilience: A Case Study on Policy Theories and Practices

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Cosmin Lucian Gherghe³⁾

Abstract:

Background: The current study focuses on the research topics of "environmental security" and "social resilience" upgrading recent advances in approaching the policy theories and practices.

Objectives: Thus, the research helps to understand the social and policy opportunities and innovation exploring a range of literature in selected periods.

Methods: The research provides a two-steps basis (quantitative and qualitative analysis) using the *Google Ngram Viewer* research tool aimed at focusing on the use of relevant topics in the field.

Results and findings: All in all, the research focus on the policy theories and practices represents an evolving reference related to three analytical frameworks (AF): (AF1) social resilience, social actors, organization, social practice, society, societal, social community, social environment, social engagement, social participation; (AF2) climate, environment, environmental security, environmental resilience, climate change, climate security, climatic conditions, climatic resilience; (AF3) prosperity, peace, growth, development, sustainable growth, sustainable development, developing states, emergent economies.

Keywords: *environment, security, social, resilience, development.*

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Data Analysis and Documentation on Environmental Security and Social Resilience: A Case Study on Policy Theories and Practices

Introduction

The research in the area of environmental security (ES) and social resilience (SR) has three distinct sections – firstly, on social actors and actions, secondly, on environmental security mechanisms and practice, and thirdly focusing on the growth and sustainability development goals. In this context, the recent literature considers: (a) the establishment of new directions of analysis and research, namely: text/ document analysis tools (Karch, 2021) and (b) the development of new instruments and research engagements in the field of social resilience and environmental security (Jewett, Mah, Howell, Larsen, 2021).

Therefore, the objectives of the interdisciplinary research are achieved by (i) providing concepts developing a general interface with the relational analysis of the “environmental”, “climate”, “resilience” and “security” related concepts during the period 1970-2019 through the analytical representation of the “environmental security” topics; (ii) approaching the particular usage of the topics of “climate security” concept during the period 2000-2019.

Moreover, the current study reviews the key topics across the recent literature with the aim to describe the state of the terminology, particularly its importance for policy practices. Understanding also the development of the policy theories is needed while providing social resilience and environmental security on various levels of community organization.

Methodology and research objectives

The research objectives of the current study are to facilitate the analysis of these major topics using the *Google Ngram Viewer* research tool that provides a linkage among selected topics or concepts (*ngrams*) providing an innovative approach to the Google books research. Moreover, the interdisciplinary research presents the frequency of use of a selected topic throughout the Google scanned books. Each figure of the current study will focus on *ngram* technique and methodology aimed to provide a contextual representation of the reference period (e.g. 1960-2019; 1990-2019 etc.).

More specifically, Figure 1 contextualizes the relational analysis representation of the use of “environmental”, “climate”, “resilience” and “security” related concepts by focusing on the period 1970-2019. Figure 2 points out the representation of the use of “environmental”, “climate”, “resilience” and “security” related concepts for the same period. Figure 3 introduces the analysis of the “environmental security” concept and related topics to climate security issues” and “climate security discourse”. Figures 4 and 5 provide the link to other topics of “climate security” and “climate resilience”. As Figure 6 develops an inner approach to “social/societal”-related concepts during the period 1990-2019, Figure 7 addresses the “social environment”, “social engagement”, “social participation” concepts.

The main objective of the Figures 8, 9, 10 is to address is to quantify the representation of UN SDG goals-related and the “environment” (concept and adjective) and related concepts (nouns) (1990-2019). It is also important to focus on the configuration of Figure 11 considering how the reference interval for the period 1960-2019 synthesizes the conceptual inputs in the area of the use of “environmental”-related concepts. Figures 12 and 13 explore the priorities of “climate”-related concepts and “sustainable” (adjective) and related nouns during the last three decades.

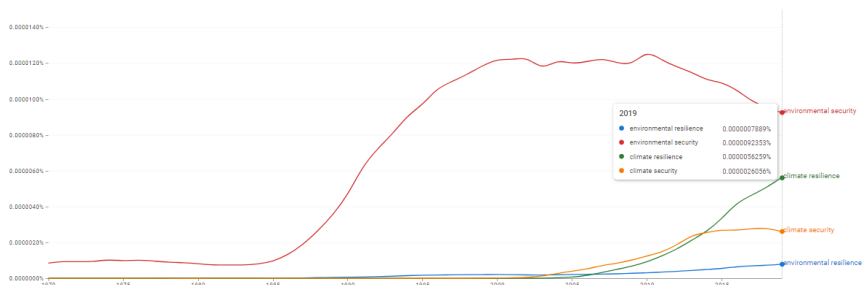
Literature review

The conceptual overview of the social resilience-related phrases comprises a set of major related topics that involve various input and output levels, namely: the social behavior during COVID-19 pandemic (Burlea-Schiopoiu, Ogarca, Barbu, Craciun, Baloi, Mihai, 2021; Burlea-Schiopoiu, Puiu, Dinu, 2022; Bărbuceanu, 2022: 181–188), sustainability, communication and social media linkage (Lăpădat, Lăpădat, 2021: 22-30; Bularca, Nechita, Sargu, Motoi, Otovescu, Coman, 2022); social participation, mobility and resilience in multilevel governance (Levasseur, Roy, Michallet, St-Hilaire, Maltais, Génèreux, 2017: 2422-2432; Olimid, Georgescu, 2017: 42-56; Pîrvu, Bădîrcea, Doran, Jianu, Țenea, Murtaza, 2022); community resilience and COVID-19 crisis (Olimid, Georgescu, Gherghe, 2022: 38-51; Wei, Han, Han, Gong, 2022: 706-714; Trivedi, Afjal, Spulbar, Birau, Murthy Inumula, Mitu, 2022: 365-376; Birau, R., Spulbar, Trivedi, Florescu, 2021: 13-21; Olimid, Olimid, 2022: 182-190) and cultural, communication and language social encounters (Mitu, 2021: 201-211; Vlăduțescu, 2021: 89-92; Păunescu, Chirițescu, 2022). However, Popay et al. argue that there are also other social determinants for this approach reflecting health inequalities and system resilience (Popay, Kaloudis, Heaton, Barr, Halliday, Holt, Khan, Porroche-Escudero, Ring, Sadler, Simpson, Ward, Wheeler, 2022). Moreover, a part of literature recently assumed that social resilience is affected by local strategies and environmental security (Wamsler, Lawson, 2012: 28-53; Kaplan, Rashid, Gasparovic, Pietrelli, Ferrara, 2022: 1513– 1526; Georgescu, 2014: 135-146). Based on these correlations, Jewett et al., Sorea et al. and also Otovescu et al. identify a direct link between social cohesion and community resilience (Jewett, Mah, Howell, Larsen, 2021: 325-336; Otovescu, Otovescu, Motoi, Otovescu, 2015: 32-49; Sorea, Czesznez, Rățulea, 2022), as Ellis et al. develop an active model for the community resilience within the public sector (Ellis, Dietz, Chen, 2022). Therefore, a range of discussions are developed here based on: (i) social considerations and risk assessments (Crowley, Jackson, Connell, Karunarthna, Anantasari, Retnowati, Niemand, 2022; Moya, Goenechea, 2022); (ii) security determinants (Georgescu, Olimid, Gherghe, 2022: 82-96); (iii) climate resilience (Pope, Gitay, 2022).

Other two potential reflections are relevant. The first one refers to the revision of the concept of resilience suggesting the need for community focus and support (Manyena, 2006: 434-450). The second one provides the right to recovery at community level (Ahmad, Chowdhury, Siedler, Odek, 2022: 327– 338). While acknowledging the various discussions in the environmental security and social resilience approach, there is also a more appropriate evaluation of the climate change perspectives, scenarios and effects, carrying out a strict focus on three broad indicators including the decision-making process, the linkage amongst environment and economic factors and the sustainable productivity (Apitz, 2021: 495-497). Using these three determinants, Apitz states the systematic challenges that the society faced here including social engagement and security. Whereas, the research methodology provides alternative techniques for three categories of analytical frameworks (AF), namely: (AF1) social resilience, social actors, organization, social practice, society, societal, social community, social environment, social engagement, social participation; (AF2) climate, environment, environmental security, environmental resilience, climate change, climate security, climatic conditions, climatic resilience; (AF3) prosperity, peace, growth, development, sustainable growth, sustainable development, developing states, emergent economies.

Data Analysis and Documentation on Environmental Security and Social Resilience: A Case Study on Policy Theories and Practices

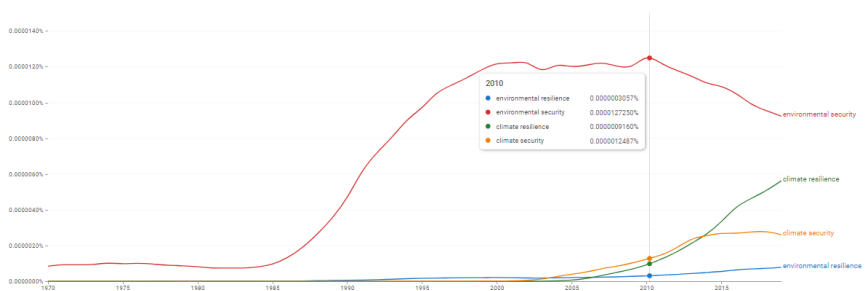
Figure 1. Relational analysis representation of the use of “environmental”, “climate”, “resilience” and “security” related concepts (1970-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on *Google Ngram Viewer* data

The relational analysis representation of the use of “environmental” and “climate” related to the concepts of “resilience” and “security” for the period of 1970-2019 shows the highest frequency values in 2019 for “climate resilience” (0.0000056259%), “climate security” (0.0000026056%) and “environmental resilience” (0.0000007889%), while “environmental security” scored highest between 2000 and 2010 (0.000012725%).

Figure 2. Relational analysis representation of the use of “environmental” and “climate”-related concepts (2010)



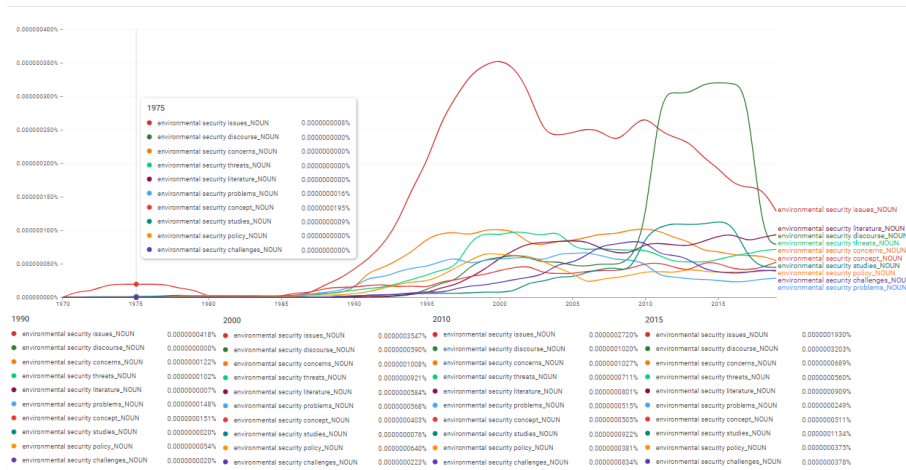
Source: Authors’ compilation based on *Google Ngram Viewer* data

The analysis for the identification of “environmental security”-related concepts shows that “environmental security issues” has started being mentioned in 1975 (0.0000000008%) and rose to rich its highest frequency in 2000 (0.0000003547%). The other concepts discovered in the analysis wither rather minor occurrence were “environmental security literature” (0.0000000901%), “environmental security threats” (0.0000000921% in 2000), “environmental security concerns” (0.0000001027%), “environmental security concept” (0.0000000511%), “environmental security policy” (0.0000000640% in 2000), “environmental security challenges” (0.0000000834% in 2010) and “environmental security problems” (0.0000000568% in 2000).

Two notable exceptions were “environmental security discourse” and “environmental security studies”, both registering a similar frequency pattern, displaying

an ascending line in 2010 (0.0000001020% and 0.0000000922% respectively) and reaching the top in 2015 (0.0000003203% and 0.0000001134% respectively), gradually descending towards 2019.

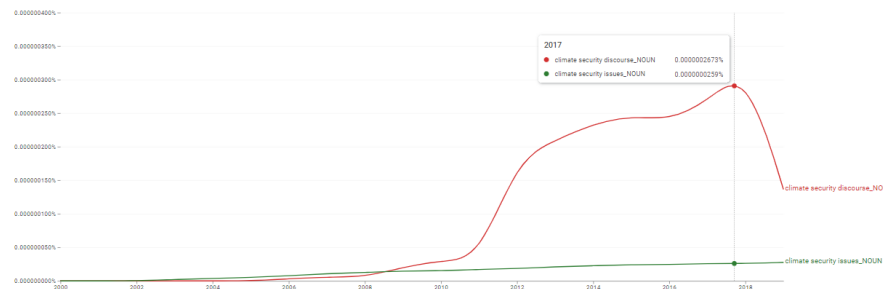
Figure 3. Relational analysis representation of the use of “environmental security” concept (1970-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

When performing the relational analysis representation of the use of “climate security” concept for the period 2000-2019 we identified only two related concepts: “climate security issues” and “climate security discourse” (registering the highest frequency in 2017 – 0.0000000259% and 0.0000002673%, respectively).

Figure 4. Relational analysis representation of the use of “climate security” concept (2000-2019)

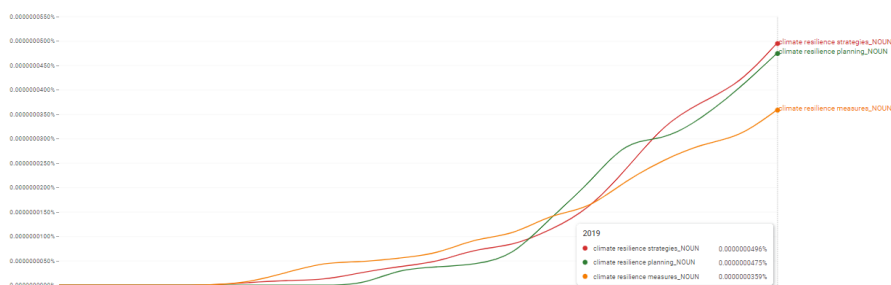


Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The analysis has identified three concepts related to “climate resilience”, all three of them peaking in 2019: “climate resilience strategies” (0.0000000496% in 2019), “climate resilience planning” (0.0000000475% in 2019), and “climate resilience measures” (0.0000000359%).

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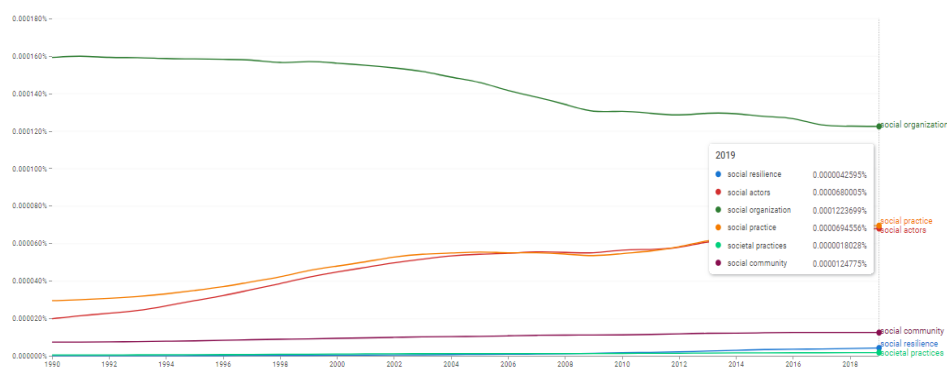
Figure 5. Relational analysis representation of the use of “climate resilience” concept (2000-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on *Google Ngram Viewer* data

The research methodological framework has targeted the scoring of concepts associated to environmental security and social resilience. The research units were designed to show the results of the extraction process of the evaluated phrases. *Google Ngram Viewer* features provide the possibility to identify the frequencies of some core topics in Google corpus. Thus, the analysis goes further to account the frequencies of the following associated concepts in 2019: “social resilience” (0.0000042595%), “social actors” (0.0000680005%), “social organization” (0.0001223699%), “social practice” (0.0000694556%), “societal practices” (0.0000018028%), “social community” (0.0000124775%).

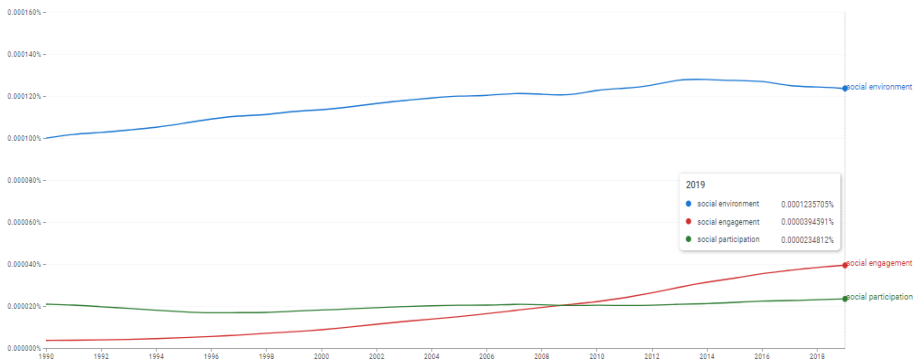
Figure 6. Analysing the use of “social/societal”-related concepts (1990-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on *Google Ngram Viewer* data

The analysis further provides meaningful information as regards the use of certain phrases for the period 1990-2019, showing the following values for 2019: “social environment” (0.0001235705%), “social engagement” (0.0000394591%), “social participation” (0.0000234812%).

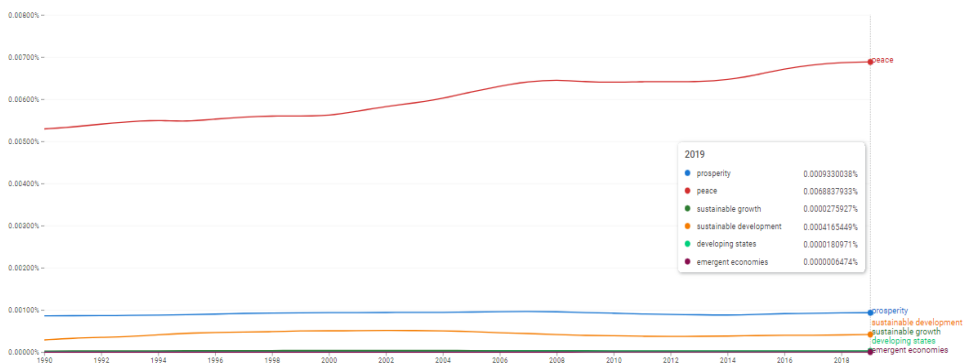
Figure 7. Analyzing the use of “social environment”, “social engagement”, “social participation” concepts (1990-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The retrospective analysis performed for the period 1990-2019 for the representation of UN SDG goals-related concepts provides evidence for the constancy associating frequencies to major concepts, while the concept of “peace” has shown a gradual increase reaching 0.0068837933% in 2019. Meanwhile, the subsequent graphic points out the constant use of the conceptual cluster and provides the values recorded for 2019 in the case of all other concepts: “prosperity” (0.0009330038%), “sustainable growth” (0.0000275927%), “sustainable development” (0.0004165449%), “developing states” (0.0000180971%) and “emergent economies” (0.0000006474%).

Figure 8. Representation of UN SDG goals-related concepts (1990-2019)



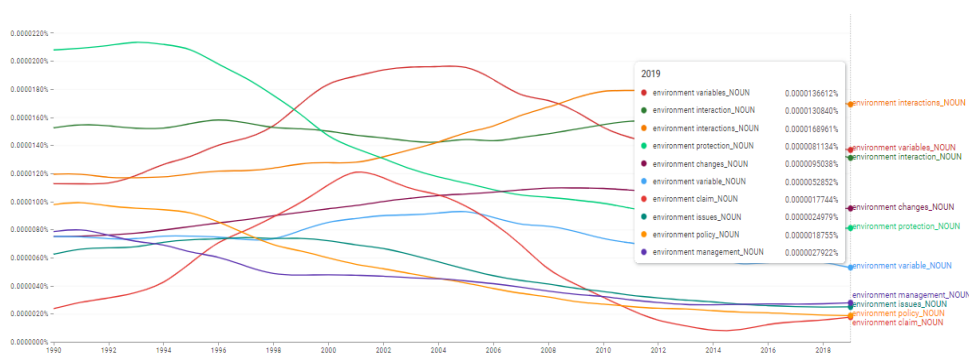
Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The analysis shows the following frequencies for the environment-related concepts for the period between 1990-2019. Throughout this period we observe that the use of phrases such as “environment variables” with its singular form “environment variable” have increased until reaching a peak between 2000-2006; after that period we observe a constant decrease till 2019 (reaching the values 0.0000136612% and 0.0000052852% respectively). The same could be observe for the phrase “environment claim” which

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reached its most frequent in 2001, then gradually decreased until 2019 (0.0000017744%). There is the case of phrases whose frequency increased gradually until 2019 such as “environment interaction” (0.0000130840%) and the plural form “environment interactions” (0.0000168961%), and “environment changes” (0.0000095038%). There is also the case of phrases whose frequency has constantly decreased until 2019. We observed this situation for the case of “environment protection” (0.0000081134%), “environment issues” (0.000024979%), “environment policy” (0.0000018755%) and “environment management” (0.0000027922%).

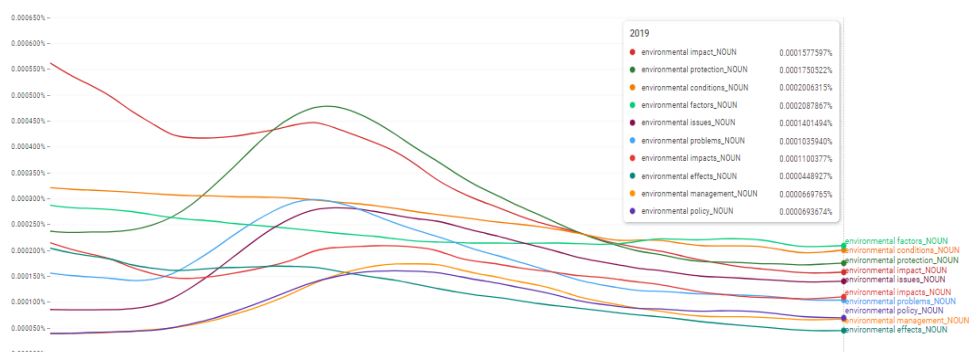
Figure 9. Analyzing the use of “environment” and related concepts (nouns) (1990-2019)



Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The analysis was directed to identify the changes in frequencies as regards the associations between the term “environmental” (adjective) and related nouns, highlighting the following: “environmental impact” and its plural “environmental impacts”, “environmental protection”, “environmental conditions”, “environmental factors”, “environmental issues”, “environmental problems”, “environmental effects”, “environmental management” and “environmental policy” which peaked around 1995.

Figure 10. Analyzing the use of “environmental” (adjective) and related nouns (1980-2019)

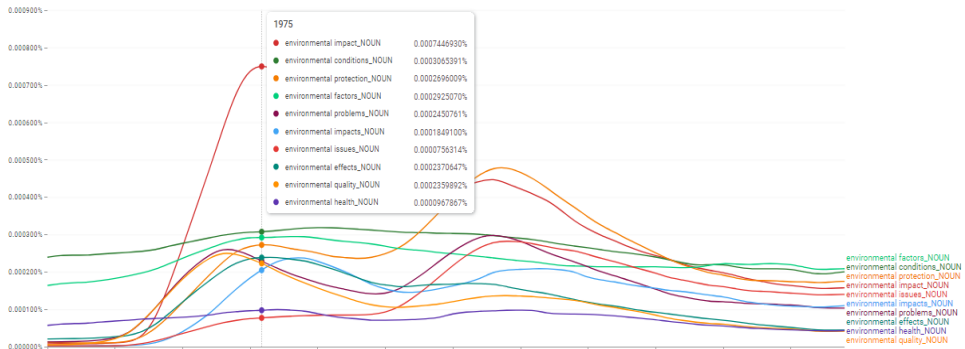


Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The results change when selecting the reference interval as the period 1960-2019, thus “environmental impact” and its plural form “environmental impacts” with its

highest frequency in 1975 (0.0007446930%), “environmental protection”, “environmental conditions”, “environmental factors”, “environmental issues”, “environmental problems”, “environmental effects”, “environmental management” and “environmental policy”.

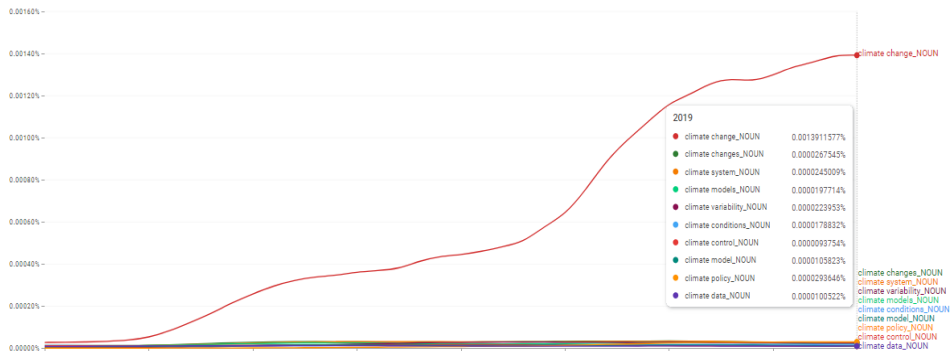
Figure 11. Analyzing the use of “environmental”-related concepts (1960-2019)



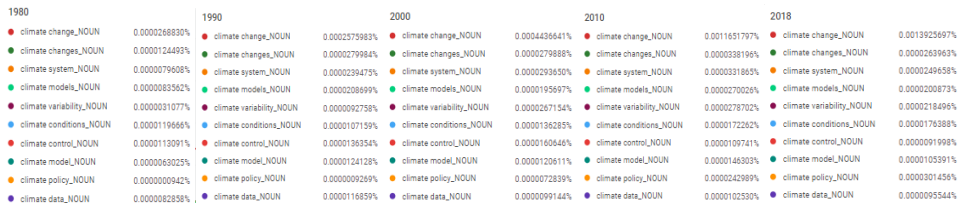
Source: Authors’ compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

The analysis of climate-related concepts representative for the period 1980-2019 has identified the following highest frequencies for “climate changes” (0.0000338196% in 2010) replaced by “climate change” (0.0013925697% in 2018). With the exception of “climate change”, all other concepts identified by the *Ngram* scientific literature scanning soft would be varying slightly for the selected period. Thus, the program identified the following highest frequencies: “climate system” (0.0000331865% in 2010), “climate models” (0.0000270026% in 2010) and “climate model” (0.0000146303% in 2010), “climate variability” (0.0000278702% in 2010), “climate conditions” (0.0000178832% in 2019), “climate control” (0.0000160646% in 2000), “climate policy” (0.0000301456% in 2018), and “climate data” (0.0000116859% in 1990).

Figure 12. Analyzing the use and frequency comparison for “climate”-related concepts (1980-2019)



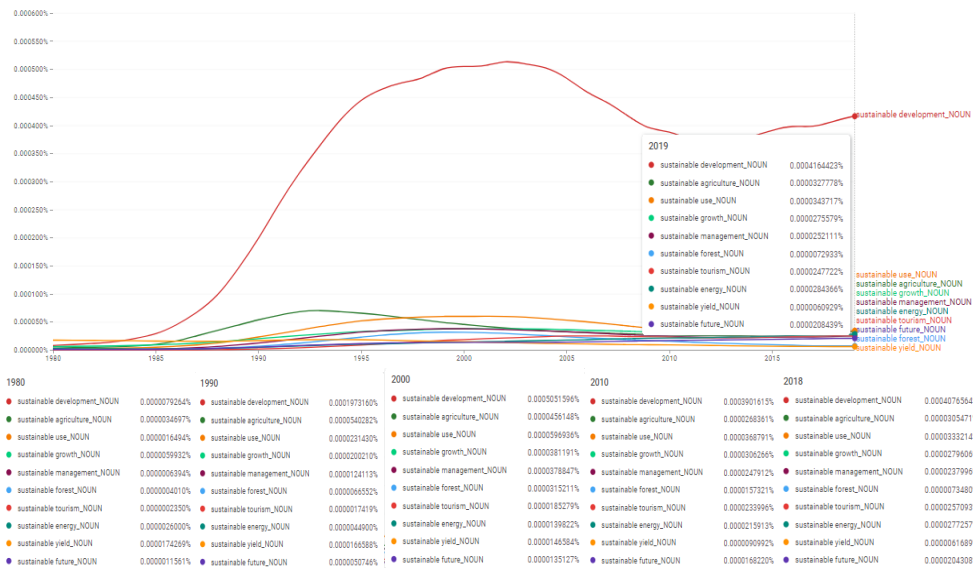
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Source: Authors' compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

Throughout the period 1980-2019, the concept of “sustainable development” has acquired the highest frequency (0.0005051596% in 2000), “sustainable agriculture” (0.000540282% in 1990), “sustainable use” (0.0000596936% in 2000), “sustainable growth” (0.0000381191% in 2000), “sustainable management” (0.0000378847% in 2000), “sustainable forest” (0.0000315211% in 2000), “sustainable tourism” (0.0000257093% in 2018), “sustainable energy” (0.0000284366% in 2019), “sustainable yield” (0.0000174269% in 1980), and “sustainable future” (0.0000208439% in 2019).

Figure 13. Analyzing the use and frequency comparison for “sustainable” (adjective) and related nouns (1980-2019)



Source: Authors' compilation based on Google Ngram Viewer data

Conclusions

In conclusion, the current research connects the processes of social resilience to the ones related to environmental security. Consequently, the analytical research of the topics developed in Figures 1-13 explores the frequencies of use for selected topics while focusing on the evolving conceptual context of the policy theories and practice. The analysis has shown the evolution of the appropriation and use of specific concepts and phrases associated to “environmental security” and “social resilience”, as well as their dissemination throughout the online literature corpus within a wide span of time.

Thus, the analysis has provided evidence for the constancy, rise or decline in the use of some specific concepts, opening the arena to scientific displays of relating the above-mentioned occurrences to policy theories and practice.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Article Info

Received: October 30 2022

Accepted: November 08 2022

How to cite this article:

Olimid, A. P., Georgescu, C.M., Gherghe, C. L. (2022). Data analysis and documentation on Environmental Security and Social Resilience: A Case Study on Policy Theories and Practices. *Revista de Ştiinţe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 34 – 46.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Limits of the Relevance of the GDP indicator

Narcis Eduard Mitu¹⁾

Abstract:

Often, in different economic and social analyses, GDP has come to take on the role of a complete indicator of the global development of society and progress in general. However, only the use of GDP as a measure of well-being necessitates an ongoing campaign to change the perspective to guide policies and evaluate progress. Is needed indicators that promote truly sustainable development that improves human life quality and correctly reflect the degree of social welfare. Citizens deserve an accurate sense of how well their economies are performing, with a view to long-term sustainability. GDP has and always will have valuable short-term insights, but to respond to 21st-century pressures we need modern economic indicators. Critiques of the GDP make way for other measures of progress and well-being to be recognized and used more comprehensively.

Keywords: *gross domestic product (GDP), welfare, indicators, limitations, sustainable development, index.*

JEL Classifications: H70, H75, I31

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Introduction

The gross domestic product (GDP) is one of the best-known instruments for measuring the degree of development of macroeconomic activity (Miladinov, 2020; Ediev, 2011; Stengos et al., 2008). Conceived in the 1930s, GDP has become a standard reference for policymakers around the world, being invoked very often in public debates. It is calculated according to a clear methodology, which allows comparisons to be made over time and between countries and/or regions. GDP can be considered a good ergometer of the economy, indicating how much effort is put into generating value (Dyan & Sheiner, 2018), regardless of whether the result means useful products and services or whether the result obtained generates negative externalities. At the same time, GDP has become an indirect indicator of the global development of society and progress in general (Marcus & Kane, 2007; McCulla & Smith, 2007).

However, given its nature and purpose, this indicator has a number of limitations because it cannot provide information on all topics that are the subject of public debates. Extremely important is the fact that GDP fails to measure the capacity of environmental sustainability or the degree of social inclusion (Stiglitz et al. 2009), the quality of governance or education, etc. (Fraumeni, 2022), these limits should be taken into account when the mentioned indicator is used in the analyses and debates regarding the economic and social policies that define the welfare of citizens.

For example, GDP takes a positive count of the cars we produce but does not account for the emissions they generate; it adds the value of the sugar-laced beverages we sell but fails to subtract the health problems they cause; it includes the value of building new cities but does not discount for the vital forests they replace. As Robert Kennedy put it in his famous election speech in 1968, “it [GDP] measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.” (Kapoor & Debroy, 2019)

In this regard, it is increasingly recognized that, if GDP is taken as a single benchmark, decision makers cannot benefit from a sufficiently detailed and faithful picture of how economic performance reflects on citizens or the long-term impact of economic growth on sustainable development.

Thus, the importance of measuring economic performance and societal progress beyond the boundaries of the GDP indicator is becoming an increasingly topical approach. As such, more and more often, there is a need to refer in the public discourse to an indicator or a set of indicators that capture and evaluate as faithfully as possible social welfare and the degree of sustainable economic development (Mitu, 2021).

Since these are two different things – sustainable development and welfare – two altimeters are actually needed. Sustainability refers to a healthy world, now and in the future, solidarity between generations and is a condition; while welfare refers to social development and is a target variable. In the case of sustainability, it is sufficient to ensure the continuation of a long-term sustainable way of life (a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs), worldwide. If this condition is met, there is no need to pursue further sustainability. However, the welfare situation is different: a higher welfare is always preferable to a lower one, so striving for more welfare is rational.

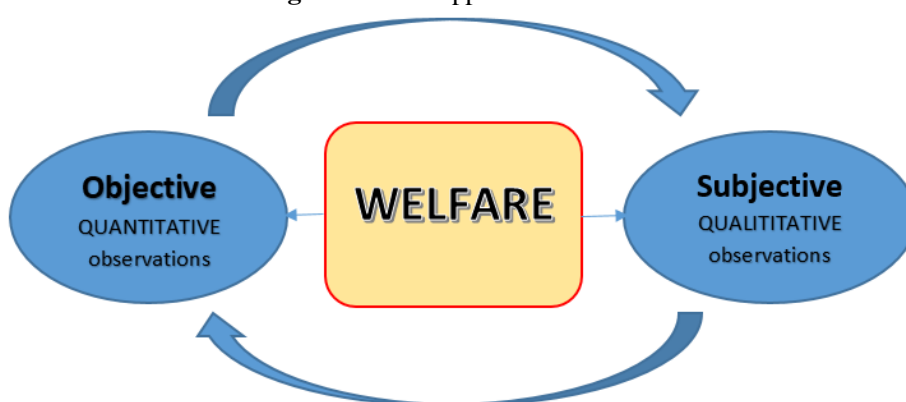
Limits of the Relevance of the GDP indicator

Expression of welfare

Defining welfare at an individual or general level (equivalent to welfare or a high level of quality of life) is a multidimensional approach, this concept includes physical, material, social, emotional welfare and the degree of satisfaction with the activities carried out, all related to a recognized set of values (Conceição & Bandura, 2008; Felce & Perry, 1995).

Assessing welfare usually involves a double approach: subjective and objective. While the objective approach is used to compare the level of welfare between countries or regions and over different periods of time – external, quantitative observations; the subjective one is necessary to identify the determinants of welfare – citizens' perception, qualitative observations (Böhnke & Kohler, 2008).

Figure 1. Dual approach to welfare



Source: Authors' own compilation

GDP, an indicator obtained by processing some quantitative data, can respond to a greater or lesser extent to the determination of objective welfare, illustrating an image seen 'from the outside' by each citizen. In contrast, the subjective side of welfare, also known as stated welfare, encompasses a wide range of emotional and cognitive processes. Essentially, it illustrates people's 'internal' perception of quality of life. Typically, subjective welfare is measured by surveys designed to directly capture feelings, experiences, and emotions.

Welfare is undoubtedly a multidimensional concept, as it includes many aspects of human life, not just those related to income or consumption. Such aspects are health, education, environmental conditions, etc. Concept of 'welfare' have a long tradition of use in the lexicon of discourse on wellbeing.

In this sense there are divergent views among economists about the degree to which an increase in the size of GDP always translates into an increase in welfare. In other words, not always and not under all conditions if people consume more, they should be happier. What matters for a good life is the impact of a specific set of circumstances on how people value the quality of their lives, and is based on the view that the best judges of how their lives turn out are themselves, the people.

Therefore, viewed from this perspective, GDP becomes limited to provide a clear picture of such a multi-faceted concept (Toader et al., 2017). Starting from the fact that welfare is multidimensional, as it encompasses various aspects of human life, and noting that GDP is not a completely adequate measurement tool, the search for

alternatives to this indicator was a natural step. Given that the need to conceptualize welfare in a much more holistic manner became apparent even before the aforementioned reports, researchers have tested several solutions in an attempt to address these shortcomings. It is therefore important to look at the limitations of GDP as an indicator of welfare and consider possible alternative approaches.

Limitations of GDP

Most of the limitations are due to the fact that, in essence, the GDP indicator fails to capture the subjective welfare that citizens really feel. Consequently, GDP fails to account for non-market transactions, wealth distribution, the effects of externalities, and the types of goods or services that are being produced within the economy. As a result the concept does not account for various important factors that influence social welfare.

To simplify things, according to Zeder (2020), among the most relevant limitations, the following can be listed:

Table 1. Relevant limitations of GDP

Limitations of GDP	Description of the phenomenon
<i>GDP does not incorporate any measures of welfare</i>	GDP only quantifies the value of all finished goods produced in an economy over a given period of time, usually a year. There are several ways to calculate and measure GDP, but none of them include any indicator of welfare. Even if not including such an indicator in the calculation does not necessarily mean that GDP cannot be an indicator of welfare, it must be remembered that GDP is used as a 'proxy of a proxy', this significantly affects its validity and eloquence.
<i>GDP only includes market transactions</i>	GDP does not account for domestic or voluntary work, even though these activities have a considerable positive impact on social welfare, as they complement the market economy and thus improve the standard of living. On the other hand GDP does not include black market transactions or other illegal activities that may have a substantial negative impact on overall social well-being.
<i>GDP does not describe income distribution</i>	To describe more accurately social welfare, it is essential to consider the distribution of income. In this sense, the Gini coefficient is illustrative. Gini coefficient (Gini index or Gini ratio) is a measure of statistical dispersion used to represent the income distribution of a nation's population, but especially to represent the disproportion in the distribution of income or wealth, being an index of inequality. If there is a high degree of inequality in the distribution of income, most people do not really benefit from increased economic output because they cannot afford to buy most of the goods and services created.
<i>GDP does not describe what is being produced and ignores</i>	Because GDP quantifies the value of all finished goods and services generated by an economy, it also includes products or services that generate externalities that can have negative effects on social welfare. For example, according to the European

Limits of the Relevance of the GDP indicator

<p><i>externalities</i></p>	<p>Parliament (2022), the textile industry pollutes water and generates greenhouse gas emissions and waste, with disastrous effects on social welfare. The production of textile materials requires a high consumption of water, to which is added the land on which cotton and the rest of the fibres are grown. The global textile and clothing industry is estimated to have used 79 billion cubic meters of water in 2015 – while the needs of the entire EU economy amounted to 266 billion cubic meters in 2017. To manufacture a just one cotton T-shirt, it is estimated that 2,700 litres of fresh water are used – the drinking water needs of one person for 2.5 years. It is estimated that the textile industry is responsible for around 20% of global clean water pollution due to dyeing and finishing products. The fashion industry is also estimated to generate 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions – more than all international flights and shipping combined. This is also true for many other goods and services that can have negative effects on society.</p>
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Source: Authors' processed, based on Zeder (2020)

Also, according to Dynan & Sheiner (2018), the category of relevance limitations can also include:

GDP excludes much of home production and other 'non-market' activities such as leisure, even though most of these activities actually increase real household consumption and thus increase welfare.

GDP refers to domestic production, but some of this production is 'owned' by non-residents. From the perspective of citizens, however, welfare is closely correlated with the income they receive from the production they own, regardless of where it is produced, the production produced in the country for which the GDP is determined matters less.

GDP also includes production that offsets the depreciation of tangible assets. However, this part of production is intended to maintain the current capital stock rather than to increase the services consumed by households and thus welfare.

GDP includes government, business and household investment (through housing and consumer goods). Although these investments may provide future services, they are not services that citizens immediately enjoy.

If we consider these aspects (which are not exhaustive), the major problem with GDP as an indicator of welfare becomes quite evident. The claim that higher GDP always increases social welfare becomes obsolete, unrealistic because at some point the positive effects resulting from increased consumption opportunities may be outweighed by the negative effects associated with the limitations mentioned above. Therefore, while GDP may in some cases be a good proxy for social welfare, it results in a limited description that may lead to unfavourable conclusions.

To compensate for these problems, many organizations and international bodies have tried to identify different approaches to measuring welfare, the most significant of which are shown in table 2.

Table 2. Alternative approaches to measuring welfare

The name of the indicator	Characteristics of the indicator
<i>Human Development Index (HDI)</i>	It is an index that focuses specifically on people and their capabilities to assess a country's development and welfare. It measures achievements in three critical dimensions: life expectancy (health), average years of schooling (education) and gross national income per capita (standard of living). Thus, the HDI also includes an indicator of economic activity, but adds two complementary dimensions that result in a more comprehensive description of social welfare. However, it does not take into account factors such as protecting personal freedom, pollution levels or gender disparity. The HDI was created by the United Nations.
<i>Gross National Happiness Index (GNH)</i>	Sometimes called Gross Domestic Happiness (GDH), is a measure of economic and moral progress, a measurement of the collective happiness in a nation. It was built on four pillars. The four pillars of GNH are: good governance, sustainable development, preservation and promotion of culture, and environmental conservation. These four pillars are further classified into nine areas (domains of measurement): psychological wellbeing; material wellbeing/standard of living; good governance; health; education; community vitality; cultural diversity and resilience; balanced time use; ecological diversity. A related but somewhat different indicator is the <i>Happy Planet Index (HPI)</i> (developed by the UK's New Economic Foundation) which looks at life expectancy, experienced wellbeing, inequality and ecological footprint to show how efficiently people in different countries are using environmental resources to lead long, happy lives. The HDI it was created by the government of Bhutan.
<i>Social Progress Index (SPI)</i>	The index provides an extensive framework that is based on three key dimensions: basic human needs, foundations of well-being, and opportunity. Again, social progress for each of those dimensions is measured by a multitude of indicators. Those include but are not limited to: nutrition, medical care, and safety (basic human needs), education, wellness, and sustainability (foundations of well-being), and personal rights, freedom, and tolerance (opportunity). The index is published by the nonprofit Social Progress Imperative.
<i>Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI)</i>	Is a metric designed to take fuller account of the well-being of a nation, only a part of which pertains to the health of the nation's economy, by incorporating environmental and social factors which are not measured by GDP. This indicator incorporates factors such as the cost of ozone depletion, crime or poverty on a nation's economic health. It nets the positive and negative results to decide whether economic growth has benefited the population overall, for example, balancing GDP spending against external costs. The GPI it was created by the US organization: Redefining Progress.

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<i>Thriving Places Index (TPI)</i>	The Thriving Places Index is designed to provide a robust reporting framework that shows the conditions for wellbeing at a local level. It radically challenges the current paradigm that defines progress by purely economic and financial means. Instead of focusing on just growing consumption and wealth for a few, the Thriving Places Index, created by Centre for Thriving Places it's designed to focuses on all the things that help people and places to do well. It radically challenges the current paradigm that defines progress by purely economic and financial means.
<i>Better Life Index (BLI)</i>	The BLI allows for a comparison of wellbeing across 35 countries, based on 11 topics identified by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These range from housing, income, community and education to environment, civic engagement and health. The index also allows a comparison of gender differences. The index includes 80 indicators of wellbeing that provide a comprehensive picture of natural, human, economic and social capital.
<i>Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI)</i>	The IWI is a metric for inclusive wealth within countries: unlike GDP, the IWI provides a tool for countries to measure whether they are developing in a way that allows future generations to meet their own needs. The inclusive wealth index measures the wealth of nations by carrying out a comprehensive analysis of a country's productive base. That is, it measures all of the assets from which human well-being is derived, including manufactured, human and natural capital. In this, it measures a nation's capacity to create and maintain human well-being over time. The IWI was developed by the UN.
<i>Green GDP (GGDP)</i>	Is an index of economic growth, implemented in China, with the environmental consequences of that growth factored into a country's conventional GDP. Green GDP monetizes the loss of biodiversity, and accounts for costs caused by climate change.
<i>Genuine Savings Indicator (GSI)</i>	GSI is a simple indicator to assess an economy's sustainability. The World Bank's savings analysis argues that factors such as public investments of resource revenues and the social costs of pollution emissions are equally relevant in determining the overall level of saving. The GSI encourages discussion around natural resources in a language familiar to finance policymakers.

Source: Authors' processed, based on relevant economic literature

Conclusions

The importance of measuring economic performance and societal progress "beyond GDP" is increasingly advocated in the current period. In this sense, it is increasingly recognized that, if GDP is taken as a single benchmark, decision makers cannot benefit from a sufficiently detailed and faithful picture of how economic performance reflects on citizens or the long-term impact of growth on sustainability (Mitu et al., 2007).

The weaknesses of GDP as an indicator are not only a reflection of the rapid transformation the world economy has seen this century, in the wake of the fourth industrial revolution, the climate crisis and COVID-19 (Olimid et al., 2022). The general

use of GDP to measure the welfare of a nation has been questioned many times, even by its inventor, the American economist Simon Kuznets. The welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measure of national income (Kuznets, 1962, p. 29). More recently Stiglitz (2014) has gone further, reflecting concerns with the limitations of GDP, saying that not only is GDP not a good measure of welfare, but GDP is not a good measure of how well an economy is performing and that too much has already been sacrificed on the altar of GDP fetishism. Therefore, as Ban Ki-moon (2012) also noted we need to move beyond gross domestic product as our main measure of progress, and fashion a sustainable development index that puts people first.

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Article Info

Received: July 25 2022

Accepted: August 06 2022

How to cite this article:

Mitu, N. E. (2022). Limits of the Relevance of the GDP indicator. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 47 – 55.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Investigating the impact of government economic policies on crime in Pakistan

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Abstract:

This study was conducted in an effort to better understand how decisions made by the government in Pakistan regarding taxation and spending have affected crime rates over the years 1980 to 2020. The Vector Error-Correction model suggests that the government's policies have a causal effect on crime rates in the long run. The study concludes that rising direct taxes and defence expenditures decreases the reported crime rate in Pakistan. Moreover, the empirics revealed that rising unemployment rate increase crimes. The income inequality has also portrayed positive relationship with reported crimes. The impulse responses affirm the persistent long run relationship trends in which both unemployment rate and income inequality increases crime rate and the direct taxes and defence expenditures decreases crime rate in the country.

Keywords: *labor market, government economic policies, crime rate, income inequality, taxation, economic misery, poverty, unemployment.*

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1. Introduction

Taxes, subsidies, government spending, overseas loans and grants, and alternative forms of debt financing are all examples of governmental policy. The health of the economy as a whole is largely dependent on these elements. The effects of these actions are both immediate and long-term. Defence, subsidies, and public transportation are all examples of indirect effects that can be directly attributed to taxation. Indirectly affecting the labor market, taxes and subsidies promote the creation of products and services. The unemployment rate reflects the accessibility of available job openings in the economy. An uptick in the jobless rate indicates fewer individuals are working and earning a living. When unemployment and rising costs are factored together, the problem becomes especially acute for the poorest members of society (Gillani et al., 2009). All of these things contribute to the economic woes and mental anguish of the poor. They consider their economic needs before law and order and ultimately commit crimes. However, there is no single reason for crime, the major reasons for crime could be economic misery, mental stress or the habit of people (Aurangzeb 2012).

Economic misery is caused due to low income or decrease in purchasing power. The latter is effected through purchasing power that is affected by imposition of taxes. The taxes can be direct or indirect but increase in either of them or both lead to decrease the real income of the individuals. These lower incomes, in comparison with the incomes before taxes imposition, due to taxes accelerate crimes (Chamlin et al., 1999). Increase in taxes lowers incentive to business as well, if the taxes are imposed on the producers and it resulted in decrease in their demand that in turn increases unemployment. The combination of high unemployment and wide income disparity is a major contributor to criminal activity (Wu and Wu, 2012). Deprivation among the lower-income population is a reflection of the unequal distribution of wealth that is depicted by the measure of income inequality. For this reason, many people point to income inequality as a primary motivation for criminal activity (Fajnzylber et al., 2002). More crimes occur in areas with wide income gaps because those with lower wages feel the effects of the economy and try to steal from those with higher salaries (Kelly, 2000). On the other hand, Spulbar and Birau (2019) investigated the implications of cybercrime on the banking industry in ASEAN countries even considering propagation effects.

Law and order is another major determinant of the crime rate as it increases the likelihood of the criminal being caught after the crime. The lower the chances of being caught the larger would be the incentives to crime. Defense spending by the government results in a larger and more effective military and police force, which benefits the economy as a whole.

As a result, offenders are more likely to face consequences for their actions, which in turn reduces the crime rate (Anwar et al., 2015). The monetary and human losses incurred as a result of criminal activity have significant implications for society (Arshad et al., 2016). Therefore, it is in the best interest of policymakers to examine the causes of economic crime and work to eliminate them. Poverty, economic inequality, unemployment, and lack of education are among characteristics that economists have identified as contributing to crime rates in many economies (Neumayer, 2005; Buonanno and Leonida, 2005; Arshad et al., 2016). Reported crimes in Pakistan observe many fluctuations from independence to now, for brief view of recent statistics on reported crimes, figure 1 shows the time series data on all reported crime from 1980 to 2020.

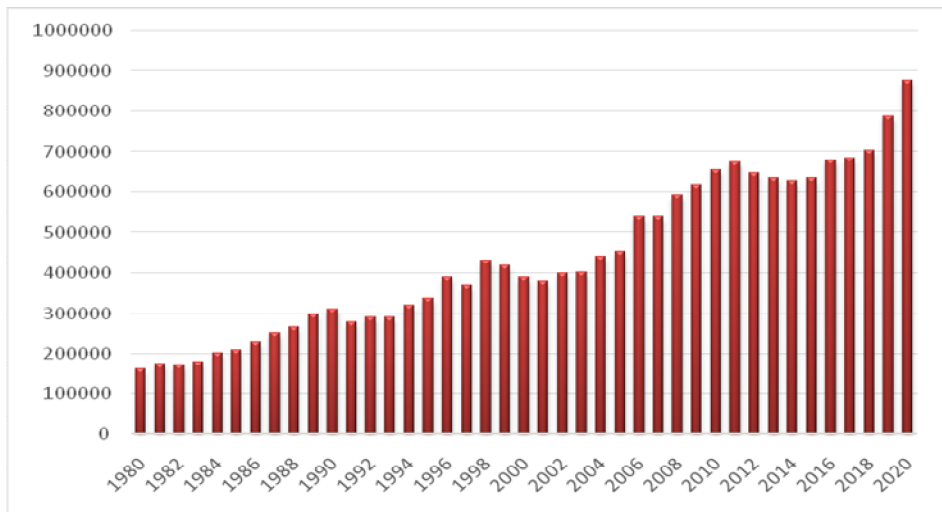


Figure 1: All Reported Crime in Pakistan
Federal bureau of Statistics

Figure 1 show that reported crimes increase till 1990 then it reduces to some extent and increased even more by 1998, after it crime decreased a little and start raising again till 2011 then it start falling again till 2015. The fall in the reported crimes was majorly due to Pakistan army operations like Zarb-e-Azab, Rah-e-Nijat and Raah-e-Raast against terrorists at that time. However, after 2016 the country is facing surge in the crime rate that has accelerated enormously in 2020. As a developing nation it is a challenge for Pakistan to control crimes. Government of Pakistan uses its defence expenditures for this purpose which are financed through taxes and using Loans and grants from other nations. Spulbar et al. (2021) the effects of some selected taxes on the complex dynamics of GDP at European Union - 28 member countries. But taxes have negative impact on production of goods and services while loans and grants are accompanied by restrictions, then how far these policies are impacting crime? Does policies regarding taxes and expenditures are effective in controlling crime in Pakistan? These questions have not got much attention earlier, however this study is an attempt to answer them and point out those economic factors which can effectively control crime in Pakistan that makes it a healthy contribution towards relevant literature.

2. Literature Review

Crime has been discussed in the researches on both developed and developing countries. According to Wilson and Cook (1985), in 1976 the US Congress blamed rising unemployment for a rise in crime rates. The following report, from 1984, will connect disparities in employment, real per capita income, and other economic indicators with criminal activity. Several previous studies have examined the causes of criminal behaviour. Some authors attach crime to social reasons other emphasis on demographic, economic and socio-economic aspects. There are few studies that relate crime to government policy variables like taxes, loans and grants and expenditures; however, many exist in case of other economic variables. Among a lot of studies some most important related to current paper are discussed as follows:

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In analyzing urban economies, Kelly (2000) finds that inequality becomes a motive for individuals to commit violent crime significantly more than other economic characteristics.

The study indicated that police presence and economic hardship had a significant effect on property crimes but had no bearing on violent crime. According to research by Demombynes and Ozler (2005), extreme poverty and inequality fuel criminal activity in South Africa. It appears that the barrier wall erected by the colonies and their wealthier neighbors has reduced property crime. The results indicate that when poverty rises, crime rates tend to fall. Economics in Pakistan were studied by Asghar et al. (2016), who looked at data from 1984 to 2013. The study disentangles the impact of economic, social, and political elements on criminal behavior. In the end, the study suggests that having stricter laws actually makes things worse, whereas having a more reliable government is beneficial in reducing crime. It has been discovered that poverty contributes to a rise in criminal activity. A positive correlation between economic disparity and crime is found in the study. Omotor (2009) found that unemployment was a key cause of crime in Nigeria, despite the fact that in this study, it remained negligible.

Unemployment and military spending have a significant and negative impact on crime rates in the United States, as discovered by Raphael and Winter-Ebmer (1998). According to the findings, a rise in crime rates is linked to persistently high unemployment rates. Unemployment has been observed to be reduced in correlation with an increase in military spending and an increase in the number of available jobs. According to an examination of the same economy by Chamlin and Cochran (2000), persistent joblessness contributes to a rise in criminal activity. People who have been out of work for more than 15 weeks have been linked to an increase in property crime. From 1964 to 2008, Jalil and Iqbal (2010) looked at how unemployment and urbanization affected crime rates in Pakistan. The research also indicated that income disparity and inflation played a role in driving criminal activity in Pakistan. Long-term data research showed a high correlation between urbanization and crime. Crime is higher in rural regions compared to cities in the Sidama Zone and neighboring economies, according to a study published in 2016.

Using cross-sectional statistics on the American economy, Gumus (2003) examines the correlation between urbanization and crime. Researchers conclude that unemployment, population growth, and income disparity all have a role in keeping cities lawless. For 33 countries across Europe, Altindag (2012) examines the correlation between unemployment and criminality. The analysis relied on panel data, and both OLS and 2SLS were utilized to ensure the accuracy of the findings. There is a growing empirical link between joblessness and criminal activity. Due to the rise in unemployment, property crimes have been on the rise, and the increase is more pronounced in 2SLS than in OLS. The unemployment rate is heavily influenced by people with lower levels of education. To what extent poverty contributes to criminal activity in Germany is estimated by Mehlum et al., 2005. To estimate this connection, the study makes use of the instrumental variable method. The research used both ordinary least squares (OLS) and instrumental variables estimates, revealing both bias in the OLS method and a somewhat substantial impact of poverty on crime via the latter. Several years later, Traxler and Burhop (2010) reexamined the same data and found that poverty is indeed directly linked to property crime. Both analyses confirmed a significant inverse relationship between poverty and violent crime. Mehlum et al. (2005)

posit that this could be due to the high cost of beer, but later studies find that if beer consumption is included in, this effect disappears.

According to Bourguignon (2001), crime is a societal cost associated with economic development irregularities. Increased crime rates are a general consequence of both relative poverty and income inequality. The study analyse US economies data and highlight Latin America due to its certain characteristics. This state observed high crime rate and more unequal income distribution. The process of economic growth also observes high volatility. The study declares crime a high expense attached to inequality and poverty and it can be even more severe in recession periods in those economies where existing crime rate is huge. Bourne (2011) analysed crime in Jamaica economy. This research considers a wide range of macroeconomic variables as potential causes of violent crime. Unfortunately, neither joblessness nor poverty were shown to be important in attempting to account for the occurrence of criminal activity.

The correlation and causality between inequity and crime have been estimated by Fajnzylber et al. (2002). More than 30 economies are represented in the study's panel data. Rising inequality has been proven to be a significant factor in both cross-country and within-country studies of crime rates. Neumayer (2005) examines the worldwide connection between crime and poverty. A lack of correlation between poverty and criminality was found. Inequality in income and criminal activity may both be influenced by factors that are external to individual economies, according to the findings. In order to determine whether or not crime is related to a community's economic status, Patterson (1991) analyzed data from 57 tiny societies. Based on the data, it appears that income disparity has no bearing on criminal activity in societies. In addition, it was revealed that poverty and population density were major factors in violent crime. By looking at 25 different districts in Punjab (Pakistan) from 2005 to 2011, Anwar et al. (2015) analyze what factors lead to property and violent crimes. The report breaks down total criminal activity into two categories: property crimes and violent crimes. All sorts of crime were found to be influenced by population density and criminal profits.

The effects of tax policy on crime are studied by Chamlin et al. (1999). The study suggests that a significant rise in tax deductions is to blame for the alarming rise in violent crime. For property crimes, the impact is much smaller. According to the research, changing taxes in order to encourage social charity has the opposite effect of what was hoped for: an increase in criminal activity. The study recommends lowering the tax rate and introducing new charitable giving programs to reduce crime. According to Martinez (1991), tax amnesty and crime are bad for the American economy. Tax amnesty is the forgiveness granted to the disobeyed persons rather punishment. After policy about tax is cleared then further disobeyers have both civil and criminal penalties. The study declares tax evasion a crime. However, the study is not certain about long time effects of amnesty. According to Zimring and Hawkins (1993), economic inequality was a major contributor to crime during the 1980s US crisis. The significance of deregulation in describing those losses is highlighted in the report. As a result, they can't tell if criminal behavior stems from individual choices or systemic problems.

The role of economic considerations in explaining crime is examined by Wu and Wu (2012).

In order to understand the correlation between income disparities, unemployment, and criminal activity, this research builds models. The established model is strongly supported by empirical evidence from the British economy. The study finds

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that unemployment and income inequality provide a satisfactory explanation for criminal activity. The research concludes that property crime, in particular, is an economic phenomenon motivated by financial benefits. Burdett et al., (2004) provide an extended investigation of the same relationship in the context of the job search. Quantitative methods are used alongside the establishment of many equilibria that detail the emergence of various outcomes. The study concludes that expanding unemployment benefits causes both joblessness and criminal activity to rise. The special equilibrium situation that reveals the non-monotonous connection between crime and poverty is also examined. Arshad et al. (2016) use data collected in Punjab (Pakistan) between 2005 and 2013 to assess the effect of economic factors on crime. Spending on healthcare and law enforcement has been shown to contribute to an upward trend in crime rates. Government spending was also proven to be a factor in reducing crime. The research indicates that decreasing crime in Punjab can be accomplished by increased funding for primary education rather than for police.

More police officers and more inmates are two key factors that Levitt (2004) found to reduce crime. The study explains why crime rates fell from 1991 to 2001 in the United States' economic sector. The analysis found no evidence that these factors affected crime rates in the past and concluded that increased police recruiting will reduce crime going forward. According to research by Haider and Ali (2015), when all districts of Punjab, Pakistan are taken into account, rising rates of unemployment and population density are responsible for the country's rising crime rate. The report calls for reforms to government policy, such as reorganizing police departments, lowering poverty rates, and limiting population growth and corruption, in order to bring about a decline in crime rates. From 1975 to 2007, Gillani et al. (2009) analyze the connection between crime and economic indicators in Pakistan's economy. According to the results, unemployment, low wages, and poverty all have a role in fueling criminal activity. From 1980 to 2010, Aurangzeb (2012) examines crime in Pakistan's economy. According to the findings, lower crime rates are associated with rising GDP and pay rates. There is a direct and substantial relationship between population growth and changes in the crime rate. Based on the findings, the report recommends reducing political power to improve security. The existing literature has indicated many economic and non-economic factors that affect crime in economies. However, as the researchers we have to pick the parsimonious model that cares for degrees of freedom as well. Hence, the focus of present study remained on unemployment rate, income inequality, government expenditures and taxes to explain the crime rate in long run.

3. Economic theory and econometric methodology

Economists analyse the economy and comes with the theories that explains the economic reality well. These theories could be verified further by establishing the econometric models. These models provide information, forecasting and a guide to policy makers. There are many factors that affect some particular factor of economy, however certain factors are assumed constant in one model or taken as endogenous in the other model. Crime occurs mostly as constant whereas its effects lie in the root of each economic indicator. Since crime is effected by both economic factors and government policies. What could be deriving factors behind crime in the long run? This study points out some economic and government policy factors that drive crime in Pakistan economy. Many studies including Aurangzeb (2012), Asghar et al., (2016) and Raphael and Winter-Ebmer (2001) have focused on crime and points out different

economic factors. Following the directions from existing literature on crime, this study has chosen unemployment rate, income inequality (gini coefficient) and government policy variables, all in the form of percentage of GDP, are defence expenditures, loans and grants, direct and indirect taxes. The data is taken from Pakistan economy over the period from 1980 to 2020. Data on variables is taken from different issues of Economic Surveys of Pakistan, Statistical Year Book and World Development Indicators.

Macroeconomic variables have a unit root problem, as discovered by Nelson and Plosser (1982) using time series data. They conclude that determining whether or not a unit root exists is a useful way to validate the data's source. There are a few key distinctions between stationary and non-stationary data. Temporary shocks in stationary time series data eventually fade away, and the series revert to their long-run averages. While stationary time series data can recover from shocks, non-stationary data cannot. A number of unit root tests exist in the literature to determine if a time series is stationary. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) unit root test was used for this analysis (1981). The stationarity problem in the time series data makes its regression estimates vulnerable and the researchers then seeks the cointegration among the variables. Various cointegration tests are available in the literature for use in econometric research. The Engle-Granger (1987) test, the Johansen (1991/1992) Maximum Likelihood test, and the Johansen-Juselius (1990) test are the three most well-known and widely-used cointegration tests. These studies aid in empirically indicating the long term link between variables through the Vector Error Correction model (VECM) that they established. To study the interrelationships between crime, unemployment, defense spending, income inequality (GINI coefficient), government aid (grants and loans), government revenue collection (direct taxes and excises), and taxation (both direct and indirect), we apply a vector error correction model (VECM. This technique of analysis also allows multiple equilibriums through trace statistics that identify the number of long run relationships, or there could be no long run relationship detected at all. Using VECM, we would be able to identify that is there any empirical evidence of causality, uni-directional or multi-directional, between government policies and crime rate in Pakistan. Later, the diagnostic tests would discuss the reliability of the estimates.

4. Empirical Results and Discussion

The pre-requisite for applying VECM is checking stationarity of the variables. The results of Augmented Dickey-Fuler test of all variables in the model are reported in the table 1. The empirics has revealed that all the variables included in this study are not stationary at level. However, they became stationary at first difference. Hence their order of integration is **I(1)**. Since variable have unit root the ordinary least squares would lead to spurious regression. In order to avoid spurious results, it is pivotal to estimate the cointegration among variables of the model.

Table 1: Unit Root Estimation

	At level	At First Difference
Variables	T-Statistic(Prob.*)	T-Statistic(Prob.*)
LCr	-0.842(0.8065)	-6.513(0.0000)
Unrate	-1.638 (0.4633)	-5.131 (0.0000)
DirT	-1.695(0.4339)	-5.977(0.0000)
DefX	0.044(0.9620)	-5.616 (0.0000)
INI	-2.572(0.0990)	-5.188(0.0000)

*MacKinnon (1996) one-sided p-values.

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The next step after checking stationarity is the determination of the lag length. Lag order determines not only the number of lags to be included in the model but also it affects the degrees of freedom. The more lags are included in the model on the cost of loss in the degrees of freedom. Therefore, it is desirable to obtain the optimal lag order. This optimal lag order is usually taken by using the information criteria. The lowest values of information criterion, in most of the criteria, indicates the optimal lag length of the variables included in the model. The results of different information criteria used in this study are given in table 2. We have initially tested for the 4 lags. The optimal lag length is one that indicated by the AIC, HQIC and SBIC; only LR indicate the four lags to be included that we have ignored as the other three criteria are pointing to include only one lag. It also intend to save loss of degrees of freedom.

Table 2: Lag Length Selection Criteria

Lag	LR	AIC	HQIC	SBIC
0		6.573	6.650	6.791
1	389.33	-2.597*	-2.137*	-1.291*
2	36.897	-2.243	-1.399	0.151
3	47.739	-2.182	-0.954	1.301
4	48.185*	-2.133	-0.521	2.438

Note: * indicates optimal lag length.

Further, we use Johansen Tests for Cointegration to check long run relationships in the model. The Johansen Tests for Cointegration provides this benefit that we decide on the basis of data that how many long run relationships exist among the variables. The results of our dataset are depicted in table 3. We have allowed the five long run relationships as there are five variables in the model. In addition, we have also allowed the zero cointegration equation. The Trace Statistic has indicated that there is only one long run relationship exist among our variables, the maximum eigen values also affirms the same results (indicated in the appendix). Hence, there is only one cointegration, long run, relationship exist among the reported crimes, direct taxes, unemployment rate, income inequality and defence expenditures.

Table 3: Results of Johansen Tests for Cointegration

Maximum Rank	LL	Eigen-value	Trace Statistic	5% Critical value
0	61.244		72.711	68.52
1	75.816	0.526	43.568*	47.21
2	88.364	0.474	18.472	29.68
3	95.375	0.302	4.449	15.41
4	97.557	0.106	0.087	3.76
5	97.600	0.002		

Note: * indicates selected rank

The only long run relationship exist in our model is given in equation 1. The equation indicate that, in the long run, the crime rate is positively affected by income inequality and unemployment rate, and it is negatively affected by defence expenditures and direct taxes. All the variables are highly statistically significant, at 1 percent level of

significance, which provide empirical evidence in the favour of long run relationship (details are given in the appendix).

$$LCr = 23.070 + 1.116 INI + 0.177 Unrate - 0.295 DefX - 0.696 DirT \quad (1)$$

Equation 1 is indicating the long run relationship that describes the impact of income inequality, unemployment rate, defence expenditures and direct taxes on crime rate of Pakistan. The coefficient of unemployment rate indicates the positive relationship with crime. It describes that the increase in unemployment rate would translate into increase in the crime rate in the long run. When the people are unemployed, they do not earn their living from legitimate activities and take the road of crimes. It is also affirmed in other studies including Haider and Ali (2015), Omotor (2009) and Altindag (2012). The result assures that Pakistan economy is suffering from crime due to the rising unemployment rate in the economy. It is also depicted by the recent surge in the data for crime in which the year 2020 took a spike from 2019 due to the unemployment rise in the era of COVID-19 lockdowns.

The estimate of income inequality (gini coefficient) also depicts the positive relationship with the crime rate, its magnitude is the largest among other coefficients. It highlights that the income inequality has the strongest effects on the crime rate among unemployment rate, defence expenditures and direct taxes. A small change in the income inequality could possibly bring a large change in the long run equilibrium rate of crime. This finding is in line with Kelly (2000) and Fajnzylber et al., (2002). The income inequality is somehow a weak measure of disparity among the population. If there is higher inequality, the poor feel deprived and many of them could choose to be criminals to get the higher standard of living that their status quo is living. Therefore, we can say that the rise in income inequality is causing an incentive for the poor to commit crimes in Pakistan over the long run.

The estimate of defence expenditures, as the percentage of GDP, is revealed negative. It indicates that with increase in the defence expenditure the crime rate reduces in Pakistan economy. The defence expenditures have received mixed results in literature as Arshad et al., (2016) indicate that defence expenditures increases crimes while Levitt (2004) finds the defence expenditures decreases crimes. The differences in results could possibly emerge from the difference in quality of institutions in the economies that in turn determines the efficiency of defence expenditures. We have found the strong evidence that the rise in defence expenditures, as the percentage of GDP, is decreasing crime rate over the long run in Pakistan. This result could also suggest that the defence expenditures allocated by the government in the past have been used elegantly, to improve law and order, which in turn has reduced the crimes over the long period of time.

This study has found direct taxes, as the percentage of GDP, decreases the crime rate in long run in the Pakistan economy. Its coefficient is larger than the defence expenditure. This finding is against the argument that increase in taxes leads to cause economic misery which leads to increase crime (Aurangzeb, 2012). It is because we have discriminated between direct and indirect taxes while the earlier literature dealt both as the same. The direct taxes are imposed on the middle and higher income brackets in Pakistan. The direct taxes support the poor by exempting them from the tax structure. However, the indirect taxes in the country do not discriminate between the rich

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and poor. Hence, it would be interesting to check if there is a long run relationship between crime rate and the indirect taxes. We have tried to find out such long run relationship that includes indirect taxes but the Johansen Tests for Cointegration has declined the existence of any long run relationship existence when we replaced direct taxes with the indirect taxes in the model (results of this model lag length criteria and cointegration test are depicted in the appendix). Similarly, we have attempted to replace the defence expenditures by the development expenditures of the government and loans and grants as well but Johansen Tests for Cointegration also provided zero long run equations indicating no such relationship existence in the long run (results of these models lag length criteria and cointegration tests are reported in the appendix).

The VECM also allows us to find the impulse response functions of the variables of the model. Since we have only one long run relationship that explains crime, so the unemployment rate, direct taxes, income inequality and defence expenditures will affect the crime. Moreover, the relationship between the variables will remain limited to the one-way in which the impulse in any of the four indicators would affect the crime rate. It is interesting to note that VECM usually indicates many equations in the long run but in our study the indication of one equation highlights that the crime is the only factor whose long run relationship could be explained using the unemployment rate, direct taxes, income inequality and defence expenditures; and there is no other dimension of the long run relationship exists indicating crime rate is not affecting the government economic policies.

The results of impulse response functions of our study are reported in figure 2 (table of impulse response function is in the appendix). We find that the impulse in defence expenditures leads to decrease crimes sharply in Pakistan and the decrease is sharp till first five years. Later, the decreasing trend remains there but only slightly as compared to its values before. It indicates that the rise on defence expenditures, as the percentage of GDP, decreases the crime rate in Pakistan even after ten years. Similar results are found for the direct taxes, as the percentage of GDP, where the one time rise (impulse) in the direct taxes leads to decrease the crimes in Pakistan over the long run. The trend shows rapid fall in the crime rate in the earlier years which become static approximately after six years but still it maintains the negative path. On the contrary, according to our estimate, a sudden rise in the income inequality increases the crime rate in the country. The figure indicates that crime increases, by an impulse in income inequality, initially as an increasing rate until seven years approximately and then at the decreasing rate. The results of unemployment rate impulse are also somehow similar to that of income inequality. However the magnitude of these results differ much as the impulse in income inequality has higher impact on the crime rate than that of impulse in unemployment rate. It is very interesting to note that the magnitudes of impulse response functions are small. However, the variables of analysis are in the form of natural logarithm (crime), percentage of GDP (direct taxes and defence expenditures), rate (unemployment rate) and index (gini coefficient); that means a smaller value in them would be actually very large when these values are converted into numbers.

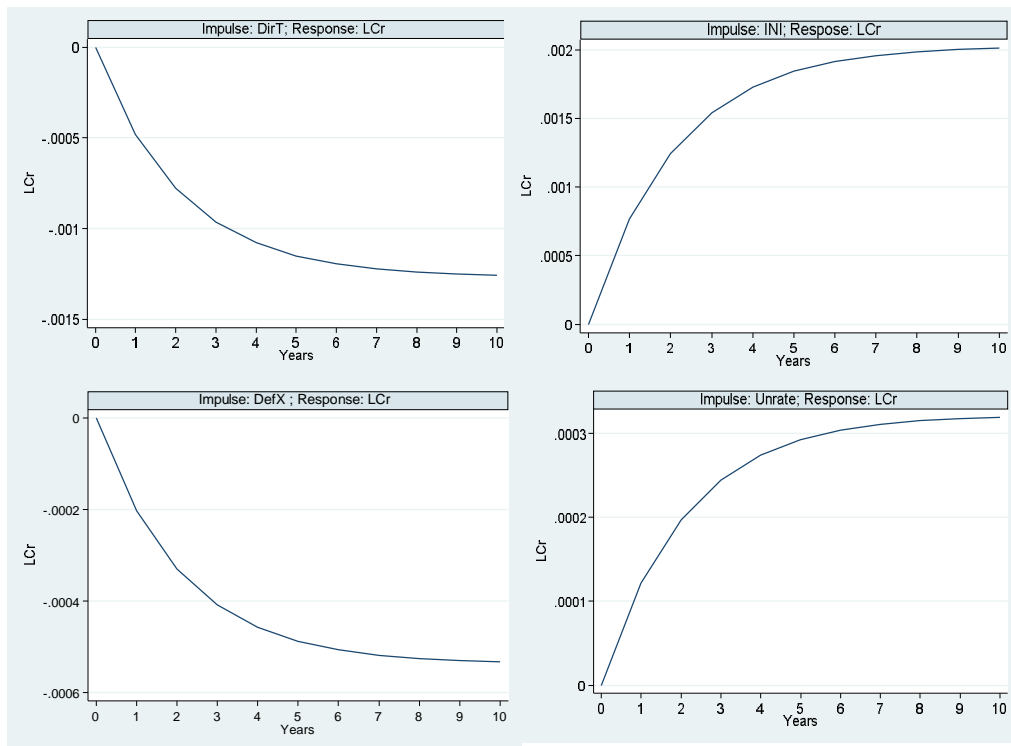


Figure 2: Impulse Response Functions (Author’s calculations)

5. Diagnostic Tests

After estimating the cointegration, it is inevitable to discuss the nature of residuals that are obtained in the process. Hence, we first test for the autocorrelation through Lagrange-multiplier test (results are indicated in the appendix); its results revealed that there is no autocorrelation in the residuals obtained from this study. Then, we check for the normality, skewness and kurtosis by applying various tests (results are in appendix). The results of Jarque-Bera test declared normality in residuals distribution. The variables used in the analysis have also shown no divergence in the analysis of skewness and kurtosis. Therefore, we can say that our estimates are empirically valid and reliable. Moreover, the cointegration relationship we have found has come up from the empirical analysis of data and not by any error in the estimation process.

6. Conclusions

The present study explores the impact of unemployment rate, income inequality and government policies regarding taxes and expenditures on crime in Pakistan from 1980 to 2020. The results of Augmented Dicky Fuller test ensured data non-stationarity on level and stationarity on the first difference that lead towards cointegration. Johansen Tests for Cointegration revealed only one long run relationship among the variables. The Vector Error-Correction model affirms that crime possess unidirectional long run relationship with the government policies, in which crime is determined by the policies, in which crime is explained by the other variables. We further applied the Lagrange-multiplier test to investigate the autocorrelation and Jarque-Bera estimates are used for

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checking normality of residuals; the results of sooner indicated no autocorrelation and the latter ensured the normality in the residuals estimated from our model.

The empirics have revealed that an increase in both unemployment rate and income inequality leads to increase the crime rate in Pakistan, between them the latter has stronger impact on crime rate. Further, the empirics highlighted that rising direct taxes and defence expenditures decreases the reported crime rate, in long run, in Pakistan. The impulse response function has indicated that the rise in direct taxes are decreasing crimes more than the rise in defence expenditures. In addition, the impulse responses also indicate that one-time rise in direct taxes and defence expenditures have spill-over effects over the long period of time. Similarly, the one-time rise in unemployment rate and income inequality continue to increase crime rate after several years. In a nutshell, the study revealed that government policies regarding direct taxes and defence expenditures play a significant role in determining long run trends of crime rate in Pakistan. Therefore, we suggest to policy makers to increase both defence expenditures and direct taxes to control effectively the crime surge in the country.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Appendix Stationarity

dfullerINI

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
Variable: INI Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller		
		----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-2.572	-3.648	-2.958	-2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0990.

. dfuller d.INI

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39
Variable: D.INI Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

Dickey–Fuller

statistic	Test	----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-5.188	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerunrate

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
 Variable: unrate Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller ----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-1.638	-3.648	-2.958	-2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.4633.

. dfullerd.unrate

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39
 Variable: D.unrate Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller ----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-5.131	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerdefexpgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
 Variable: defexpgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller ----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	0.044	-3.648	-2.958	-2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.9620.

. dfullerd.defexpgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39
 Variable: D.defexpgdp Number of lags = 0

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H0: Random walk without drift, $d = 0$

statistic	Test 1%	Dickey–Fuller critical value -----		
		5%	10%	-----
Z(t)	-5.616	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerdirtytaxgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
Variable: dirtytaxgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, $d = 0$

statistic	Test 1%	Dickey–Fuller critical value -----		
		5%	10%	-----
Z(t)	-1.695	-3.648	-2.958	-2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.4339.

. dfullerdirtytaxgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39
Variable: D.dirtytaxgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, $d = 0$

statistic	Test 1%	Dickey–Fuller critical value -----		
		5%	10%	-----
Z(t)	-5.977	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerloansgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 42
Variable: loansgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, $d = 0$

statistic	Test 1%	Dickey–Fuller critical value -----		
		5%	10%	-----
Z(t)	-1.560	-3.634	-2.952	-2.610

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.5038.

. dfullerd.loansgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 41
 Variable: D.loansgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller		
		----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-8.894	-3.641	-2.955	-2.611

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerindtaxgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
 Variable: indtaxgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller		
		----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-1.167	-3.648	-2.958	-2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.6876.

. dfullerd.indtaxgdp

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39
 Variable: D.indtaxgdp Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller		
		----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-7.246	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

. dfullerlnc

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 40
 Variable: lncrime Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller		
		----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	

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Z(t) -0.842 -3.648 -2.958 -2.612

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.8065.

. dfuller.d.lcr

Dickey–Fuller test for unit root Number of obs = 39

Variable: D.lcr Number of lags = 0

H0: Random walk without drift, d = 0

statistic	Test	Dickey–Fuller ----- critical value -----		
	1%	5%	10%	
Z(t)	-6.513	-3.655	-2.961	-2.613

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000.

VECM

lcrINUnratedefexpgdpdirtaxgdp

Lag-order selection criteria

Sample: 1984 thru 2020

Number of obs = 37

Lag	LL	LR	df	p	FPE	AIC	HQIC	SBIC
0	-116.611			.000493	6.57355	6.6503	6.79124	
1	78.0543	389.33	25	0.000	5.2e-08*	-2.59753*	-2.13705*	-1.29138*
2	96.5028	36.897	25	0.059	8.0e-08	-2.24339	-1.39918	.151215
3	120.372	47.739	25	0.004	1.1e-07	-2.1823	-.954353	1.30077
4	144.465	48.185*	25	0.004	1.7e-07	-2.13324	-.521563	2.43828

* optimal lag

Endogenous: lcrINUnratedefexpgdpdirtaxgdp

Exogenous: _cons

Rank of VECM

Johansen tests for cointegration

Trend: Constant Number of obs = 39

Sample: 1982 thru 2020 Number of lags = 2

Maximum rank	Params	LL	Eigenvalue	Trace statistic	Critical value 5%
0	30	61.244304	.	72.7112	68.52
1	39	75.815939	0.52634	43.5679*	47.21
2	46	88.363988	0.47454	18.4718	29.68
3	51	95.375444	0.30202	4.4489	15.41
4	54	97.5566	0.10583	0.0866	3.76
5	55	97.5999	0.00222		

Maximum rank	Params	LL	-----Eigenvalue----- Maximum	Critical value 5%
-----------------	--------	----	---------------------------------	-------------------------

0	30	61.244304	.	29.1433	33.46
1	39	75.815939	0.52634	25.0961	27.07
2	46	88.363988	0.47454	14.0229	20.97
3	51	95.375444	0.30202	4.3623	14.07
4	54	97.5566	0.10583	0.0866	3.76
5	55	97.5999	0.00222		

 * selected rank

Vector error-correction model

Sample: 1981 thru 2020	Number of obs =	40
	AIC	= -2.626857
Log likelihood = 66.53714	HQIC	= -2.413131
Det(Sigma_ml) = 2.47e-08	SBIC	= -2.035749

Equation	Parms	RMSE	R-sq	chi2	P>chi2
D_lcr	2	.064141	0.3124	17.26842	0.0002
D_INI	2	.055345	0.3534	20.76496	0.0000
D_unrate	2	.705272	0.2156	10.44191	0.0054
D_defexpgdp	2	.341212	0.1071	4.557572	0.1024
D_dirtaxgdp	2	.306485	0.0917	3.837126	0.1468

Short Run Estimates

	Coefficient	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	

D_lcr						
_ce1						
L1.	-.000688	.0309276	-0.02	0.982	-.0613051	.059929
_cons	.0422057	.0105254	4.01	0.000	.0215763	.0628351

D_INI						
_ce1						
L1.	.0947398	.0266865	3.55	0.000	.0424353	.1470442
_cons	.0163725	.009082	1.80	0.071	-.0014279	.0341729

D_unrate						
_ce1						
L1.	1.01948	.3400695	3.00	0.003	.3529559	1.686004
_cons	.0416607	.1157336	0.36	0.719	-.1851729	.2684943

D_defexpgdp						
_ce1						
L1.	.2510496	.1645266	1.53	0.127	-.0714166	.5735158
_cons	-.1034131	.0559922	-1.85	0.065	-.2131559	.0063296

D_dirtaxgdp						
_ce1						
L1.	-.2370982	.1477819	-1.60	0.109	-.5267453	.052549

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```

      |
_cons | .0760539 .0502936 1.51 0.130 -.0225197 .1746276
-----

```

Cointegrating equations (Long Run)

```

Equation   Pvars  chi2  P>chi2
-----
_ce1       4 188.7866 0.0000
-----

```

Identification: beta is exactly identified

Johansen normalization restriction imposed

```

beta | Coefficient Std. err.   z  P>|z|  [95% conf. interval]
-----+-----
_ce1  |
lcr   | 1
INI   | -1.116166 .346521 -3.22 0.001 -1.795335 -.4369975
unrate | -.1770789 .0375174 -4.72 0.000 -.2506117 -.1035461
defexpgdp | .2950243 .0479709 6.15 0.000 .2010031 .3890455
dirtaxgdp | .6964574 .1209223 5.76 0.000 .4594542 .9334607
_cons | 23.06969
-----

```

$$LCr = 23.070 + 1.116 INI + 0.177 Unrate - 0.295 DefX - 0.696 DirT$$

Diagnostic testing

Autocorrelation

Lagrange-multiplier test

```

-----+-----
| lag | chi2  dfProb> chi2 |
-----+-----
| 1 | 15.5299 25 0.92811 |
| 2 | 20.2444 25 0.73389 |
| 3 | 26.6857 25 0.37177 |
| 4 | 16.8262 25 0.88800 |
| 5 | 15.3348 25 0.93320 |
| 6 | 26.0325 25 0.40587 |
-----+-----

```

H0: no autocorrelation at lag order

Normality Test for Residuals

Jarque-Bera test

```

-----+-----
| Equation | chi2  dfProb> chi2 |
-----+-----
| D_lcr | 0.600 2 0.74063 |
| D_INI | 1.581 2 0.45362 |
| D_unrate | 0.976 2 0.61376 |
| D_defexpgdp | 2.895 2 0.23518 |
| D_dirtaxgdp | 0.316 2 0.85379 |
| ALL | 6.369 10 0.78339 |
-----+-----

```

Skewness Test for Residuals

Skewness test

Equation	Skewness	chi2	df	Prob > chi2
D_lcr	-.30456	0.587	1	0.44341
D_INI	.45	1.282	1	0.25744
D_unrate	.32155	0.655	1	0.41839
D_defexpdp	-.67538	2.889	1	0.08919
D_dirtaxgdp	.0125	0.001	1	0.97490
ALL		5.415	5	0.36740

Kurtosis Test for Residuals

Kurtosis test

Equation	Kurtosis	chi2	df	Prob > chi2
D_lcr	2.9092	0.013	1	0.90905
D_INI	2.5658	0.299	1	0.58482
D_unrate	3.4506	0.321	1	0.57071
D_defexpdp	2.9388	0.006	1	0.93861
D_dirtaxgdp	2.5539	0.315	1	0.57453
ALL		0.954	5	0.96618

Impulse Response Function (IRF)

Results from crime

Step	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	irf	fir	fir	fir
0	0	0	0	0
1	.000768	.000122	-.000203	-.000479
2	.001246	.000198	-.000329	-.000777
3	.001543	.000245	-.000408	-.000963
4	.001727	.000274	-.000457	-.001078
5	.001842	.000292	-.000487	-.00115
6	.001914	.000304	-.000506	-.001194
7	.001958	.000311	-.000518	-.001222
8	.001986	.000315	-.000525	-.001239
9	.002003	.000318	-.000529	-.00125
10	.002014	.000319	-.000532	-.001257

- (1) irfname = crime, impulse = INI, and response = lcr.
- (2) irfname = crime, impulse = unrate, and response = lcr.
- (3) irfname = crime, impulse = defexpdp, and response = lcr.
- (4) irfname = crime, impulse = dirtaxgdp, and response = lcr.

Investigating the impact of government economic policies on crime in Pakistan

Equations Showing no Long Run Relationships (Tries that have not revealed significant but as a reference given in appendix)

Trail 1 (adding indirect taxes replacing direct taxes)

```
. varsoclrINlunratedefexpgdpindtaxgdp
```

Lag-order selection criteria

```
Sample: 1984 thru 2020                Number of obs = 37
+-----+
|Lag| LL   LR   df  p   FPE   AIC   HQIC  SBIC |
+-----+
| 0| -136.929                .001477  7.67182  7.74857  7.88951 |
| 1|  41.5514  356.96  25  0.000  3.7e-07*  -.624399  -.16392*  .681751* |
| 2|  55.2023  27.302  25  0.341  7.5e-07  -.010933  .833278  2.38367 |
| 3|  77.6641  44.924  25  0.009  1.1e-06  .126267  1.35421  3.60933 |
| 4| 116.662  77.996*  25  0.000  7.9e-07  -.630377*  .981299  3.94115 |
+-----+
* optimal lag
Endogenous: lcrINlunratedefexpgdpindtaxgdp
Exogenous: _cons
```

Rank of VECM (Zero revealed: no long run relationship exists)

```
. vecranklcrINlunratedefexpgdpindtaxgdp, trend(constant) lags(1) max
```

Johansen tests for cointegration

```
Trend: Constant                Number of obs = 40
Sample: 1981 thru 2020        Number of lags = 1
```

```
-----
Maximum              Critical
rank Params      LL Eigenvalue Trace value
                        5%
0  5  21.726155      .  44.9672*  68.52
1  14 31.228878     0.37820  25.9618  47.21
2  21 38.224912     0.29517  11.9697  29.68
3  26 41.40865     0.14716  5.6022  15.41
4  29 43.685796    0.10761  1.0479  3.76
5  30 44.209768    0.02586
-----
```

```
-----
Maximum              Critical
rank Params      LL Eigenvalue Maximum value
                        5%
0  5  21.726155      .  19.0054  33.46
1  14 31.228878     0.37820  13.9921  27.07
2  21 38.224912     0.29517  6.3675  20.97
3  26 41.40865     0.14716  4.5543  14.07
4  29 43.685796    0.10761  1.0479  3.76
5  30 44.209768    0.02586
-----
```

* selected rank

Trail 2(adding loans and grants replacing direct taxes)

```
. varsoclrINlunratedefexpgdplloansgdp
```

Lag-order selection criteria

```

Sample: 1984 thru 2020                Number of obs = 37
-----+-----
|Lag| LL   LR   df  p   FPE   AIC   HQIC  SBIC |
-----+-----
| 0| -31.4832          4.9e-06 1.97206 2.04881 2.18976 |
| 1| 141.459 345.89 25 0.000 1.7e-09* -6.02484 -5.56436* -4.71869* |
| 2| 163.822 44.725 25 0.009 2.1e-09 -5.88226 -5.03805 -3.48765 |
| 3| 192.274 56.904 25 0.000 2.2e-09 -6.06886 -4.84092 -2.5858 |
| 4| 225.719 66.891* 25 0.000 2.2e-09 -6.52536* -4.91369 -1.95384 |
-----+-----
* optimal lag
Endogenous: lcrINunratedefexpgdplonsgdp
Exogenous: _cons
    
```

Rank of VECM (Zero revealed: no long run relationship exists)
 . vecranklcrINunratedefexpgdplonsgdp, trend(constant) lags(1) max

Johansen tests for cointegration

```

Trend: Constant                Number of obs = 40
Sample: 1981 thru 2020        Number of lags = 1
    
```

Maximum rank	Params	LL	Eigenvalue	Trace statistic	Critical value	5%
0	5	104.89108	.	62.9586*	68.52	
1	14	121.83709	0.57143	29.0666	47.21	
2	21	130.63669	0.35595	11.4674	29.68	
3	26	134.03659	0.15633	4.6676	15.41	
4	29	136.03081	0.09490	0.6792	3.76	
5	30	136.37038	0.01684			

Maximum rank	Params	LL	Eigenvalue	Trace statistic	Critical value	5%
0	5	104.89108	.	33.8920	33.46	
1	14	121.83709	0.57143	17.5992	27.07	
2	21	130.63669	0.35595	6.7998	20.97	
3	26	134.03659	0.15633	3.9884	14.07	
4	29	136.03081	0.09490	0.6792	3.76	
5	30	136.37038	0.01684			

* selected rank

Trail 3 (adding development expenditures replacing defence expenditures)

```

. varsoclrINunratedevexpgdpdirtaxgdp
    
```

Lag-order selection criteria

```

Sample: 1984 thru 2020                Number of obs = 37
-----+-----
|Lag| LL   LR   df  p   FPE   AIC   HQIC  SBIC |
-----+-----
| 0| -151.751          .003292 8.47302 8.54976 8.69071 |
| 1| 23.3548 350.21 25 0.000 1.0e-06* .359201* .81968* 1.66535* |
    
```

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```
| 2 | 41.3429 35.976 25 0.072 1.6e-06 .738224 1.58244 3.13283 |
| 3 | 70.9497 59.214 25 0.000 1.5e-06 .489204 1.71715 3.97227 |
| 4 | 96.7225 51.546* 25 0.001 2.3e-06 .447433 2.05911 5.01896 |
```

+-----+

* optimal lag

Endogenous: lcrINunratedevexpdpdirtaxgdp

Exogenous: _cons

Rank of VECM (Zero revealed: no long run relationship exists)

. vecranklcrINunratedevexpdpdirtaxgdp, trend(constant) lags(1) max

Johansen tests for cointegration

Trend: Constant

Number of obs = 40

Sample: 1981 thru 2020

Number of lags = 1

```
-----+-----
Maximum                               Critical
rank Params      LL Eigenvalue  Trace  value
                               statistic 5%
0   5  -1.4238468      . 54.2631* 68.52
1   14 10.464877      0.44813 30.4856 47.21
2   21 17.231853      0.28705 16.9516 29.68
3   26 21.850598      0.20621  7.7142 15.41
4   29 25.686647      0.17453  0.0421  3.76
5   30 25.707678      0.00105
```

```
-----+-----
Maximum                               Critical
rank Params      LL      Eigenvalue----- value
                               Maximum 5%
0   5  -1.4238468      . 23.7774 33.46
1   14 10.464877      0.44813 13.5340 27.07
2   21 17.231853      0.28705  9.2375 20.97
3   26 21.850598      0.20621  7.6721 14.07
4   29 25.686647      0.17453  0.0421  3.76
5   30 25.707678      0.00105
```

* selected rank

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Article Info

Received: November 02 2022

Accepted: November 10 2022

How to cite this article:

Arshad, S., Naeem, M. Z., Spulbar, C., Birau, R., Ninulescu, P. V. (2022). Investigating the impact of government economic policies on crime in Pakistan. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 56 – 79.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Modern Tools in the Assembly of Political Platforms and Perception

Lavinu Costinel Lăpădat¹⁾

Abstract

Contemporary media instruments that are mainly fuelled by the internet and the social media are critical in constructing robust political constructs or platforms and should they fail to achieve this undertaking, they can undoubtedly, at least, put forward a modified perception of that political element. In other words, if the media does not have enough power to construct a solid political movement, it can, at least, make it appear to be solid and imbedded with legitimacy and representativity. The generative infrastructure required to assemble and coagulate a coherent political public image draws its strength from within an interactional paradigm that creates a bond between the political communicator and the target audience for which the political message of that communicator is designated.

Keywords: *media, perception, internet, legitimacy, dissemination.*

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The desire to achieve a normative ideal of the media system relied on a redefinition of the standard reporting of events focused on a strong synchronicity between the information infrastructure and the strategic objectives of communicating the political image. The Internet and social networks have generated a new emergence of civic responsibility at the level of demographic structures that especially target youth or people with a high degree of training and education. This re-correlation of certain categories previously passive or simply resigned to participate actively in the civic mechanism of political communication is in itself a technical achievement that derives not from the structural or ideological change of the message, but from the intrinsic methodology of disseminating a certain act of political communication.

The Internet has popularized and redefined the connection of the new generation with contemporary society, generating new procedures and approaches regarding communication in a democratic state. Through the new methodologies, information is no longer provided arbitrarily by certain opinion-formers, the Internet user becoming his/her own opinion-former, using a personal ideological filter or even personal convenience sources to access information or templates at any time of the day or night, related to information according to certain desired or personal research impulses. Forums have become the new agora of the 21st century, allowing those who previously had no voice, a free framework of expression supported and encouraged by anonymity and the total absence of any form of censorship: "New information technologies have generated alternative forms of communication during the campaign period, forms that give voters much greater autonomy. Rather than waiting passively, and most likely in vain, for the media to provide them with interesting topics, Internet users have the opportunity to search for the information they are interested in about a candidate or another. This newfound autonomy increases the overall meaning of political involvement. Moreover, the use of the Internet increases the interest in the campaign and increases the civic commitment of the runner that cannot be influenced by traditional methods of propaganda. Also, the Internet reduces campaign costs for candidates, costs that are much lower than public baths (in the Romanian space) or contacting voters by phone (in the American space). Therefore, whether it is about costs or reducing the distance between the candidate and the electorate, the Internet remains an effective form of mobilizing the electorate." (Roșca, 2007: 72-73)

The large-scale use of the Internet as a medium for disseminating political message has generated an infrastructural set designed to allocate complex mediations associated with relations between voters and the elected. The chaotic growth of the Internet does not represent a simple evolution in the establishment of socio-political connections, but rather a revolution in the manner in which individuals communicate with each other in the context of the perceived relevance of electoral interaction. Online media platforms do not represent a simple development of the effectiveness of transmitting the political message, they are synonymous with a widening of the range of interaction and the ways of implementing these functionalities. The Internet, along with traditional mass media, represent technological intermediaries that facilitate the elective ways associated with leaders and related ideologies.

The Internet is not a mere evolution of political communication, but a revolution in itself of the intrinsic nature of communication. Social networks foster abrupt metamorphoses in redefining the relationship trajectories between citizens and those who request their vote, a new selective dimension of the informational framework

being generated, the voter having the privilege of benefiting from information uncensored and unconditioned by media trusts or audio-visual regulatory bodies.

Media platforms in the online sphere have a monolithic axis of address. If before, a political communication approach generated by the candidate focused on the connective rigor between him and the receiving environment, with the advent of the Internet the receiver himself became an opinion former, thus generating a multiplicity of images impossible to quantify or control. Lăpădat and Lăpădat believe that: "Media is a means of expression and, at the same time, a means of influence and possible means of pressure. For some scholars, it acts in the sense of uniformity and conformism, for others, in the way of diversity and complexity" (Lăpădat and Lăpădat, 2019: 70). The structure of the campaign came to be supported or criticized in very complex ways in the virtual environment to the detriment of the traditional promotional messages on television or posters stuck legitimately or not on buildings.

A functional deficit of the Internet is constituted by the correlation of the reception of the informational flow on the principles of an informational recycling of an ideological nature that is consistent with one's own desires or political affinities. The purpose of the Internet was to provide a substantial amount of information to somehow detach itself from the worn-out trappings of television and newspapers. An exponential increase, both quantitative and qualitative, of access was supposed to be synonymous with an ideological liberation of the receiving mass. Despite the undeniable qualities of the Internet in terms of quantity and speed of dissemination, there has been widespread over-indoctrination of political message consumers. Although the amount of information present online is huge, presenting and representing in its entirety and absolutely uncensored all political perspectives, the individual has shown a paradoxical vulnerability to self-indoctrination, selecting from that huge mass of information strictly those data that fit his own set of values, leading thus towards a consolidated limitation of the availability of versatility of the ideological variations of reception: "The existence and accessibility of a huge amount of information online puts traditional media in the background. People now have the opportunity to directly reach a multitude of information sources, bypassing conventional channels. Facilitating access to different and often opposing viewpoints should encourage communication between ideologies. However, things are not quite like that. The abundance of information generates a paradox: society's capacity to produce information exceeds people's capacity to consume it. Thus, individuals select about the same set of information that they were used to selecting. Moreover, there are voices that claim that the possibility offered by new media platforms to personalize the online environment will lead to the isolation of individuals from opposing viewpoints. Therefore, the question arises whether the virtual public space facilitates the polarization of society on ideological grounds." (Sălcudeanu, Aparaschivei and Toader, 2009: 24)

The methodology of the information dissemination functionality proposed by the traditional media systems offered a communication paradigm based on the passivity of the receiver, on the technical inability to strengthen an interactive network through which the public itself becomes a secondary communicator capable of holding accountable the direct generators of the information. The information proliferation mechanism was quite simply built, focused on an agglutination of polemics between the opposing candidates, and the resulting ideas reached the receiving sphere of the passive media consumer who chose to agree or disagree with one or more points of view presented. Another compromising factor lies in the membership of the political message

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facilitator at the level of a trust or state apparatus. Televisions or newspapers, whether independent or state-owned, are controlled or at least guided based on as real political or economic realities as possible. This direct control has the potential to compromise the veracity or relevance of a message, often offering truncated or out-of-context perspectives, and sometimes even refusing to offer certain viewpoints or realities. When the facilitator of the political message is controlled, then that control will also translate to the media product, thus being the case of a compromise of the purpose and ideals of communicational deontology.

The new research in the media field tends to explore the solution potential offered by the use of the Internet as a fair and representative alternative because we are dealing with an information sphere that has thousands or millions of users, being, at least theoretically, impossible to control or to subjugate. Although this state is actually a reality, we can still talk about a structural deficiency of the online environment that cannot be corrected or limited because it is an imperfection of the collective social mind. Just as in the case of television people choose to watch only those stations that are in harmony with their own grid of ideological values, the same danger applies to the Internet, where individuals are often liable to turn to those sites, blogs or areas of social networks that mirror your own opinions and beliefs. In this respect, Sălcudeanu, Aparaschivei and Toader believe that: “We observe, therefore, that in practice, political blogs can sometimes shape the media agenda, but, in order to succeed, the information transmitted must obey the logic of news selection, typical of traditional mass media. The rediscovery of the Internet has given rise to hopes and opinions that the new medium of communication represents both a panacea for the problems generated by the inequity of the classical public sphere and a solution to increase political participation among citizens. On the other hand, a major problem that threatens the political blogosphere is represented by the principles behind the coagulation of online communities. It turns out that many of the laws that govern the behaviour of the electorate in the real world are also found in the online environment.” (Sălcudeanu et al., 2009:23)

The advantage of the Internet in political communication lies in the fact that it is not under the limiting spectrum of censorship, existing even outside of any regulatory formulas. Any receiver can in turn become a transmitter of a political message, requiring only basic access to the Internet and some knowledge of the field of communication. Social media platforms have become a powerful unifying force, encompassing the communicative energies of millions of people. This very organization, however, can be a sign of a vulnerability, as there is already an organized framework that can be subject to content management and censorship in accordance with the privacy terms and conditions regarding access to that site.

The versatility of communicational circularity at the level of the Internet, the potential of transiting both message generating and receiving areas means that every person who accesses the Internet or a certain social network can choose to be a simple message consumer, a pseudo-administrator who evaluates and may manage access to certain information or may even be an independent or organized creator of media content. The lack of a centralized system of control constantly expresses the concern that the content of political communication may fall into ridicule or focus on irrelevant spheres of ideological proliferations. This, however, represents the true vector of legitimacy of the Internet, in that there is no longer a question of centralization based on the plutocratic criteria provided by the elites.

The quality or content of political communications will be regulated strictly according to the desired reception and generation of internet users. In terms of media communication, the Internet thus becomes the fairest and most representative form of mirroring the concerns of a society. The quantitative and qualitative complexity of the material distributed and redistributed expresses a superior dimension of inclusion, ensuring that no voice remains unheard or unrepresented, each political current having its own descriptive and analytical area, and if it does not exist, the potential recipients of the political message they can become content creators themselves, acting as legitimate compensators for potential representational imbalances in the online sphere.

The disadvantage of carrying out the political image campaign through the use of the Internet lies in the still low level of this form of communication at the level of the masses of voters. Another clear disadvantage is that brought about by the fact that only certain categories of age and professional training consider the Internet to be a viable source of communication and information. There are a number of monolithic categories of individuals who have a strong impact on the political scene, but cannot be influenced by the online environment because, deliberately or not, they have no connection to it. In the opinion of researcher Viorica Roșca: “The only downside to Internet campaigning is the relatively small number of voters who use this source of access to political discourse. In the US, only a third of voters use this means of information. Electronic communication offers a degree of exposure of the candidates close to that obtained through the technique of party propaganda, but much lower than in the case of telephone communication. In Romania, the Internet usage rate is even lower. The question of whether the Internet can contribute to the democratization of political communication does not have a certain or affirmative answer. Electronic communication can expand the deliberative practices of political actors and media institutions, but there is a risk that the Internet will only provide new visibility practices for political actors and increasingly diverse private spaces. On the other hand, Internet web pages of political parties or candidates attract a relatively small audience. When we consider the role that the Internet plays in the democratization of political communication, one of the main issues that arise is that of political content.” (Roșca, 2007: 73)

The future of political communication via the Internet is almost guaranteed by the propensity of the new generation to accept a very fast system of transmitting information independently of the traditional constraints of mass media. The emergence of this new communication infrastructure facilitates the creation of a global community according to new ideological cultural criteria or political interests. The fact that we are talking about an independent global network, which is not under the jurisdiction of a particular country or interest group, turns the Internet into a communication system as close as possible to the ideals of independence and rejection of manipulation or censorship. Though the media is fundamentally designed as a conduit for information, it is often misused to distort and reshape political perspective: “The media is a complex mixture but it is very clearly delimited by communication factors based on manipulation and subjectivity, which are hidden behind ideological mirages such as deontology or professional integrity” (Lăpădat and Lăpădat, 2020: 125-126). As a first impact, the Internet meant a counter to the political messages provided by traditional mass media that were under the financial jurisdiction of trust interests or internal control mechanisms. There is also a strong downside to political communication via the Internet. If enhanced freedom and lack of centralized censorship or regulation means

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superior access to democratic ideals of communication, then we must also accept the other side of the coin.

The total freedom of ideas applies including to negative or extremist ideologies, generating a fertile communication field for harmful policies that in the traditional media environment would have been eliminated by means of the regulations in the audio-visual field. Correlating this appetite with the almost normal status of the Internet, which involves not assuming communication, there is already a strong framework of democratic dysfunctions at the level of political communication. Ideally, the concealment of the identity of the online political communicator reflected strong considerations focused on enhancing the need for anonymity as an absolute guarantor of freedom of expression. This anonymity, however, correlated with the absence of regulatory courts and the elimination of state authorities in the online environment, meant the generation of an environment conducive to the development of harmful reflexivity in terms of political addressing.

The development of the Internet and the blogosphere can be associated with the correlations of meaning related to the notions of rural and urban. When the online environment was in its infancy, communication of any nature, including politics, was done in a natural way, the actors of communication knew each other and acted exactly as in a small community of people. The exponential development of the online phenomenon produced, in addition to the advantages of increasing the informational beach, also an ideological segregation or isolation, giving birth to groups or groupings that communicated in opposition to each other: "Interestingly, the same trend of polarization is directly proportional to the size of the blogosphere. However, it is a natural tendency, especially if we draw a parallel with the evolution of a village, which over time becomes a city. If, initially, the inhabitants all knew each other, with the increase of the locality, the community also atomizes. The same happens in the case of political blogs, especially since here the criterion on the basis of which a group is formed is very clear: ideology. I specify that the isolation between the two groups is not total, there are a number of links based not so much on agreement as on the exchange of information." (Sălcudeanu et al., 2009:75)

The final product of the restrictive mechanisms for accessing the Internet is constituted by the arbitrary composition of a new plutocratic class argued by the fact that the individuals who preoccupy themselves with political content through the Internet are generally those who benefit from a higher level of education and prosperity. These individuals are generally active middle-class people of a young age, often prone to active involvement in political movements, engaging in civic communications, and mobilizing almost instantly using the Internet or social networking sites.

The Internet is creating an eclectic new sphere of journalism or evaluation of the political message. An opinion on the Internet cannot be censored, and the independent voices of analysis that do not find their representativeness or access in traditional media systems, find in the virtual environment an unrestricted or intimidated communication bridge. If in traditional mass media censorship or attempts at censorship can lead to the elimination or limitation of certain communication packages, this restrictive approach can transform online communicators into modern martyrs of political dissent, doing nothing more than popularizing their voice, generate an augmented area of online dissemination aimed at counteracting the abuses of the traditional media apparatus.

Political communication facilitated by the information infrastructure of the Internet has experienced a structural advantage in the free dissemination of specific messages and ideologies. The communication system and the creation of correlations and dissemination links means an intrinsic difficulty in controlling a system without a leader. The arbitrary elimination of a communicator will bring about a counter-reaction that will produce a hundred other similar communicators, perhaps even more virulent and motivated in the composition of the act of communication. If we add to this framework of systemic benefits and the dimension of the new element of the Internet, then we are dealing with an event framework that is difficult to control or at least to quantify. It is a very difficult challenge to control something built not to be controlled, incompatible with this by its very structure, and if the respective sphere of communication is new and almost unknown, then we can talk about an almost impossible endeavour.

The Internet's substantial impact on political communication, and especially its demographic relevance among young people and intellectuals, has nonetheless attracted intense energies, resources, and concerns from parties on the political scene. Clearly, the future of political campaigns will be determined and decided online and not by worn-out methodologies such as the printed newspaper or election posters pasted on rusted shacks. This means that political forces are already acting to dissect the essential functionalities of online communication and design new image and campaign strategies capable of seizing this medium that is not yet exploited to its full potential. The strategy deficiencies will initially be compensated by allocating substantial, human and financial resources that can create opinion nuclei on the Internet capable of mimicking the naturalness or idyllic freedoms of this address area. Researcher Paul Aparaschivei notes that: "The online environment has seen a spectacular evolution worldwide, translated into millions of new users every year. The Internet was quickly adopted by the advertising, public relations and, inevitably, political marketing industries. At the same time, traditional media messages have adapted to the characteristics of the online environment, acquiring values such as relevance, brevity and, very importantly, interactivity. Starting in 2004, the blog began to be used as a means of unconventional promotion of the politician on the Internet. The first to quickly adopt this new media were American politicians. With the success shown by some as bloggers, the interest of other political people around the world in spontaneous communication, characterized by naturalness, has increased significantly." (Sălcudeanu et al., 2009:78)

The potential for success based on a strong hub of communication and innovation has turned the online environment into a focus of analysis for traditional mass media. The natural tendency to adopt those functionalities capable of dominating the political communication landscape of the future has determined a vast transition of traditional communication structures to the virtual space. Some newspapers have completely abandoned the printed version, opting for a strictly virtual existence. Televisions have chosen to coexist, at least at the moment, in both spheres of communication, but increasing their presence and relevance on the Internet with each passing day. This redefinition of political communication vectors is synonymous with the creation of new political communication strategies based on re-examining the role of the Internet in influencing democratic mechanisms. Civic movements are fuelled by social media conglomerates, with sites like Facebook and Twitter promoting or legitimizing collective perceptions of social action in the name of shared political ideologies.

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The multiplicity of perspectives offered by the online environment has forced candidates or even elected politicians to be much more careful in cultivating their own image. If in the traditional media there were perhaps a few dozen journalists who made up the voice of civil society, in the current conditions of representativeness through social networks we have millions of receivers who can at any time turn into independent voices capable of criticizing or supporting the measures or actions of candidates who request or they already have the popular vote. The Internet tends to balance the scales of surveillance and legitimacy from the voters to the elected, from the receiving table to the so-called elites of the political class. The explosion of new online media paradigms is not a simple revolution in the mechanisms of dissemination and evaluation of the political message, but also a systemic transformation of political life in general.

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Article Info

Received: November 07 2022

Accepted: November 14 2022

How to cite this article:

Lăpădat, L. C. (2022). Modern Tools in the Assembly of Political Platforms and Perception. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 80 – 87.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Information and Practices on Resilience and Environmental Governance in the EU 8th EAP (2022): Assessment of Data Accesibility, Policy Development and Human Resources

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Abstract:

The present article is based on the research and analysis of the guidelines and principles of the European Union (EU) legislation in the field of resilience and environmental governance (EG) considering the Environment Action Programme (EAP) launched on April 2022, namely Decision (EU) 2022/591 (2022) and entering into force on May 2, 2022. The study uses complex tools addressing the areas of the: (i) the principles and conceptualization; (ii) the social outcomes (SO), social practices and public participation; (iii) the policy outcomes (PO), the access to information and environmental impact; (iv) the monitoring framework. The research uses the legal documents provided by EUR-Lex, here including: (a) the Decision (EU) 2022/591 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 April 2022 on 8th EAP (April 2022); (b) the Directive 2001/42/EC (2001) and the Directive 2011/92/EU (2011) concerning the programmes and projects in environmental areas; (c) the Communication From the Commission regarding the “monitoring framework” for the 8th EAP (Brussels, July 2022). In conclusion, the study is aimed to present the new approaches to EG and resilience status ensuring a community-based perspective focusing policy developments and human resources.

Keywords: *resilience, environmental governance, EU, policy, human resources, development.*

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Introduction

The study on resilience and environmental governance (EG) in the European Union (EU) focuses the field of the Environment Action Programme (EAP) launched on April 2022 within the Decision (EU) 2022/591 (2022) entered into force on May 2, 2022. The research points the areas of the EU's 8th EAP (2022), namely: (i) the principles of equity [EU's 8th EAP Recital (33)]; (ii) the "precautionary principle" [8th EAP Article 1(5)]; (iii) the principle of "preventive action" [EU's 8th EAP Article 1(5)]; (iv) the principles of "rectification of pollution at source" [EU's 8th EAP Article 1(5)]; (v) the conceptualization of the objectives [EU's 8th EAP Article 2, Article 3]; (vi) the social outcomes (SO), social practices and public participation [EU's 8th EAP Recitals (3), (4), (13), (14), (18), (19), (35), (36)]; (vii) the policy outcomes (PO) [EU's 8th EAP Recitals (3), (4), (11), (19), (26), (27)]; (viii) the access to information and environmental impact [EU's 8th EAP Recitals (34), (35), (39), (40)]; (ix) the monitoring framework [EU's 8th EAP Recitals (3), (8), (19)].

Methodology, principles and conceptualization of "availability" and "data"

The legal research focuses on the systematic approach to: (1) the EU provisions, the priority objectives and the specific principles and (2) the concepts and legal provisions involving the monitoring procedure and the EU EG [EU's 8th EAP Article 3(ah)(ii)]. In this context, the debate over the EG priority objectives and the preventive measures (Quinlan, Berbés-Blázquez, Haider, Peterson, 2016: 677-687; Bennett, Satterfield, 2018; Cullen-Knox, Eccleston, Haward, Lester, Vince, 2017: 3-13; Driessen, Dieperink, van Laerhoven, Runhaar, Vermeulen, 2012: 143-160; Himley, 2008: 433-451) is linked in recent literature to the leadership engagement in the field of: (a) the urban resilience and EG (Therrien, Normandin, 2020: 320-341; Ruseva, Foster, Arnold, Siddiki, York, Pudney, Chen, 2019); (b) the risk encounters (Urquiza, Amigo, Billi, Calvo, Gallardo, Neira, Rojas, 2021); (c) the consequences of Covid-19 (Burlea-Schiopoiu, Ogarca, Barbu, Craciun, Baloi, Mihai, 2021; Motoi, Popescu, 2021: 135-143; Olimid, Georgescu, Gherghe, 2022: 38-51;.); (d) the environmental measures and policies (Jordan, Lenschow, 2010: 147-158; Vlăduțescu, 2014); (e) EG and public participation (Newig, Fritsch, 2009: 197-214; Olimid, D.A., Olimid, A. P., 2022a: 114-121); (f) the environmental objectives and practices developing a two-step analytical framework focusing biodiversity and resources (Nilsson, Zamparutti, Petersen, Nykvist, Rudberg, McGuinn, 2012: 395-423); (g) the approaches to "risk governance" (Renn, Schweizer, 2009: 174-185); (h) the research agenda of the EP integration and the objectives envisaging the framework of the "climate policy integration" (Runhaar, Driessen, Uittenbroek, 2014: 233-246).

In addition, the research tools will involve: (i) the area of research of the statutory provisions of the EU EG objectives [EU's 8th EAP Article 3(a)]; (ii) the policies and reports concerning the reference domains [EU's 8th EAP Recital (19)]; the environmental policies; the social practices and the economic strategies; (iii) the implementation of standards of "transparency" and "public participation" and the reference to "access to justice" [EU's 8th EAP Article 3(a)]. Moreover, the legal analysis is based on the following guidelines of the 8th EU EAP: (a) "intergenerational responsibility" [EU's 8th EAP Article 2(1)] and (b) "better regulation" [EU's 8th EAP Article 3(d)(iv)]. In this context, this section focuses on a review of the following concepts: "governance", "sustainability" and

“resilience” [EU 8th EAP Article 1]. All three concepts focus on the priority actions and goals including the recent advances in the monitoring framework and the “adaptive capacity” [EU 8th EAP Article 2(2)(b)]. Nevertheless, the “intergenerational responsibility” is defined using a multilateral framework applying to: (i) the conditions and measures [8th EAP Article 1(1-5)]; (ii) the main objectives and the thematic strategies highlighting “biodiversity”, “ecosystems”, “resilience” and the “well-being economy” [EU 8th EAP Article 2(1)(2)]; (iii) the integrated objectives of the EU policies, namely Directive 2008/99/EC (2008) and the relevant principles of “judicial cooperation” and “law enforcement” [EU 8th EAP Article 3(c)]; (iv) the monitoring policies and systemic evaluation of indicators here including the two axes of policies: the “environment-social” nexus and the “environmental-economic” nexus [EU 8th EAP Article 4(2)]; (v) the assessment of actions and indicators during the “mid-term review” [EU 8th EAP Article 5]; (vi) the evaluation of outcomes [EU 8th EAP Article 6].

Furthermore, the other two terms (“availability” and “data”) refer to the basic procedure of monitoring and evaluation aimed to apply to a range of actions namely: “systemic analysis”, “systemic change” and “data collection” [EU 8th EAP Article 4].

In this context, the EG and the resilience framework focus also on the capacity to achieve the UN 2030 goals and the Paris agreement objectives [EU 8th EAP Recital (13)]. The four steps implemented by the EU’s 8th EAP are the following:

(1) the EU “environmental performance” framework [EU’s 8th EAP Article 3(a)];

(2) the “financial and human resources” allocation plan [EU’s 8th EAP Article 3(b)];

(3) the “judicial cooperation” area [EU’s 8th EAP Article 3(c)];

(4) the “policy development” area [EU’s 8th EAP Article 3(d)] here including the implementation of the objectives enabled by:

(4.1.) the Article 2 of the EU’s 8th EAP;

(4.2.) the Directive 2011/92/EU (2011) focusing on the environmental outcomes and processes, the Directive 2001/42/EC (2001) and the legal provisions of the 8th EAP Article 3(d)(ii)] focusing both on:

(a) Defining the conceptual framework of the “environmental assessment” [Directive 2001/42/EC, Article 2(b)], the “environmental report” [Directive 2001/42/EC, Article 2(c)] and the “public” approach [Directive 2001/42/EC, Article 2(d)] and

(b) Establishing the requirement for the “environmental report” and the relevant data related to the consultations procedure of the Members States [Directive 2001/42/EC, Articles 5-6];

(4.3.) the “healthy environment” and the “people's well-being” in accordance with the provisions of the EU 8th EAP Article 3(d)(iii);

(4.4.) the ‘Think Sustainability First’ initiative [according to the EU 8th EAP Article 3(d)(iv)];

(4.5.) the new legislative provisions considering the environmental impact [according to the EU 8th EAP Article 3(d)(v)];

(4.6) the stakeholders' contributions and evaluation [according to the EU 8th EAP Article 3(d)(vi)].

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2. Social outcomes (SO): social practices and public participation

To achieve social development, the EU's 8th EAP recognizes two approaches to the environment policy (EP) and sustainable development (SD) considering the recent scientific developments aimed to ensure the role of social practices, public participation and social engagement (Olimid, D.A., Olimid, A. P., 2022b: 122-131), communication (Mitu, 2021: 134-145) and the environmental sustainability (Avelino, 2017: 505– 520; Olimid, D.A., Olimid, A. P., 2022a: 114-121; Çop, Olorunsola, Alola, 2021, 671-682; Olimid, A. P., Olimid, D.A., 2022: 182-190). The two perspectives of EP & SD integrate the socio-economic and environmental factors here including the “social well-being” and the “health natural resources base” [according to the EU 8th EAP Recital (3)].

The nexus between social practices and public participation is underpinned using the reference to “social inclusion”, “social issues” and health [according to the EU 8th EAP Recital (3)]. The three determinants are aimed to focus the SO by integrating an illustrative design of the social norms, processes and progresses. It also enables:

(1) on the institutional level, the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 [according to the EU 8th EAP Recital (3)];

(2) at the regional level and also local level, the focus is on EP decentralisation and coordination [according to the EU 8th EAP Recital (35)];

(3) on public participation level, the social status acknowledges the topics of social impact [EU 8th EAP Recital (18)], social factors [EU 8th EAP Recital (37)], “social partners” [according to the EU 8th EAP Article (3)(aa)] and human resources here focusing: human rights and health [EU 8th EAP Recitals (27) and (28), Article (3)(o)] and human activities and resources [EU 8th EAP Article (3)(b)].

Furthermore, the EU 8th EAP (2022) thereby develops and helps to identify a social framework aimed to assess the strategies and resilience actions in the field of social progress and well-being. Additionally, the 8th EAP (2022) provides a social point of reference for the social objectives and initiatives following the relationship between social actors: “citizens, communities and other stakeholders” [according to the EU 8th EAP Article (3)(aa)]. Before performing this point of reference, the 8th EAP (2022) also registers: (i) the development of social practices and principles; (ii) the implementation of measures and policies used to address social factors. In this direction, the EAP (2022) also designs an illustrative framework for the cooperation between the public and private sectors across multiple dimensions: EP, EG, administration etc.

Based on this social assessment, the EU 8th EAP (2022) also guides the framework of the social strategy to focus the social determinants and partners. In the area of SO, the main goal of the 8th EAP (2022) is to provide the organizational and functional setup of “social well-being” aimed to increase the resilience status of the communities, civil society and Member States [according to the EU 8th EAP Article (3)(aa)(ac)]. On this social assessment, the EU's 8th EAP (2022) maps the framework of the social strategy approaching an innovative nexus between accessibility of policies and data, mobilization of social partners and implementation of technologies.

Moreover, the main objective of the EAP (2022) is to provide the structural setup of the action programme aimed to increase the resilience status of communities, to build new monitoring policies and to ensure sustainability (see Figure 1. 8th EAP: Conceptual framework for building resilience focusing the resilience status and the sustainability approach).

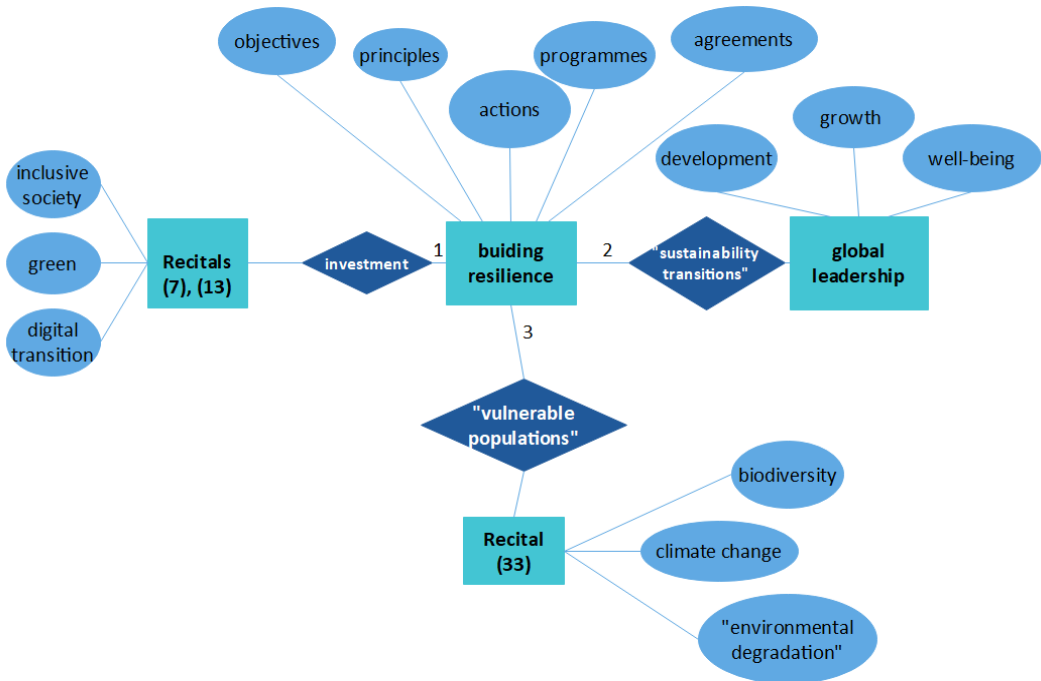


Figure 1. 8th EAP: Conceptual framework for building resilience

Source: Authors' own compilation based on the legal provisions and conceptualization of the 8th EAP Decision (EU) 2022/591 (2022)

3. Policy outcomes (PO): access to information and environmental impact

Another focus of the research is also to place on the policy outcomes (PO) as recent literature lays down the role of the integrated policies and the need to strengthen the measures for multilateral approaches: (a) the policy development and environmental conditions (Armitage, Dzyundzyak, Baird, Bodin, Plummer, Schultz, 2018: 3-14); (b) the evaluation and monitoring of EG (Bennett, Satterfield, 2018); (c) the environmental impact (Mahmoudi, Sayahnia, Esmailzadeh, Azadi, 2018: 567-570); (d) the documentation of the EU legislation in various areas (Georgescu, Olimid, Olimid, Georgescu, Gherghe, 2017); (e) information and institutional resilience (Georgescu, Olimid, Gherghe, 2022: 82-96). In this direction, both short-term and long-term outcomes of the EU 8th EAP point to the resilience policies and measures here including: (i) the nexus between health policies and EG [according to the EU 8th EAP Article (3)(g)(o)]; (ii) the focus on systemic changes and the need to mobilize the policy agenda [according to the EU 8th EAP Article (3)(x)]. A review of the policy indicators also highlights the multifaceted impacts on the EP in the sectors of the sector of data information and technologies ensuring public participation and cooperation at EU institutional levels: national, regional and local.

The EU's 8th EAP (2022) refers also to the assessment of policy indicators and development and the status and access to information [according to the EU 8th EAP Recitals (34)(39)(40) and Article 3(b)]. It also refers to the "quantitative and qualitative tools" aimed to identify the path for understanding the role of interoperability and accountability through the EU actions, plans and programmes [according to the EU 8th EAP Article 4(5)(g)(h)(i)].

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Through considering resilience-building actions and processes from the stage of priority actions to a more advanced level, the EU 8th EAP (2022) reveals also the supporting mechanisms and policy tools, namely: (i) the governance measures and mechanisms [EU 8th EAP Article 1(1)]; (ii) the monitoring procedures and mechanisms [EU 8th EAP Recitals (3) and (8)]; (iii) the evaluation framework and tools and the “measurable” determinants [EU 8th EAP Article 3(r)]. For the implementation of the step, the EU 8th EAP (2022) resilience strategy assesses the following activities that should be considered and implemented: (i) the identification of priority goals and the environmental impact following the EU Green Deal [EU 8th EAP Recital (5)]; (ii) the achievement of the Next Generation EU Recovery Plan [8th EAP Recital (7)]; (iii) the review and development of policies in the area of the “climate-neutral”, “natural capital” and “the state of the environment” [EU’s 8th EAP Recital (16)]; (iv) the development of a global network based on the principles of responsibility and capability [8th EAP Recital (33)]; (v) the monitoring of the “inclusive transition towards sustainability” [EU’s 8th EAP Recital (36)]; (vi) the evaluation of the “sustainability, well-being and resilience” [EU’s 8th EAP Recital (36) and Article 1(4)]; (vii) the reporting of the “environmental risks” [8th EAP Article 2(1)]; (viii) the assessment of “resilience to climate change” [EU’s 8th EAP Article 2(1)]; (ix) the monitoring of the nexus between “adaptive capacity”-resilience-prevention-preparedness [EU’s 8th EAP Article 2(2)(b)] (see Figure 2. 8th EAP: Conceptual framework for environment policy focusing policy development, governance and monitoring).

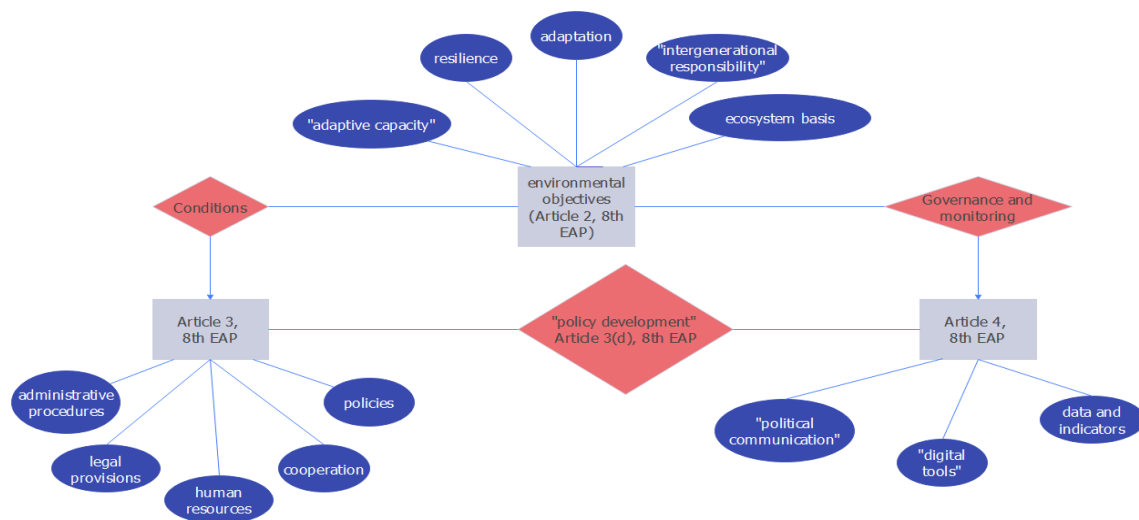


Figure 2. EU 8th EAP: Conceptual framework for environment policy

Source: Authors’ own compilation based on the legal provisions and conceptualization of the 8th EAP Decision (EU) 2022/591 (2022)

4. Monitoring framework for the 8th EAP

In July 2022, a monitoring framework was launched with the aim to develop a measuring instrument for the EU 8th EAP progresses and objectives (26 July 2022) within the Communication entitled “Measuring progress towards the attainment of the

Programme's 2030 and 2050 priority objectives" (COM/2022/357 final, 2022). In addition, the EU 8th EAP assesses several intermediate stages as a network of 26 interconnected indicators, here including: climate change (CC), biodiversity and living conditions (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4). Moreover, the EAP includes particular references to the indicators, targets and sources namely: (1) CC mitigation and adaptation (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicators 1-4); (2) free environment, pollution and health impact (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicators 7-8); (3) biodiversity and health (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicators 9-11); (4) energy encounters (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicators 12-16); (5) "eco-innovation" and sustainability (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicators 17-21); (6) "environmental wellbeing" (COM/2022/357 final, 2022, Point 4, Indicator 26). The EAP can also be framed conveniently via the "mid-term review" [EU 8th EAP Article 5(1)(2)]. Furthermore, it also frames the relevant guidelines in accordance with the legal provisions of Article 4 enabling the monitoring and reporting phases [EU 8th EAP Article 4(1-6)].

Conclusions

In conclusion, the EU 8th EAP reflects both the priority policies and measures for the EG and policy development, and also the resilience status and human resources. It also provides tools and instruments aimed to define the policy implementation at all levels and to understand the EG as a multidimensional framework focusing on social actors, citizens, communities and institutions.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Article Info

Received: October 14 2022

Accepted: October 22 2022

How to cite this article:

Olimid, A. P., Olimid, D. A. (2022). Information and Practices on Resilience and Environmental Governance in the EU 8th EAP (2022): Assessment of Data Accessibility, Policy Development and Human Resources. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 88 – 97.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The integrity incident such as incompatibility of certain categories of public office with the status of individual trader - the role of the National Integrity Agency (I)

Lavinia Elena Stuparu¹⁾

Abstract:

The National Agency for Integrity was established in Romania in 2007 as an autonomous administrative authority, with legal personality, operating at national level. Based on and within the limits of the incidental legal framework, this authority exercises a number of responsibilities regarding unjustified assets, conflicts of administrative interests, conflicts of criminal interests or incompatibilities. Among them, the finding and sanctioning of the violation of the legal regime of incompatibilities provides the analysis context for the incompatibility between certain categories of public functions and the status of individual trader. The levels of discussion concern technical, procedural aspects, driven by the role of the status institutions that may intervene in case of such an incident of integrity, as well as conceptual aspects, determined by a normative evolution of the notion of individual trader.

Keywords: *National Integrity Agency, integrity incident, incompatibility, public office, individual trader.*

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Incidental regulatory framework and rationale for the existence of the National Integrity Agency (A.N.I.)

Since 2007, the legal framework in Romania has ensured the establishment and functioning of the National Integrity Agency (Agency) at national level as an administrative means to fight corruption. The drafting of the legal regime of this stand-alone authority in legislative terms, with legal personality, arose from and was driven by the process of Romania's accession to the European Union, in the context of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism established by the European Commission. At the time of its establishment, its specialized mission made it the only institution of its kind in the EU and non-EU area.

In the national legal order, at the time of the adoption of the Law no. 144/2007 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the National Integrity Agency, there were already normative acts governing the legal institutions that became the "raw material" necessary for the performance of the National Integrity Agency's activity and fulfilment of the purpose. Therefore, examples are the Law no. 115/1996 on the declaration and control of the assets of dignitaries, magistrates, certain persons with managerial and control functions and public servants, the Law no. 78/2000 on the prevention, detection and punishment of corruption and Law no. 161/2003 on some measures to ensure transparency in the exercise of the public office, public functions and in the business environment, prevention and punishment of corruption,

The text of the Law no. 144/2007, faced with the declaration of unconstitutionality for a large number of articles by the Decision of the Romanian Constitutional Court no. 415/2010 (for an analysis of the legal implications of this Decision, Putinei, 2010: 83-88), was succeeded by the promulgation of the Law no. 176/2010 on integrity in the exercise of public functions and dignities, for the amendment and completion of the Law no. 144/2007 on the establishment, organization and functioning of the National Integrity Agency, as well as for the amendment and completion of other normative acts. Thus, together with the Law no. 176/2010 (in its current form), the Law no. 184/2016 on the establishment of a mechanism to prevent the conflict of interest in the procedure of awarding public procurement contracts and the Law no. 129/2019 on preventing and fighting against money laundering and terrorist financing, have completed the category of normative instruments essential in establishing the legal regime of the National Integrity Agency. Last but not least, the exercise of its powers is also impacted by other relevant laws in the administrative field such as the Administrative Code (approved by GEO no. 57/2019), the Law no. 393/2004 on the status of local elected officials or the Law no. 96/2006 on the status of deputies and senators.

The purpose for which the Agency was established, adopted by the legislature in article 8 paragraph 1 of the Law no. 176/2010, is to ensure the integrity in the exercise of public office and functions and to prevent institutional corruption. In order to achieve this goal, the Agency has an adequate institutional framework and exercises the numerous powers provided for by the applicable legislation.

Qualified as the main component for administrative investigation of corruption in Romania (Ghinea, Moilat, 2015:238 et seq.), the Agency exercises responsibilities in the assessment of asset declarations, data and information on assets, as well as changes in assets, incompatibilities and potential conflicts of interest in which the persons exhaustively mentioned in the law may find themselves (article 1 paragraphs 1 and 2 of Law 176/2010), during the period of holding public offices and public dignities.

As an operationally independent institution, the National Integrity Agency exercises its specialised administrative control in compliance with the principles with which it has been vested by the legislature, namely legality, confidentiality, impartiality, operational independence, expeditiousness, good administration, the right of defence, as well as the presumption of lawful acquisition of assets,

General considerations on the core mission of the National Integrity Agency

In Romania, the Agency continues to be the only institution with exclusive competence in managing the system of declarations of assets and interests, as well as in identifying, preventing and fighting against integrity incidents, but not in sanctioning them, the coercive power in this matter being the prerogative of several entities. In carrying out its activity, the Agency follows the legal procedures for ensuring the integrity and transparency in the exercise of public functions and dignities, collaborates with domestic and foreign entities and the results of the steps taken are subject to judicial control under the law.

In relation to the national regulatory framework, the Agency's core mission is to assess integrity incidents such as conflicts of interest, incompatibilities or unjustified assets identified at the level of public administration. Clearly, the common element in all three situations is the alteration of integrity as a basic principle of professional conduct.

In the synthetic view of the National Integrity Agency, implemented in one of the guides it has developed and published on its official website, a public official is deemed in *conflict of interest when*, by virtue of the public office he or she holds, he or she takes a decision or participates in the taking of a decision in which he or she also has a personal interest, while a public official is in *incompatibility* if he or she holds more than one office at the same time, although prohibited by law (see *Guide on incompatibilities and conflicts of interest*, 2019 : 4, 10).

A complex legal institution, *the conflict of interest* is the subject of nuanced approaches in European and national legislation, but also in the case law of Romanian courts or the Court of Justice of the European Union. In practice, the conflicts of interest criminalised by law have legal implications mainly in the administrative and criminal fields.

Administrative conflict of interest, regulated by the Law no. 161/2003 (articles 70-79, articles 99-100), designates the case in which the person exercising a public dignity or a public function has a personal interest of a financial nature, which could influence the objective performance of the duties incumbent upon him/her according to the Constitution and other relevant normative acts. The Agency's competence includes conflicts of interest (with the nuances imposed by the legislature for each category of public function/dignity concerned) concerning parliamentarians, members of the Government and those exercising other public functions in the central and local public administration (e.g. prefect, sub-prefect, secretary of state), all the categories of local elected officials (e.g. mayors, deputy mayors, local councillors, presidents and vice-presidents of county councils, county councillors), civil servants, persons exercising public dignity and public functions within the authorities and institutions under exclusive parliamentary control (e.g. members of the Court of Auditors, the Ombudsman), the President of Romania, presidential advisors and state advisors in the Presidential Administration, as well as magistrates.

The conflict of interest related to public procurement, regulated by the provisions of the article 59 from the Law no. 98/2016 on public procurement, refers to any situation in

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which the members of the staff within the contracting authority or of a procurement service provider acting on behalf of the contracting authority, who are involved in the performance of the award procedure or who can influence its outcome, have, directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest, which could be perceived as compromising their impartiality or independence in the context of the award procedure. Within the meaning of the article 72 from the Law no. 99/2016 on sectoral procurement, a conflict of interest is any situation in which the staff of the contracting entity or of a procurement service provider acting on behalf of the contracting entity who are involved in the award procedure or who may influence its outcome have, directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which could be perceived as compromising their impartiality or independence in the context of the award procedure.

In both cases, therefore, the mere perception or appearance of a conflict of interest in a public procurement or sectoral procurement procedure must be addressed and remedied in accordance with the law. In this regard, the Integrated Information System for the Prevention and Identification of Potential Conflicts of Interest, set up within the A.N. I. pursuant to the Law no. 184/2016, operates on the basis of the data entered in the integrity forms drawn up and registered during the procedures for the award of public contracts or sectoral procurement contracts. The analysis of the information contained in these forms is carried out by integrity inspectors, who form a separate structure within the A. N. I., according to their duties, tasks and responsibilities. The exercise of their duties shall be carried out exclusively by reference to the persons referred to in the article 1 of the Law no. 176/2010, as holders of the obligation of integrity and transparency in the exercise of public functions and dignities.

Criminal conflict of interest has been criminalised by the current Romanian Criminal Code (article 301), in the chapter allocated to service offences, under the heading "use of office to favour certain persons". According to the normative text invoked, such an offence is committed by a public official who, in the exercise of his or her duties, has performed an act by which a financial benefit was obtained for himself or herself, for his or her spouse, for a relative or a relative up to and including the second degree, and is punishable by imprisonment from 1 to 5 years and prohibition to hold public office for a period of 3 years (for an analysis of the offence, Lazăr, 2016: 6-23, Diaconescu, Răducanu, 2017: 175-182). Unlike the Law no. 161/2003, applicable only to certain categories of persons exercising public dignity or functions, the criminal legislation refers as the active subject of the offence of conflict of interest only the public official, within the meaning of the provisions of the article 147 para. (1) of the Criminal Code. In view of the applicable national legal framework, the doctrine considers that any person may be a public official if he or she performs a task in the service of a public authority, public institution, institution or other legal person of public interest, as well as in services of public interest (Chirilă, 2010 :21). The moment from which the limitation period for criminal liability begins to run, which is practically identical to the moment when the offence is committed, is deemed to be the moment when a material benefit has been obtained (Rotaru-Radu, 2018:50).

As far as *incompatibilities are* concerned, although we do not have a legal definition of the notion, the Law no. 161/2003 regulates the regime of *incompatibilities* in the exercise of public office and public functions. In this respect, the legislature has taken into account both the incompatibilities established by this normative act (articles 81-107) and those established by the Romanian Constitution, by the law applicable to the authority or public institution in which the persons exercising a public dignity or public

function carry out their activity, by the Law no. 161/2003 or other special laws (e.g. Law no. 96/2006). With regard to the categories of persons likely to be identified as being in a situation of incompatibility, we underline the existence of an identity with the same category detailed above for the incident of integrity of the type of administrative conflict of interest.

The discussion on the institution of *unjustified wealth* has as its normative starting point the enshrinement in the text of the article 44 para. (8) of the Romanian Constitution regarding the presumption of lawful acquisition of wealth. Its status as a relative legal presumption allows to fight it by evidence to the contrary and does not prevent, de plano, the confiscation of an illicitly acquired wealth (Safta, 2012:120-121). The Romanian Constitutional Court has consistently ruled that the constitutional norms mentioned do not prevent the investigation and confiscation of illicitly acquired wealth (for an approach under the aspect of constitutional relevance, Drăghici, 2018:23). Thus, in the case of an integrity incident of the type of unjustified wealth, the National Integrity Agency has the power to ascertain the existence of "unjustified differences" (for the Constitutional Court's view on the fluid character under the legal aspect of this phrase Gîrleşteanu, 2011:141-142) between the wealth acquired and the income realized by persons subject to assessment procedures according to the law (the categories of persons nominated by article 1 of the Law no. 176/2010). The value threshold for assessing a significant difference, established by the Law no. 144/2007, is represented by a difference of more than 10,000 euros or the equivalent of this amount in lei, between the changes occurred in the wealth during the exercise of public office and the income achieved during the same period.

In its areas of competence, the stand-alone authority under review may or may be referred to it ex officio by any natural or legal person by means of a request, in accordance with the law. Assessments of incompatibilities, administrative conflicts of interest and unjustified assets are carried out by the Agency's integrity inspectors, who are randomly assigned by electronic system, with the redistribution of assigned work being possible only in the cases established by the Law no. 176/2010.

According to the framework legislation, the assessment of the declaration of assets, data and information on existing assets, as well as changes in assets during the period of holding public office or public dignity, and the assessment of conflicts of interest and incompatibilities shall be carried out both during the period of holding public office or public dignity and within 3 years after the end of such office or public dignity, and may only cover the period of holding such office or public dignity (established by article 12 from the Law no. 173/2010).

From a procedural point of view, in the *case of the assessment of assets*, which is occasioned by the analysis of asset declarations, data, information and existing changes in assets, the integrity inspector initially carries out administrative procedures, exclusively by reference to public information, and subsequently, after informing the person who is the subject of the assessment and inviting him/her to present a point of view, he/she also requests from natural or legal persons data or information that is not public. If necessary, in order to clarify all aspects, an extra-judicial expertise may be carried out, in accordance with the law, with the consent of the person whose assets are subject to assessment, in the absence of his consent, the ANI inspector may request the court in whose district the person under investigation is domiciled to allow an extra-judicial expertise to be carried out, at the Agency's expense. In the cases and under the conditions of the law, the integrity inspector shall draw up an assessment report which

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shall be communicated, within 5 days of its completion, to the person who has been the subject of the assessment activity and, where appropriate, to the tax, criminal prosecution and disciplinary bodies, as well as to the commission for the investigation of assets provided for in the Law no. 115/1996 or to other institutions provided for by law, for the purpose of assessment and taking the necessary measures (articles 11-19 of Law no. 176/2010).

If, following the *assessment of the declaration of interests and other data and information*, the integrity inspector identifies evidence of a conflict of interest or incompatibility, he shall inform the person concerned and shall invite him to submit a point of view. If, after the invited person's point of view has been expressed orally or in writing or, failing that, after 15 days following the acknowledgement of receipt of the information by the person subject to the assessment, the integrity inspector still considers that there are indications of a conflict of interest or incompatibility, he/she shall draw up an assessment report (failing confirmation, the assessment report shall be drawn up after a new communication procedure has been completed). The assessment report shall be communicated within 5 days of its completion to the person who has been the subject of the assessment and, where appropriate, to the criminal prosecution and disciplinary bodies. If the conflict of interest assessment report or the incompatibility assessment report has not been contested by the person subject to the assessment within 15 days of its receipt in the administrative court, the Agency shall, within 6 months, refer the matter to the competent bodies for the initiation of disciplinary proceedings and, if necessary, to the administrative court for the annulment of the acts issued, adopted or drawn up in violation of the legal provisions on conflict of interest or incompatibilities (articles 20-26 of the Law no. 176/2010).

The status of files drawn up by ANI inspectors. may be closed files - when the complaints submitted for assessment did not meet the conditions provided for by law, fell within the competence of other institutions, the facts referred to were not confirmed or were affected by the limitation periods provided for by law -, or files in which significant differences were found between the wealth acquired and the income earned, violation of the legal regime of incompatibilities, conflict of interest in administrative matters, strong indications of criminal offences (conflict of interest, false statements, offences similar to corruption offences, etc.). For the latter, the national legislation allows the Agency to decide, where appropriate, to apply direct sanctions, refer cases to the competent institutions, prosecution bodies or courts.

Identification of incompatibilities, as an incident of integrity, in relation to status of trader

In Romania, the legal regime of incompatibilities is regulated by the Law no. 161/2003 on measures to ensure transparency in the exercise of public office, public functions and in the business environment, and to prevent and punish corruption, as well as by other legal acts applicable to the categories of public office or dignity concerned (e.g. the Romanian Constitution, the Law no. 303/2004 on the Status of Magistrates, the Law no. 269/2003 on the Status of the Romanian Diplomatic and Consular Corps, the Law no. 94/1992 on the organisation and functioning of the Court of Auditors). The interpretation of the legislation on the regime of incompatibilities still generates discussions among specialists, as the abundance of legislation on the subject inevitably leads to misunderstandings between legal texts.

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As an incident of integrity, subject to the assessment of the National Integrity Agency, incompatibility consists in holding or exercising a public office/position/capacity simultaneously with holding or exercising another office/position/capacity in the public or private domain, the accumulation of which is prohibited by law.

In practice, in the case of incompatibility, the rights resulting from the legal relationship outside a service relationship are legal, even if the activity thus carried out is incompatible, the legislature applying in this situation a sanction of a professional nature for the lack of a decision to renounce the accumulation generating incompatibility.

The national legislation in force establishes situations of incompatibility for several categories of persons exercising public functions/duties or public authority. Of these, in the sphere of commercial law we are interested in incompatibilities with the status of trader as a natural person, which is specific to the private sector. The categories of such incompatibilities are explicitly or implicitly established by the legislature, in the latter case being inferred from general formulations.

The text of the Romanian Constitution, of general applicability in the national legal order, reveals a series of incompatibilities. Thus, during his term of office, the President of Romania "may not hold any other public or private office", and the office of member within the Government "is incompatible with the exercise of a paid professional representation function in commercial organisations". In turn, the functions of magistrates (prosecutor, judge, judge at the Constitutional Court), as well as those of audit advisors, appointed by Parliament, are incompatible with any other public or private function, with the exception of teaching functions in higher education.

In contrast to the existing constitutional approach, the Law no. 161/2003 details and nuances the cases of incompatibility for the various public offices or dignities, i.e. it explicitly establishes the incompatibility with the status of a natural person trader.

Thus, the office of Member of Parliament (Deputy and Senator), the office of member within the Government, the office of Secretary of State, the office of Undersecretary of State and similar offices, as well as the office of Prefect and Sub-Prefect are incompatible with the exercise of office as a natural person trader (according to the provisions of article 82 paragraph 1 letter e, article 84 paragraph 1 letter g and paragraph 2, article 85 paragraph 1 letter i of the Law no. 161/2003).

The same regime of incompatibilities provided for ministers and secretaries of state respectively, as well as incompatibilities provided for in special laws, shall also apply to the categories of persons exercising the following public dignities and public offices within the authorities and institutions under exclusive parliamentary control: a) the members of the Court of Auditors; b) the President of the Legislative Council and the Presidents of its Departments; c) the Ombudsman and his deputies; d) the members of the Competition Council; e) the members of the National Securities Commission; f) the Governor, the First Deputy Governor, the Deputy Governors, the members of the Board of Directors and the employees with managerial functions of the Romanian National Bank; g) the Director of the Romanian Intelligence Service, the First Deputy and his deputies; h) the Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service and his deputies; i) the members of the Council of the Insurance Supervisory Commission; j) the members of the National Audio-visual Council; k) the members of the boards of directors and of the steering committees of the Romanian Broadcasting Company and the Romanian Television Company; l) the members of the College of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives; m) the General Manager and the members of the board of

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directors of the National Press Agency ROMPRES (according to article 99 paragraph 1 of the Law no. 161/2003).

For their part, presidential advisors and state advisors within the Presidential Administration are subject to the regime of incompatibilities provided for ministers and secretaries of state, respectively, including the incompatibility of exercising the capacity of natural person trader (article 100 paragraph 1 of the Law no. 161/2003).

For judges and prosecutors, the Law no. 161/2003 maintains the constitutional approach of establishing their incompatibility with any other public or private office, with the exception of teaching positions in higher education, but completes it with an express prohibition for magistrates to carry out commercial activities, directly or through intermediaries (article 101 and article 102 letter c).

In the case of civil servants, the regulatory treatment is integrative. For this category, the Law no. 161/2003 establishes the incompatibility of this capacity with the exercise of any other public office or capacity other than that in which the civil servant was appointed, as well as with offices of public dignity, while stating that these persons may not hold other offices or engage in other activities, whether paid or unpaid. Moreover, even the Administrative Code (article 460) expressly refers to the above-mentioned legal regime, established by the special legislation on certain measures to ensure transparency in the exercise of public office and public functions. Certain incompatibilities are the exclusive object of some special laws. For example, members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps are, as a rule, career diplomats and have a specific socio-professional status, conferred by their duties and responsibilities for the implementation of Romania's foreign policy, according to the provisions of the Law no. 269/2003 on the Status of the Romanian Diplomatic and Consular Corps. According to this normative act, such a capacity is incompatible with any other public or private function, with the exception of teaching positions in accredited higher education institutions. In particular, members of the Romanian Diplomatic and Consular Corps are expressly prohibited from engaging in commercial activities during their mission abroad, directly, through family members or through intermediaries (article 50 paragraph 1 letter d). Incompatibility with the status of a natural person trader is thus understood, since the prohibited activity is a central component of the object of activity of such a person.

Among the incompatibilities with the status of natural person trader, which cannot be qualified as an incident of integrity within the competence of the National Integrity Agency, we mention those arising from the exercise of liberal professions. Thus, the profession of lawyer is incompatible with the direct exercise of material acts of commerce, i.e. personal acts of commerce exercised with or without authorisation, unless otherwise provided by special laws (article 29 paragraph 1 letter a of the Statute of the Legal Profession). The profession of notary is incompatible with the direct performance of production, commercial or other service activities (article 68 letter e of the Law no. 36/1995 on notaries public and notarial activity). The function of bailiff is incompatible with carrying out commercial activities, directly or through intermediaries (article 42 letter c of the Law no. 188/2000 on bailiffs). The profession of doctor is incompatible with the capacity of employee or collaborator of production or distribution units of pharmaceutical products or sanitary materials (article 383 paragraph 1 letter a of the Law no. 95/2006 on health reform).

The liberal professions are expressly excluded from the scope of GEO no. 44/2008 on the performance of economic activities by authorised natural persons, sole proprietorships and family businesses (article 1 paragraph 2), as a regulatory act

establishing the main legal forms accessible to the natural person trader. The National Integrity Agency has no competence in the field of incompatibilities arising from the exercise of liberal professions, as natural persons or legal forms carrying out these professions are not included in the categories of legal subjects concerned by the activity of this administrative authority. In these cases, according to the special legislation in this field, the identification of the various incompatibilities is the responsibility of professional institutions/bodies which also apply legal sanctions, exclusively or in conjunction with the intervention of the courts, as appropriate.

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Article Info

Received: October 30 2022

Accepted: November 08 2022

How to cite this article:

Stuparu, L. E. (2022). The integrity incident such as incompatibility of certain categories of public office with the status of individual trader - the role of the National Integrity Agency (I). *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 98 – 106.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Risks and Consequences of Women's Unemployment in Rural Communities from Romania. Results of an Empirical Study in Dolj County *

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Abstract: This article presents, in a sociological approach, the analysis of the issue of women's unemployment, a topic that plays an important part both on the European public policies' agenda, as well as in the current sociological research and studies, which aim at increasing the rate of employment for the vulnerable categories of population. The importance of this topic derives from the fact that female persons in the rural areas are considered to be a vulnerable social category, usually confronted with several obstacles regarding employment, lacking the same access as those in the urban areas to financial, educational and training resources that would allow them to improve the quality of life or to evolve in a profession. The article also presents the results of a quantitative research carried out in three rural communities in Dolj county (the South-West Oltenia Region) which are facing high or severe risk of marginalization, and in which one of the issues that require attention is women's unemployment, especially long-term unemployment.

Keywords: *rural marginalized areas, long-term unemployment, women, social exclusion.*

* Parts of this article (part 2 and 3) were presented, as a communication, at the International Colloquium of Social Sciences and Communication ACUM 2022, Transilvania University of Brasov, 27 - 28 October 2022

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1. Theoretical framework: EU regulations on women employment

Same as in other South-Eastern European societies, women in Romania have been, are, and will continue to be more exposed to the risk of becoming unemployed. Thus, being regarded as a vulnerable category of population, especially in times of economic recession, along with the elders, young people and immigrants, women represent a priority in the design of European policies aiming to increase employment. Women represent a vulnerable social category in the Romanian labour market, and the women in the rural areas are twice as much exposed to the risk of facing long time unemployment as the women living in urban areas. Furthermore, the argument that led our research is that the lack of a job for more than twelve months affects both the subjects (having an impact on their physical and psychological health, their relations with the members of their families, friends and other relatives), as well as the families they are part of (impacting on the level of income, the quality of life, the relations among the family members etc.). Women from rural areas, especially those from marginalized communities don't have access, in the same extent, with those from urban areas to specific tools through which they can benefit from professional development. Also, there are differences in terms of financial and time resources, which makes this topic important from a sociological point of view (Niță and Pârvu, 2020; Motoi and Popescu, 2017: 112).

Why a research on women? Because beyond the realities of the changes that have taken place in the Romanian labour market, women are perceived as a socially disadvantaged category in relation to others, and they have been and, therefore, are still seen as social actors on the labour market with a higher risk potential than men. Also, As regards to gender inequality in the field of participation in vocational training, it can be explained by the fact that women have a more important family role (Crocquey, 1995: 61-63) and a rate of work different from that of men, most of the time working in areas where training is less developed.

The topic of our research is focusing on unemployed women, because also in many other scientific papers we can find the idea that certain categories of people are severely under-represented in vocational training for the unemployed: women, the low-skilled, the very long-term unemployed, the unemployed certain specific groups such as persons with disabilities. Also, women from rural areas are more exposed to unemployment because rural environment is often characterized by “a preponderance of employment in agriculture which offers a minimum subsistence conditions for the inhabitants”. (Pricină, 2018: 34)

Over time, European strategies and policies have had as their fundamental aim the increase of the employment rate at the level of the member states, so in 1997 the Luxembourg Summit takes place as a result of the increase in the unemployment rate at the European level, having four main objectives: increase the rate of employment, supporting entrepreneurship, equal opportunities between women and men and adaptability. In March 2000, the Lisbon Summit discussed the need for full employment, which in 2010 had to reach the threshold of 70% for men and 60% for women. The Lisbon Strategy through the Program established for the years 2001-2004 pursued the following objectives: equal opportunities for women and men; the need for better social inclusion; using time in a more useful way; employment growth. In fact, social inclusion is subject to many EU reports, studies and policy papers, being one of the “6 prevailing items of EU social action” (Olimid and Georgescu, 2016: 43).

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This strategy proposes active measures that start from the premise of the interdependence between economic policy, social policy and labour policy. The reduction of the unemployment rate among young people and the elderly, the need to develop entrepreneurship and the elimination of gender discrimination are supported.

Following the revision of the Lisbon Strategy in 2002 and its launch in 2005, the next program (2005-2008) of the European Union was based on the progress recorded in the period 2001-2004, in this sense the need for solid social policies capable of making facing the challenges that have arisen.

In 2008, the European Council established the Program for the years 2008-2010, which contained a total of 23 guidelines, eight of which were dedicated to employment.

The objective according to which in 2010 the employment rate of women had to reach 60% was reached in certain states in 2009, instead in Romania the employment rate of women was 52% (Frunzaru, 2012: 85).

The Europe 2020 strategy represented the desire of the European Union to lay the foundations for a sustainable, intelligent and favourable growth for social and economic inclusion (Ilie Goga, 2014: 201-202).

So the main three priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy refer to: intelligent growth, through the development of an economy based on knowledge and innovation; sustainable growth, by promoting a more efficient, ecological and competitive economy; growth favourable to inclusion by promoting an economy with a high degree of employment that ensures social and territorial cohesion (European Commission, 2010).

In the National Strategy for Employment, 2014-2020 of Romania, the main objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy regarding the labour market are presented: employment rate for people aged 20-64 over 75%; both public and private investments to support research and development of 3% of the European Union's GDP; reducing school dropout to a maximum level of 10% and increasing the graduation rate of a tertiary education level of people aged between 30-34 (minimum 40%); the decrease by 20 million of the number of European citizens threatened by poverty and social exclusion.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research objectives

Our research started from the following two research objectives:

O.1. Knowing the main challenges faced by rural women in finding a job and identifying the job expectations.

O.2. Knowing the degree of involvement in finding a job and the interest in participating in professional training courses.

2.2. Research hypotheses

H.1: The lower a person's level of education, the more difficult access to the labour market is;

H.2. The older a person is, the more difficult access to the labour market is;

H.3. The younger a person is, the greater the availability for continuous professional training.

2.3. Methods

The research that we have conducted in 4 rural marginalized communities from Dolj County is a quantitative one (opinion survey method), using as research tool the questionnaire. We have used a questionnaire with 28 questions: Close-ended questions, Open-ended questions, Multiple choice questions, Rating scale questions.

2.4. Sample

The sample was represented by 457 women living in 4 rural communities from Dolj County, with different employment statuses, from all age categories and with different levels of education. The distribution of the sample, on employment status, education level and age categories are presented in the two tables below:

Table 1: Distribution of the sample, by the current employment status (N=457)

Short-term unemployed women	46,6%
Households' women	40,8%
Long-term unemployed women	12,6%
Total	100,0

Table 2: Distribution of the exploratory lot, by age group and level of education

By age group		By level of education	
18-25 years	15,8%	High school (Secondary school)	33,1%
26-35 years	42,4%	Lower-Secondary school	28,6%
36-45 years	32,4%	Vocational school	14,5%
46-55 years	9,4%	Post-secondary school	18,4%
		Higher education	5,4%
Total	100,0%		100,0%

3. Results

Related to the personal perception on labour market, our research revealed that the majority of respondents, respectively 77%, believe that the labour market does not provide sufficient employment opportunities.

Table 3: Do you consider that there are enough jobs in your county? (N=457)

No	77,0%
Yes	21,5%
Don't know/ N.A.	1,5%
Total	100,0

A pessimistic orientation, correlated with a perception about the deterioration of the quality of life, of a discouragement regarding the search for a job and the perception of difficulties (lived or that may occur) in the process of looking for a job. Also, we have observed that there is a strong correlation with the desire to accept any job (even if it does not correspond to the qualification held) The first question addressed to the

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participants in this study confirms the negative effects of unemployment (45,0% stated that their life is worse, when comparing it with the previous year-2021)

**Table 4: Quality of life perception (2022, compared to 2021)
– bivariate analysis, by level of education (N=457)**

Level of education	Quality of life perception (2022, compared to 2021)					
	Don't know/NA	Much Better	Better	The same	Worse	Much worse
Lower secondary school	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	53.3%	26.7%
High School	1.2%	0.9%	7.5%	29.0%	43.3%	18.1%
Vocational school	0.6%	1.9%	7.5%	17.6%	48.4%	23.9%
Post-secondary school	1.3%	0.0%	3.8%	34.6%	42.3%	17.9%
Tertiary/University	0.8%	2.0%	4.7%	33.2%	47.0%	12.3%

From the bivariate analysis presented in the table above we may observe that those who are affected the most from unemployment are graduates with a low level of education (which confirms the H1 of our research). Thus, 80.0% of the lower secondary school graduates experienced a worsening of the standard of living, followed by 72.3% of the vocational school graduates. At the opposite pole are high school graduates totalling 61.4%, post-secondary school graduates - 60.2% persons who accuse the decrease of the standard of living due to unemployment and the graduates of higher studies with 59.3%.

Table 5: To what extent, the fact that you currently do not have a job, has affected your family stability? (N=457)

To a very small extent	27,8%
Not at all	24,6%
To a large extent	19%
To a small extent	15,9%
To a very large extent	9,5%
Don't know/NA	3,2%
Total	100,0%

A percentage of 25,4% of women have stated a deterioration of the family relations, which reveals the seriousness of the phenomenon from the social point of view and not necessarily from the economic one by correlating with the age of the respondents, those who reported this consequence are between 50 and 54 years (35.9%).

Table 6: What are the main problems/challenges you faced when looking for a job? (N=457)

Lack of professional experience	25.9%
Age	17.5%
Small salary	7.0%
Working conditions	1.5%
Lack of studies	3,1%
Extra hours / extended program	1.5%
Lack of qualification trainings	1.3%
Lack of job offers	14,5%

Big competition on vacancies	1.2%
Other	2,6%
Can not appreciate	13.9%
Total	100.0%

The structure of these answers reveals the main problems faced by those seeking job search: too young or too old, no professional experience, low wages, working conditions and extended working hours etc. These are perceived as problems depending on the profile of the respondents, personal expectations, and professional goals. Difficulties due to lack of experience can be a cause for which they accept jobs for which they are not qualified. This category of women is predominantly found among those with a working experience between 1-3 years. The same attitude is also found in the opinions of women who have a significant seniority in work, such as those with 10 years or more. Most of those who would work in any field are married (in the case of people aged 35-55), and unmarried in the case of youth (up to 35 years).

Table 7: When you are concerned about finding a job, where do you get the information? (N=457)

From online platforms with vacancies	66,7%
From friends	16,7%
Directly from the companies	4,6%
From newspapers	4,0%
From the National Agency of Employment	4,0%
From relatives	2,4%
Total	100.0%

Form the figure above we may observe that the presence in the first place in the preferences of the Internet for the search for a new job is an important element, in relation to the search methods. To explain this percentage, we correlated this research method with the main characteristics of the respondents. Most of those who are looking for a job using this method are youth. Thus, 62.5% of respondents under the age of 20 use the Internet to acquire a job, followed by those between the ages of 20-24 years (43,7%) and those aged 25-29 with 38,3%. After 29 years, the job search on the Internet decreases in the options of the respondents, the other methods of job search being preferred.

Table 8: Would you accept a job which is not according to your qualification? (N=457)

No. I prefer to have a job according to my qualification	27,5%
Yes	52%
Don't know	30,5%
Total	100.0%

Difficulties due to lack of experience can be a cause for which they accept jobs for which they are not qualified. This category of women is predominantly found among those with an working experience between 1-3 years. The same attitude is also found in the opinions of women who have a significant seniority in work, such as those with 10

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years or more. Most of those who would work in any field are married (in the case of people aged 35-55), and unmarried in the case of youth (up to 35 years).

Conclusions

Unemployment meant for almost half of them (45%) a lower standard of living, and for 3.5% the standard of living experienced significant decreases. Taking into consideration the age criteria, there is a greater dissatisfaction in the case of persons over 25 years and a maintenance of the state of satisfaction of persons up to 24 years. The explanation of these answers may also be due to the salaries obtained by each professional category and to the responsibilities associated with each age. Apart from the standard of living, unemployment also influences family relationships. 21.0% of the respondents stated that unemployment influenced the relationships between family members (to a large extent). Less than half of unemployed women have been participated to a job interview during the last year (2021). The percentages obtained from the responses indicate low efforts for job search, who can have multiple causes, starting from the lack of effective job search strategies, the lack of opportunities in the labour market in Dolj county (especially for persons living in rural areas), the lack of informations on the dynamics of the labour market, the demand of employers for new employees etc.. Regardless of the reasons for not being actively involved in the process of searching for a job and maintaining the status of inactive or unemployed, this situation leads to social marginalization and long-term exposure to the process of social exclusion. The problems encountered in the labour market were revealed, in small percentage, by the respondents to this survey. For most of them, the case of young people, lack of experience and professional experience represents an obstacle to employment.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Article Info

Received: November 16 2022

Accepted: November 20 2022

How to cite this article:

Popescu, A.-M., Motoi, G. (2022). Risks and Consequences of Women's Unemployment in Rural Communities from Romania. Results of an Empirical Study in Dolj County. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 107 – 114.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Abstracting Volatility Dynamics of South Korean Stock Market: A case study

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Mircea Laurentiu Simion⁴⁾, Andrei Cristian Spulbar⁵⁾**

Abstract:

The main aim of this research paper is to investigate the volatility dynamics of South Korean stock market. The sample data covers the long time period from December 1996 to September 2022, which also includes certain extreme events such as: the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the global financial crisis of 2008, the COVID-19 pandemic, the war between Russia and Ukraine. The econometric approach focuses on GARCH models and certain statistical tests. The empirical results contribute to the existing specialized literature.

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1. Introduction

South Korea along with Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan represents the Four Asian Tigers or the Four Asian Dragons which are a cluster of rapid growth economies in Asia. Moreover, South Korea is part of the East Asian Miracle. According to the most recent FTSE Russell Equity Country Classification report released in September 2022, South Korea is included in the category of developed stock markets.

Perez (2018) examined the behavior of South Korean stock market considering the rather unique characteristics of this economy which seems to be unequivocally categorized as neither developed nor developing. Lee et al. (2019) argued that in recent past the significance of corporate sustainability reached increasing levels in Korea. In addition, Thorbecke (2021) conducted an empirical research study on the firms in France and South Korea regarding stock returns and concluded that the economy in Korea is less exposed to appreciations compared to the economy in France.

2. Literature review

Perez (2018) argued that the stock market of South Korea highlights a performance in what concerns value investment aspect that differentiates it from other economies. Spulbar et al. (2022) examined volatility spillovers for the stock market in Japan using NIKKEI 225 index for the long time sample period from July 30, 1998, to January 24, 2022, i.e. including during the COVID-19 pandemic based on GARCH models. In addition, Trivedi et al. (2022) analyzed the behavior of Russian stock market for the sample period from January 2000 to April 2022 using GARCH models while considering certain extreme events such as the recent war between Russia and Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the global financial crisis of 2007-2008. Thorbecke (2021) investigated the impact of exchange rate and COVID-19 pandemic news on the French and South Korean economies.

According to Lee et al. (2019) “changes in risk or liquidity of an asset result in changes in returns “even considering the “Green Growth” policy of the Korean government authorities. Eom et al. (2022) investigated volatility interruptions in the case of Korean stock markets which is very important approach considering abnormal volatility patterns for individual financial stocks. Choi and Yoon (2020) examined the linkage between investor sentiment and herding behavior in the case of Korean Stock Market, i.e. KOSPI and KOSDAQ stock markets, which is an important aspect considering the decision-making process of investors. Badarla et al. (2022) examined the behaviour of certain stock markets, such as: Switzerland, Austria, Hong Kong and China based on GARCH models for the sample period January 2003 up to September 2021.

3. Research methodology and empirical analysis

This research paper captures the changes in volatility parameter, movement behavior of selected sample of South Korean financial market index, (KOSPI), daily closing price from December 1996 to September 2022 consisting 6360 daily observations. For this purpose we used Generalized Autoregressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity (GARCH) class models; GARCH (1, 1) model, EGARCH model and GJR model to estimate the presence of leverage effect. First, the databases are converted to first difference of log-returns and tested with normality using ADF, JB tests. The main equations are as follows:

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Log conversion;

$$r_t = \ln\left(\frac{p_t}{p_{t-1}}\right) = \ln(p_t) - \ln(p_{t-1})$$

ADF regression process;

$$\Delta y_t = c + \beta \cdot t + \delta \cdot y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^p \gamma_i \Delta y_{t-i} + \varepsilon_t$$

ADF process;

$$(1 - L)y_t = \beta_0 + (\alpha - 1)y_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Jarque-Bera test:

$$JB = n \left[\frac{s^2}{6} + \frac{(k-3)^2}{24} \right] = \frac{n}{6} \cdot \left(s^2 + \frac{(k-3)^2}{4} \right) \text{ And;}$$

$$s = \frac{\hat{\mu}_3}{\hat{\sigma}^3} = \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^3}{\left[\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \right]^{\frac{3}{2}}} \quad k = \frac{\hat{\mu}_4}{\hat{\sigma}^4} = \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^4}{\left[\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \right]^2}$$

Symmetric GARCH (1, 1) model is used as following:

$$h_t = \omega + \alpha_1 u_{t-1}^2 + \beta_1 h_{t-1}$$

The generalised form of Engle's ARCH model is called generalised Autoregressive Conditional Heteroscedastic. One ARCH effect and one GARCH effect are processed by GARCH (1, 1) processing the formulae for Mean and Variance, but also Mean equation;

$$r_t = \mu + \varepsilon_t$$

Mean equation indicates sum of average return denoted by (μ) that is returns of asset in time (t), and residual return denoted by (ε_t).

Variance equation;

$$\sigma_t^2 = \omega + \alpha \varepsilon_{t-1}^2 + \beta \sigma_{t-1}^2$$

The procedure of making the assumption about the variance equation ensures that the constant value is greater than 0. The value of $\alpha + \beta$. GARCH (1, 1) model reflects a symmetric model that is often used to evaluate volatility in time series returns. One of the drawbacks of symmetric models is that they are unable to account for the leverage effect, which necessitates the addition of lags and exponential processes. As a result, asymmetric GARCH type models, such as EGARCH, also known as Exponential

GARCH, are needed. By ensuring that variance is always positive, Nelson's EGARCH (1991) model captures the asymmetric reactions of time-varying variances to volatility shocks.

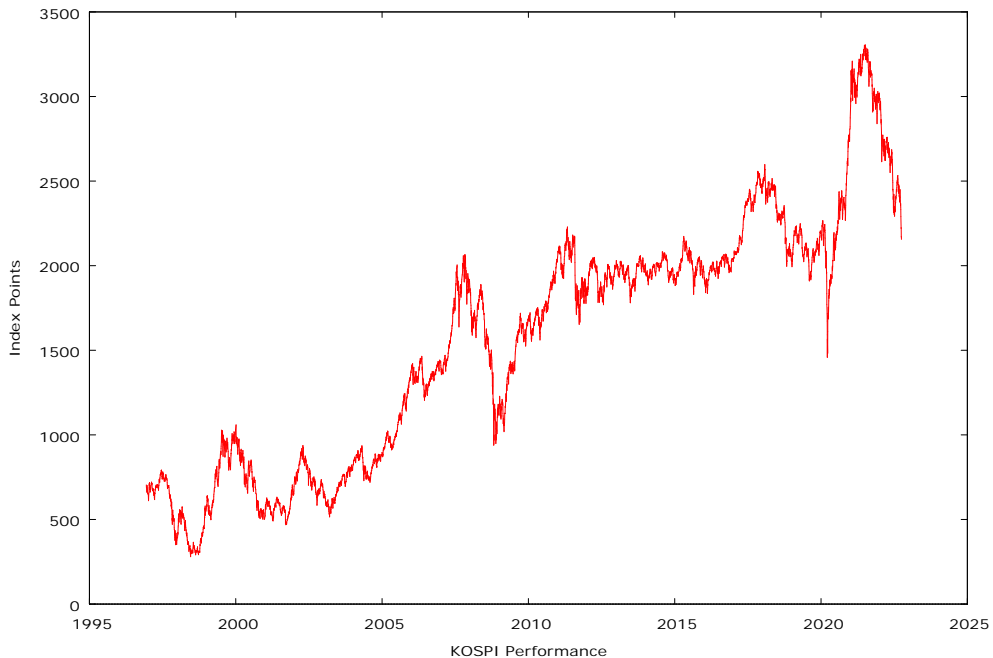
$$\text{Log}(\sigma_t^2) = \omega + \sum_{j=1}^p \beta_j \text{Log}(\sigma_{t-j}^2) + \sum_{j=1}^q \alpha_j \left(\frac{e_{t-j}}{\sigma_{t-j}} \sqrt{2} - \gamma_j \frac{e_{t-j}}{\sigma_{t-j}} \right)$$

Another asymmetric model, GJR, which was created by Glosten, Jagannathan, and Runkle in 1993 as a version of the Threshold GARCH, also measures stylized facts like the leverage effect and the impact of news on stock markets. Only regression in the mean equation, which is constant, is present in this model.

$$h_t = \delta + \alpha_1 e_{t-1}^2 + \gamma d_{t-1} e_{t-1}^2 + \beta_1 h_{t-1}$$

Where d_t represents two cases in case of 1 and 0, where $e_t < 0$, create bad news and 0, $e_t > 0$ indicates good news. Further the value of alpha, Gamma and Beta are non-negative parameters satisfying condition like EGARCH model in otherwise manner. The random-walk series movement exhibited in Fig-1. Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) statistics provides details about the stationarity of the series returns after considering the first log difference of series returns.

Fig – 1 Random-Walk movement pattern of – KOSPI

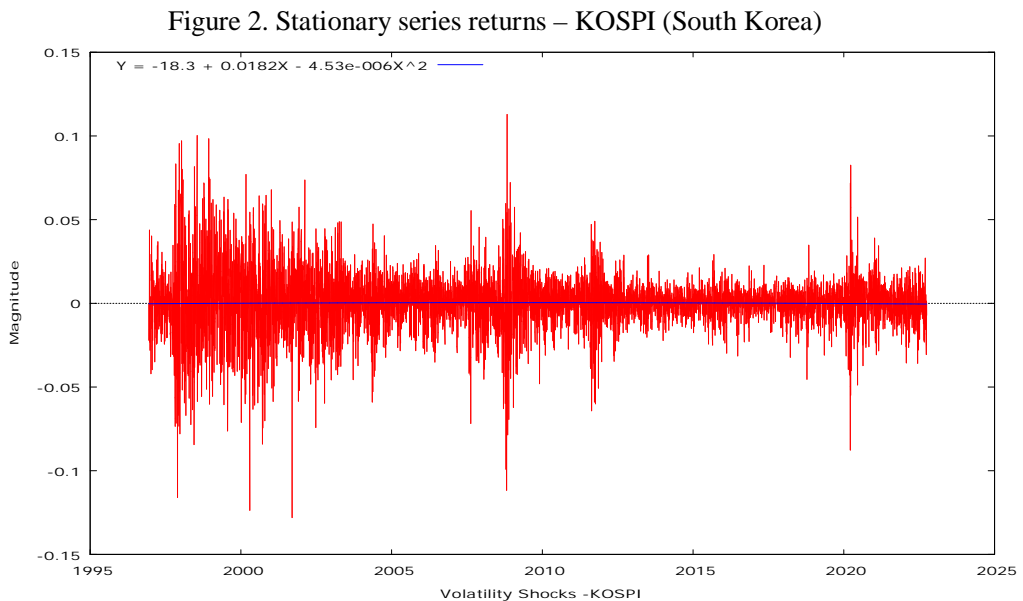


Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

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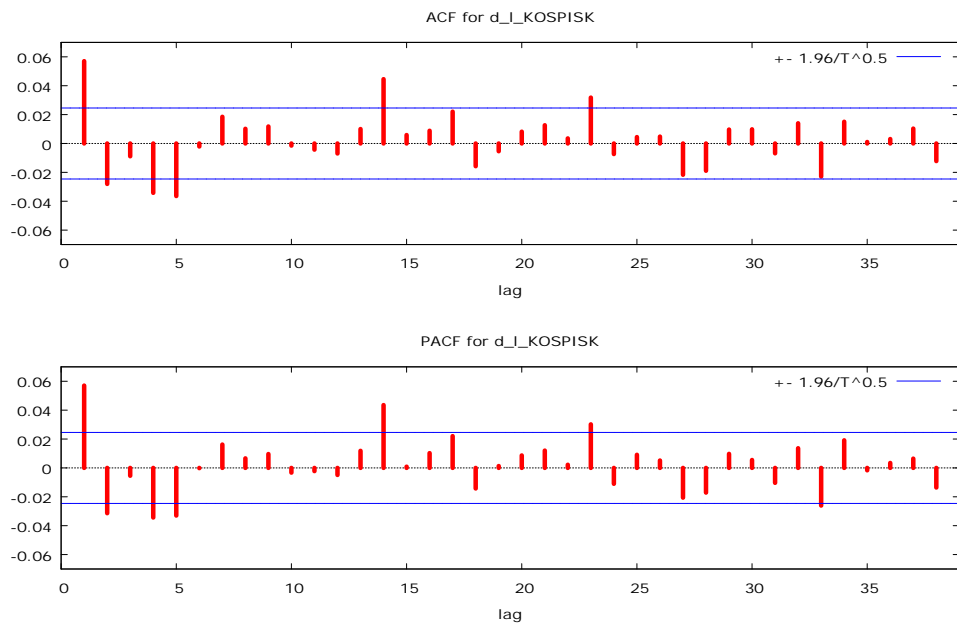
Augmented Dickey-Fuller test conducted using from 4 lags, criterion AIC with sample size 6354 where unit-root null hypothesis: $a = 1$, the primary results indicates test with constant including 4 lags of $(1-L)y = b_0 + (a-1)y(-1) + \dots + e$, estimated value of $(a - 1)$: -1.04562, test statistic: $\tau_c(1) = -38.0148$ and asymptotic p-value $1.159e-027$ confirms the series is now stationary. Other normality test statistics also provided significant results at significance level of 1%. (Doornik-Hansen test = 3232.03, with p-value 0, Shapiro-Wilk $W = 0.916024$, with p-value $1.45838e-050$, Lilliefors test = 0.0925097, with p-value ~ 0 , and Jarque-Bera test = 9738.51, with p-value 0.

Stationary series returns (Volatility Shocks), ACF and PACF, and left-tail exhibited in Fig – 2, Fig – 3 and Fig – 4 respectively. The ACF of the square standardised residuals and ACF of the square returns are comparable. Numerous economic and financial applications, including as asset pricing, risk management, and portfolio allocation, regard volatility as a key notion. This study aims to compare the effectiveness of several econometric volatility models such as GARCH, EGARCH and GJR.



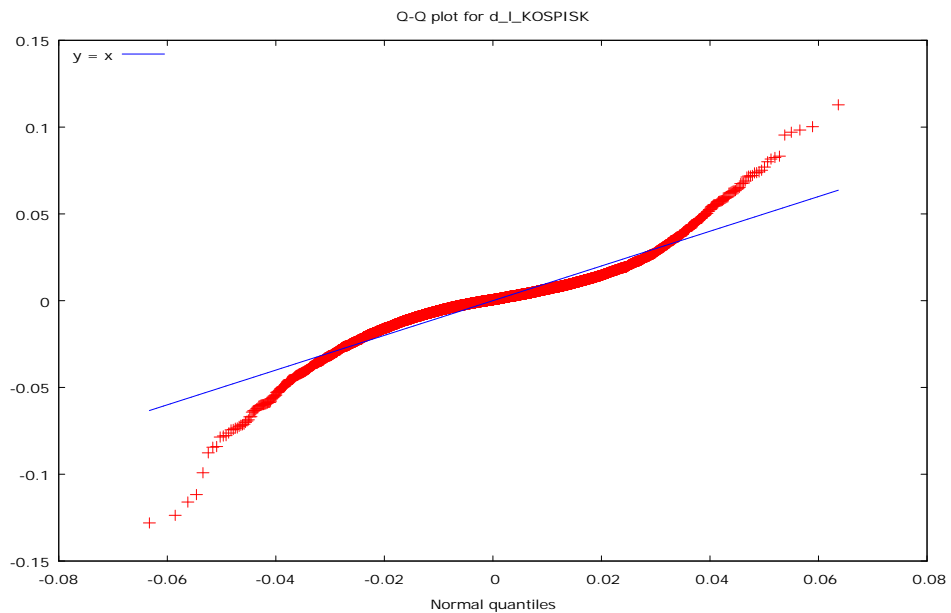
Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

Figure 3. Dynamics of ACF and PACF plots



Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

Figure 4. Property of Quantile Plot using observation from KOSPI financial index



Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

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4. Empirical results

Summary of statistics (See Table 1) indicates that that South Korean financial indexed does not follow normal distributions; the kurtosis exceeds normality parameter and creates leptokurtic impact, with negatively skewed returns. The positive mean suggests that exchange returns gradually rise over time. The coefficient of skewness shows that the distribution of returns is asymmetric, or skewed to the left. Returns have a kurtosis of 6.04, which is higher than three and indicates that the distribution of returns follows a fat-tailed distribution. This shows leptokurtosis, one of the key features of financial time series data.

Table 1 Summary Statistics, using the observations 1996-12-11 - 2022-09-30 for the variable $d_1_KOSPISK$ (6359 valid observations)

Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
0.00017582	0.00069900	-0.12805	0.11284
Std. Dev.	C.V.	Skewness	Ex. kurtosis
0.016796	95.529	-0.22592	6.0457
5% Perc.	95% Perc.	IQ range	Missing obs.
-0.026583	0.024530	0.014355	1

Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

The GARCH (1, 1) model studies the dynamics of volatility and hypothesises that any shock, whether positive or negative, can cause permanent change in all future values if the product of the coefficients for ARCH and GARCH is equal to 1. If not, conditional variance shock will be classified as persistent in nature. Actual series returns, volatility shocks, and comparative asset returns for KOSPI (South Korean Financial Index) indicates that during COVID-19 pandemic period, like any other financial markets, KOSPI also responded to pandemic events. However, it is interesting to note that the index have recovered rapidly (See Fig – 2).

In this study, the probability focused to evaluate conditional volatility. Asset returns are thought to follow a normal distribution, according to Engle (1982). The normality assumption, however, could significantly distort asymmetric GARCH estimation and understate volatility because asset returns are not normally distributed. Plot of the log returns series (Volatility Shocks) for the KOSPI exchange rates reveals periods of high volatility, sporadic extreme swings, and volatility clustering, whereby upward swings are frequently followed by other upward swings and downward swings are frequently followed by other downward swings. Table 2 shows the results of the fitted GARCH (1, 1), EGARCH (1, 1), and GJR (1, 1) for KOSPI estimated taking into account the initial difference of log return series with normal distribution. The "leverage effect," which is a dynamic asymmetry, and its presence were intended to be captured by asymmetric GARCH models. If the value of is smaller than zero, the "leverage effect" is present.

For the purpose of analysing how the global financial crisis affects stock market volatility, the GJR GARCH model was used. The fact that GARCH models enforce a symmetric volatility response to positive and negative shocks is a significant flaw in their design. It should be observed, nevertheless, that negative shocks are more likely than positive shocks to result in increases in volatility for South Korean stock index (KOSPI) . The asymmetric model parametric confirms presence of leverage effect,

suggesting that prices tend to follow negatively movement in more aggressive pattern than the reaction to positive movements. In the years leading up to the financial crisis, the majority of indices' daily mean returns were positive. In the wake of the financial crisis and the pandemic, the daily mean returns for the majority of indexes were impacted. However, the post-pandemic movement indicates strong positive recovery for the South Korean stock index.

Table – 2 Model: Property of GARCH Class models (Normal)*
Conditional mean equation

coefficient	std. error	z	p-value		
const	0.000402468	0.000131882	3.052	0.0023	*** GARCH (1, 1) [Bollerslev]
const	0.000142386	0.000146910	0.9692	0.3324	- EGARCH(1,1) [Nelson]
const	0.000176358	0.000130439	1.352	0.1764	- GJR (1, 1) [Glosten et al.]
Conditional variance equation					
coefficient	std. error	z	p-value		
GARCH (1, 1) [Bollerslev]					
omega	1.14643e-06	3.34439e-07	3.428	0.0006	***
alpha	0.0832349	0.0109077	7.631	2.33e-014	***
beta	0.914859	0.0106061	86.26	0.0000	***
GJR (1, 1) [Glosten et al.]					
omega	1.25581e-06	3.68678e-07	3.406	0.0007	***
alpha	0.0753555	0.0113367	6.647	2.99e-011	***
gamma	0.239612	0.0367753	6.516	7.24e-011	***
beta	0.916221	0.0119379	76.75	0.0000	***
EGARCH(1,1) [Nelson]					
omega	-0.195914	0.0306494	-6.392	1.64e-010	***
alpha	0.160035	0.0177123	9.035	1.64e-019	***
gamma	-0.0522922	0.00892502	-5.859	4.66e-09	***
beta	0.991409	0.00236511	419.2	0.0000	***

Source: Author's computation using daily closing price returns from 1996 to 2022

5. Conclusions

The variance equation's coefficient of the dummy variable for the majority of indices was positive and significant, which suggests that during the most recent financial crisis, spot market volatility in India rose. The outcomes also demonstrated the existence of an asymmetries effect in the volatility of stock returns. This essay's goal is to examine the impact of changes in the stock market's volatility in South Korea. The investigation took into account the daily closing prices of the KOSPI from November 1996 to September 2022. The study shows compelling evidence that the aforementioned models can adequately describe daily returns. According to descriptive statistics, the KOSPI exhibits excess kurtosis and negative skewness. The results of the ADF and JB tests show that both the ARCH effect and the volatility clustering effect are present in the residuals in a significant manner. White noise was found in the standardised residuals and the squared standardised residuals.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

Abstracting Volatility Dynamics of South Korean Stock Market

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Article Info

Received: November 13 2022

Accepted: November 20 2022

How to cite this article:

Spulbar, C., Birau, R., Trivedi, J., Simion, M. L., Spulbar, A. C. (2022). Abstracting Volatility Dynamics of South Korean Stock Market: A case study. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 115 – 123.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The Legal Regime of the Railway Passenger Carrier in the Romanian Legislation

Cristina Stanciu¹⁾

Abstract:

Rail and passenger transport is a segment of transport that benefits, in our legal system, from a regulation that covers a very wide range of legal issues. It is an exhaustive regulation, which represents a benchmark for other transport segments that have not been reserved a treatment at such a wide legislative level. In many cases, the regulation of the railway area, of transport of goods or people, brings clarifications or explains a series of notions and concepts used in other types of transport which, although they use them, do not define them.

In Romania, public railway transport is a strategic sector of national interest and an essential public service for society.

Rail passenger transport has, according to the law, the character of public passenger transport. The Ministry of Transport and other competent authorities shall act in the field of public passenger transport by rail to ensure the provision of services of general interest and shall conclude public service contracts with railway undertakings thereby establishing public service obligations of national interest in order to provide adequate transport services.

Public railway transports are performed only on the basis of a transport contract, and the transport contract is concluded and executed under the conditions of the regulations of the Romanian Civil Code, of the Regulation on Romanian railway transport, respectively the provisions of Government Ordinance no. 7/2005 and of the international agreements and conventions to which Romania has acceded.

Keywords: *public railway transports, rail passenger transport.*

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Regulations governing the contract for the carriage of passengers and luggage by rail. The carriage of passengers and luggage by rail is a segment of transport which is regulated in our legal system, covering a very wide range of legal issues. It is an exhaustive regulation, which is also a benchmark for other transport segments that have not been treated as comprehensively in law.

The main legislation governing passenger carriage by rail are: Emergency Ordinance No 12 of 7 July 1998, Ordinance No 7 of 2005; Law No 55 of 2006, Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) of 9 May 1980.

Emergency Ordinance No 12 of 7 July 1998 on transport on the Romanian railways and reorganisation of the Romanian National Railway Company covers general aspects concerning the organisation and performance of transport on the Romanian railways, identification of the competent State authority in the field of transport by rail and its powers, legal aspects concerning the railway infrastructure, ensuring its operation and the safety of traffic on the Romanian railways, reorganisation of the Romanian National Railway Company. This Ordinance was republished pursuant to Article II of Government Emergency Ordinance No 125/2003 supplementing Government Emergency Ordinance No 12/1998 on transport on the Romanian railways and reorganisation of the Romanian National Railway Company and was approved with amendments and additions by Law No 128/2004.

Ordinance No 7 of 2005 approving the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail was republished pursuant to Article II of Law No 110/2006 approving Government Ordinance No 7/2005 for the approval of the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail. The regulation applies to the forwarding, public transport of passengers, goods and other goods on Romanian railways. In addition to the provisions of the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail, the Ministry of Transport has issued Uniform Rules, applicable to railway infrastructure director and managers, carriers and beneficiaries of railway carriage. The Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail regulates the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the railway infrastructure director and managers, railway carriers and beneficiaries of transport on Romanian railways. In turn, each railway carrier may issue its own regulations, but only in accordance with and in compliance with the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail and the Uniform Rules.

Law No 55 of 2006 on railway safety ensures, through a set of legal rules, the development and improvement of safety on Romanian railways and improved access to the market for rail transport services, by: harmonising national legislation with that of the European Union, defining the responsibilities of all participants in rail traffic, setting up a railway safety authority in Romania and a body for investigating railway accidents and incidents. The law applies to the entire railway system in Romania, covering all safety requirements for the whole system, including the safe management of infrastructure and rail traffic and the interaction between rail carriers and infrastructure directors.

On Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) of 9 May 1980, the signatory parties to the Convention have constituted themselves, as Member States, in the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), based in Berne. The aim of this Organisation is to create a uniform legal regime applicable to the transport of passengers, luggage and goods in direct international traffic between Member States using railway lines. Transport in direct international traffic is supplemented by the "Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Passengers and Luggage by Rail (CIV)", which form Appendix A to the Convention.

Legal characteristics of the contract of carriage of passengers by rail. In Romania, public rail transport is a strategic sector of national interest and an essential public service for society. Rail passenger transport is, by law, public passenger transport. The Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communications and other competent authorities act in the field of public passenger rail transport to ensure the provision of services of general interest and, to this end, conclude public service contracts with rail transport operators, under which public service obligations of national interest are established in order to provide adequate transport services according to Law No. 205 of 8 November 2019 for the approval of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 83/2016 on some measures to streamline the implementation of transport infrastructure projects, some measures in the field of transport.

The public service contract (Regulation EC No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations EEC No 1191/69 and EEC No 1107/70, Article 2(i)) is a legally binding act containing an agreement between a competent authority and a public service operator to entrust the management and operation of public passenger transport services to that public service operator, subject to public service obligations.

Rail transport is any movement of persons or goods carried out by rail vehicles by transport operators on railway infrastructure.

Rail transport is classified into public rail transport and own-account rail transport.

Public passenger transport is transport services for passengers which are of general economic interest, and which are provided to the public on a non-discriminatory and continuous basis, and own-account rail transport is transport carried out in the interest of own activities with owned or leased means of transport.

Public rail transport is carried out only on the basis of a transport contract, and the transport contract is concluded and executed in accordance with the regulations of the Romanian Civil Code, the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail, the provisions of Government Ordinance No 7/2005 and the international agreements and conventions to which Romania has acceded (GEO No 12 of 1998 on transport on Romanian railways and the reorganisation of the Romanian National Railway Company, Article 1(6) and (7)).

As a result, the transport contract is the contract by which a party, called a passenger rail operator, a public service operator, which holds a transport licence and operates on the railway infrastructure, under the conditions laid down by law, undertakes to transport the passenger to their destination, within the country or in international traffic, on time, unharmed and safely, in return for a fare paid by the passenger, and to provide them with appropriate conditions with a high degree of safety, in environmentally friendly and efficient conditions.

The contract for the carriage of passengers by rail is a synallagmatic contract, as it gives rise to mutual and interdependent obligations on both contracting parties, the main obligations being: the obligation of the carrier to carry a certain person or persons safely from one place to another and the obligation of the passenger(s) to pay the carriage price.

It is, as a rule, an onerous contract (Romanian Civil Code, Art. 1172) because each party seeks to obtain a benefit in return for its performance: the passenger wants to

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travel to the destination and the carrier wants to obtain the price. As an exception, rail transport operators may grant free fares, facilities or discounts on the basis of the provisions of regulatory acts, but only if the authority, agent or organisation requesting the facility or discount provides the corresponding compensation (GO No 7 of 2005, Art. 4). Thus, children up to the age of 5, for whom a separate seat is not required, are carried free of charge and without a travel card, and children up to the age of 10 pay 50% of the fare and the train supplement and are entitled to a separate seat.

The contract for the carriage of passengers by rail is a commutative contract. According to Article 1173 of the Civil Code, a contract is commutative if, at the time it is concluded, the existence of the rights and obligations of the parties is certain and their extent is determined or determinable. A contract for the carriage of passengers by rail meets the legal requirements for it to be classified as commutative, because the parties to it know or can know from the beginning the existence and extent of their rights or, in other words, from the beginning they have a precise idea of the legal consequences which their commitment will produce.

The contract for the carriage of passengers by rail is a contract of adhesion. It is obvious that we live in an economic and social context which means that the majority of contracts, especially those where the parties are individuals on the one hand and professionals on the other, are adhesion contracts, i.e. those which involve adherence to an existing offer.

The doctrine (Piperea, 2019: 138-139) notes that, currently, the parties' agreement of will - which is the classical theory in defining the contract - is only one component in its formation and that this component must be doubled by *interest* - the parties' interest in concluding the contract. In other words, the contract in its current form is a combination of legal requirements - which involve the parties' will being valued, freedom to contract and to choose a contractual partner, good faith in negotiations at the time of conclusion and in the performance of the contract, the legal equality of the parties, and economic requirements - which involve aspects such as the parties' interest, the usefulness of the contract for the parties, continuity in the professional's activity and risk-taking.

In all this context, the concept of contractual balance must take precedence because it is the main pillar of the contract and it is often ensured by a very detailed and rigorous regulation of the professional's activity by the legislator; the balance of the parties' performance presupposes the reconciliation of the parties' interests (Piperea, 2019: 139).

Public rail transport is considered, according to the law (GEO No. 12 of 1998, art. 1 paragraph 3), as a strategic sector of national interest, an essential service for society, contributing to free movement, to the resolution of major interests of the economy, to the movement of people, goods and other goods, even fulfilling specific tasks for the needs of the country's defence.

Given the importance of this type of activity, this contract is considered to be more than a contract of adhesion, a *regulated contract*, in the sense that by law it is constructed in its entirety or in its essential part and these regulations are binding, on the one hand, for the professional who performs that activity, and, on the other hand, for the client who has as options to adhere or not adhere to the already constructed contract, to its pre-established content (Piperea, 2019: 10).

Therefore, rail passenger transport is a passenger transport service that is provided by rail passenger operators holding a transport licence and operating on the

railway infrastructure, under the terms of the law, namely GEO no. 12 of 1998 on transport on Romanian railways and the reorganisation of the Romanian National Railway Company, as amended by Law no. 205 of 8 November 2019 for the approval of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 83/2016 on some measures to streamline the implementation of transport infrastructure projects, some measures in the field of transport, as well as for the amendment and completion of some regulatory acts.

Public passenger transport is that type of transport which is of general economic interest and which is provided to the public on a non-discriminatory and continuous basis, offering a uniform information service and having a uniform ticketing system and a fixed timetable.

The public service operator is any public or private undertaking or group of such undertakings operating public passenger transport services, or any public body providing public passenger transport services.

All those providing public passenger transport services do so on the basis of a public service obligation, i.e. on the basis of a requirement defined and laid down by a competent authority, and are obliged to provide public passenger transport services of general interest which an operator, if it were considering its own commercial interests, would not assume or would not assume to the same extent or under the same conditions without remuneration (Regulation EC No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007, Article 2(a), (d) and (e)).

Substantive conditions of the contract for the carriage of passengers by rail. The essential conditions for the validity of a contract for the carriage of passengers by rail are the conditions common to any agreement: capacity to contract, valid consent of the party to be bound, a specific subject-matter and a lawful cause. Public rail transport is carried out only on the basis of a transport contract and, according to GEO No 12 of 1998, a contract for the carriage of passengers by rail may be concluded only in compliance with and under the conditions of the Civil Code, the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail and the international agreements and conventions to which Romania is a party.

With regard to consent, a particular feature is the situation of the professional carrier who is in a state of permanent offer of services to the public (Romanian Civil Code, art. 1958 para. 3) and the fact that the carrier is not entitled, except in cases expressly provided for by law, to refuse to carry out the transport. Moreover, the special law on the subject provides for three distinct situations: persons admitted to transport, persons excluded from transport and persons conditionally admitted to transport.

The principle is that people with valid travel cards are allowed to travel. However, according to Art. 9 of O. No 7 of 2005 approving the Romanian Regulation on Carriage by Rail, persons who do not comply with the regulations and provisions of the railway operator are excluded from transport. The following persons are also not allowed on the train and in the station or may be expelled: persons who by their behaviour disturb other passengers or cause damage to rolling stock belonging to the rail transport operator or who do not comply with the provisions of the regulations; persons who, due to illness, inconvenience other passengers, unless they are travelling with payment of the whole compartment reservation; persons who insult or assault the staff of the rail transport operator or the infrastructure manager(s) on duty.

There is also a third category, those who are admitted to transport, but on condition. In this respect, the transport of sick people with contagious diseases is

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regulated, as a rule, by joint instructions of the rail transport operator and the state authority for public health.

At the same time, rail passenger transport operators may lay down, by means of their own regulations, other arrangements for the admission of passengers to transport. According to the Uniform Rules on Rail Transport in Romania, applicable to operators and beneficiaries of public rail passenger transport, non-contagiously ill persons transported on stretchers or trolleys may travel in class passenger carriages, but only on the basis of medical certificates specifying this mode of transport and the fact that the sick person in question is not suffering from a contagious disease.

From the perspective of the other party, i.e. the passenger, liner transport involves transport conditions laid down in advance by the carrier and made known to the public. Basically, it is up to the person wishing to travel by such a means of transport to decide whether or not to conclude the contract.

The object of the contract, according to Article 1225 of the Romanian Civil Code, is represented by the legal operation, i.e. the transport. The carrier may refuse transport if they do not have the appropriate means of transport to carry out the carriage, and the transport must be lawful because sometimes aspects relating to public safety or the operating conditions of the means of transport justify the carrier's refusal to carry certain persons. The impossibility of transport must exist at the time the contract is concluded and must be objective. In this respect, the special law (GO No 7 of 2005, art. 8) on the subject specifies that the rail transport operator carries out passenger transport only if transport is possible with the available agents and means of transport and transport is not prevented by circumstances which the rail transport operator cannot avoid and whose removal does not depend on them.

With regard to the carrier, both the general rule and the special law lay down particular elements with regard to capacity of use. Thus, according to the rules of the GO No 19 of 1997, only persons who carry out transport activities *in the public interest* may carry out transport activities and conclude transport contracts, and according to the rules of the Civil Code only carriers who *offer their services to the public in the course of their professional activity*. Rail passenger transport, according to the special law, is a public transport service and is provided by licensed rail passenger operators operating on the railway infrastructure.

As far as the passenger is concerned, the rule is also the capacity of exercise, i.e. the person's capacity to conclude legal acts alone (Romanian Civil Code, art. 37). Given the regulations on the capacity of exercise of natural persons, the content of which is transposed in the special regulations on the transport of persons in different ways, depending on the type of transport, the minor with restricted capacity of exercise can make alone acts of conservation, acts of administration which do not prejudice them, as well as acts of disposition of small value, of a current nature and which are executed at the time of their conclusion. The current acts of disposition of small value include, for example, obtaining a travel card, which is translated, in fact, in the conclusion of a transport contract (Baiaș, Chelaru, Constantinovici, Macovei, 2012: 47).

The case does not differ from the rules of civil law already discussed in that the provisions of the Civil Code are applicable to it, as follows: for the carrier, the purpose for which the contract of transport was concluded is to obtain the price of the transport in which their profit is included, and for the passenger, the purpose is the movement in space of their own person.

Public rail passenger transport (GEO No 12 of 1998, Article 5) is, by law, a social public service. For these services, public rail transport operators receive from the State budget or local budgets, as appropriate, the difference between the fares set with the approval of the competent public authorities and the actual transport costs, plus a profit share. In addition, in the case of public passenger transport services for certain categories of natural or legal persons who benefit, by order of the competent public authorities, from reductions in transport fares, the act which provided for the granting of these reductions provides for appropriate compensation (EC Regulation No 1370 of 2007, Article 3) for the transport operator.

Legal nature and functions of the transport document. The functions of the transport document, as they result from the analyses made in doctrine (Căpățînă, 2000: 74-77) regarding the legal nature of the transport document, can be summarised as follows: the transport document is the main *instrument of proof* for the parties, providing evidence of the existence of the contract of carriage and of the obligations assumed by the parties; the transport document has a guiding or leading function because the travel instructions for a given journey or the forwarding instructions, in the case of a contract for the carriage of goods, are set out in the contract and are very important for the proper performance of the carriage; the transport document has a *legitimising function* because the holder of the document is, as a rule, the holder of the rights arising from that document. Thus, in the case of a contract for the carriage of passengers, the passenger has the right to request the contracted journey under the contracted conditions, failing which he has the right to claim compensation.

Transport documents are, in general, documents of value in the case of contracts for the carriage of goods and documents of legitimation in the case of contracts for the carriage of passengers.

Documents of title are documents embodying a claim or a right in rem which may be enforced by the holder either against the debtor at a certain time or against the goods to which they refer. They can be, in a classification made by the doctrine (Piperea, 2019: 745-746), in: *titles representing a right in rem/titles representing goods* and whoever has the legitimate possession of the document (the carrier of goods) has possession of the goods and will hand them over only to the one who presents the title (the consignee when transporting the goods); *documents entitling the debtor to a benefit*, which may consist either in the payment of a sum of money (bonds, government securities, bills of exchange, cheques) or in the delivery of a certain quantity of goods or the provision of a service (transport documents, travel documents, stamps, postal marks); *certificates of participation*, i.e. shares issued by companies and certificates of participation in open-ended investment funds.

Professionals use certain documents in their work which have the characteristics of debt securities but are not debt securities. They are *legitimating documents*, referred to by the doctrine as improper securities (Cârpenaru, 2012: 605) and they prove the existence of legal relationships that serve to legitimise the right of the holder. The holder of such a title is considered to be entitled to receive the benefit to which the title refers.

Therefore, in legal terms, the travel card is a *legitimation document*.

Thus, in the case of a contract for the carriage of passengers by rail, the status of passenger is acquired by the person in possession of a valid travel card for the train, route and class chosen for the journey in question. In other words, the right to transport belongs, according to the special law, to the passenger who possesses a valid ticket for

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the date, train, class and service used and which is obtained in accordance with the regulations in force. *Per a contrario*, a passenger who does not possess a valid travel card, the rail transport operator does not recognise any right and, consequently, will not be liable for any damage suffered by them. At the same time, the passenger is obliged to keep their travel document with them throughout the journey and to present it to the train staff or the rail transport operator's agent for verification when requested to do so.

In this respect, it is forbidden for unauthorised persons to return the travel cards and the travel cards found in such cases will be cancelled and the passengers will be considered as without travel cards. The transfer of nominal or discounted travel cards to other persons who are not entitled to them is also not permitted, and travel cards found in this situation will be retained by train staff and the passengers concerned will be deemed not to have a travel card.

As regards the time of conclusion of the contract for carriage, this is usually before the start of performance of the contract. Thus, with regard to the contract for the carriage of goods, there is no express provision in the Code which, in a separate text exclusively reserved for this legal issue, stipulates that the obligation to draw up the transport document lies with one of the parties. However, it is clear from the body of rules as a whole that the obligation is incumbent on the consignor, unless the parties or the general law provide otherwise. The text of the Civil Code supports the idea that the preparation and, implicitly, the delivery of the transport document to the carrier is the responsibility of the consignor and that the liability for defective preparation, materialised by omissions, insufficiency or inaccuracy of the declarations in the transport document, rests with them.

The rule also applies to the passenger's travel card, i.e. the travel card/ticket must be obtained before the journey begins.

Travel cards are obtained at stations, agencies, from authorised agents, from the train driver or by electronic means, under the conditions laid down in advance by the transport operator. The passenger is obliged to check that the travel card corresponds to their requests when receiving it.

The rail transport operator is responsible for making public the rules of use and the periods of validity of travel cards (O.G. No 7 of 2005, Article 11).

As an exception to the rule, the travel card can also be obtained during transport: a passenger who does not present a valid travel card on the train is obliged to pay the train fare, and if they refuse to pay the train fare, they are considered an offender.

Legal regime of the obligations of the rail transport operator. The main obligations of the rail carrier are common to those in the general regulation, such as: the obligation of the professional carrier to remain in a state of permanent offer to the public under their conditions of transport; the obligation of the carrier to take the passenger to the place of destination unharmed and in safety; the obligation of the carrier to perform the transport within the time limit; the obligation of the passenger carrier to have liability insurance; the obligation of the carrier to provide the passenger with a seat corresponding to their travel card; the obligation of the carrier to carry children travelling with the passenger free of charge or at a reduced fare, under the conditions of the special law; the obligation of the carrier to carry the passenger's luggage free of charge, in the quantity and under the conditions laid down by the provisions of the special law, and others specific to this type of transport, such as: the obligation to

inform, the obligation of the rail carrier to refund the consideration received for carriage not carried out in full or in part.

Obligation to inform. The obligation to provide information is based on one of the fundamental principles of civil law, the principle of good faith. Although this principle is not precisely defined in the current Romanian Civil Code, it underlies many contractual and pre-contractual obligations, and the content of this concept is defined by case law. The Civil Code enshrines this principle in the various aspects it regulates. Thus, in Article 14 of Chapter III - Interpretation and effects of civil law, it sets out this principle as a general rule for any natural or legal person who must respect it in any exercise of their rights and performance of their civil obligations, while establishing it as a relative legal presumption. Another regulation of good faith is provided by Article 1170 on contract, which sets out the scope of this principle in contractual matters: it covers the pre-contractual period during which negotiations take place, the mechanism for concluding the contract and its performance. It is this rationale that has led scholars to assert that the general principle of good faith is an important governing principle of contract theory (Zamşa, 2011: 236) in general.

Related to the pre-contractual stage, the Code enshrines in the matter of negotiations in Article 1183 Civil Code, the obligation of the party engaging in a negotiation to comply with the requirements of good faith, expressly stating that the parties may not agree in any way to limit or exclude this obligation.

This principle is therefore also reflected in the Civil Code in pre-contractual matters and is the legal basis for a pre-contractual obligation - the obligation of pre-contractual information. Doctrine considers this obligation to be implicit and legal (Pop, Popa, Vidu, 2012: 93-94). This obligation is all the more necessary where a professional is involved who, in the exercise of his activity, is obliged, depending on the activity they carry out, to fulfil it. Moreover, consumer law expressly enshrines this obligation and establishes a high degree of formalism as to how it must be fulfilled (Piperea, 2019: 52).

In this respect, the rail carrier, as a professional, is also obliged to provide pre-contractual information, which is translated into practice by the obligation to equip passenger stations with information desks, information boards clearly displaying the composition of trains and the main connections between trains, as well as other necessary information for passengers. It will also display passenger train routes and fares for passengers in stations in a place visible to passengers, announcing to passengers, via booster stations, the arrival, stopping and departure of trains from the station.

The obligation of the rail carrier to remain in a state of permanent offer to the public in its conditions of transport. This obligation is legally regulated in the Civil Code by the provisions of Art. 1958 para. 3 of the Romanian Civil Code, which stipulates that the carrier offering his services to the public must carry any person who requests their services, unless they have a valid reason for refusal. The law does not specify what is meant by "a good reason for refusal", but in special laws or in the carrier's regulations, we find situations of this kind. The rail carrier carries passengers only if the transport is possible with the agents and means of transport available to them which enable the regular needs of the traffic to be met, and only if the transport is not prevented by circumstances which the rail carrier cannot avoid and the removal of which does not depend on them.

The right of transport belongs to the passenger who is in possession of a valid travel card for the date, train, class and service used (OG No 7 of 2005, art. 14).

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According to the specific regulation in this field, there are three categories of passengers: passengers admitted to transport, passengers excluded from transport and passengers conditionally admitted to transport. Thus, passengers who have valid travel cards for the train, route and class chosen for the journey are admitted to transport, and passengers who do not comply with this Regulation and the provisions of the rail transport operator, which have been made public, are excluded from transport (OG No 7 of 2005, art. 9).

The following persons shall not be admitted to the train and station or may be expelled: persons who by their behaviour disturb other passengers or cause damage to rolling stock belonging to the railway carrier, persons who, due to illness, disturb other passengers, unless they are travelling on payment of a whole compartment reservation, persons who insult or assault the staff of the railway carrier or the infrastructure manager(s) while on duty.

The obligation of the rail carrier to take the passenger to the place of destination unharmed and safe. The carrier's obligation is: a contractual obligation, an obligation to do, an obligation to provide services and an obligation of result, an obligation of safety.

From the point of view of its content, the obligation to carry persons covers, in addition to the movement operations, also the embarkation and disembarkation operations. This is provided for in Article 2002(1) of the Civil Code and its effect is that the carrier's liability will cover both the damage suffered by passengers and their luggage during transport and during embarkation and disembarkation operations. In other words, failure to carry out or improperly carrying out embarkation and disembarkation operations will give rise to contractual liability, as will the actual operation of the journey.

At the same time, according to Article 22 of GO no. 7 of 2005, the rail transport is liable for damage resulting from death, injury or any other injury to the physical or mental integrity of the passenger, caused by an accident, in connection with the operation of the railway, occurring while the passenger is in the vehicles or in premises belonging to the operator, respectively during boarding and disembarkation operations. Their liability shall also extend to the objects which the passenger, victim of such an accident, had on their person.

Obligation of the rail carrier to carry out the carriage within the time limit laid down. In general theory, the carrier's liability to carry out the transport within the time limit laid down also follows from Article 2004(2)(a) of Directive 2004/49/EC. 2 of the Romanian Civil Code, which establishes the carrier's liability for direct and immediate damages resulting from failure to perform the carriage, from performing it under conditions other than those laid down or from delay in performing it. Liability is contractual.

Depending on the type of transport, some carriers have time limits for performing the transport laid down by the legislator or the authorities in law, others set them unilaterally and make them known to the public, and others set them by agreement.

In rail transport, delays to trains must be made known to the public by the infrastructure manager, either by display at stations and through the signal installations or by verbally informing train staff. If, because of the delay of the train, the passenger does not catch the connecting train scheduled for the onward journey, for which they have a travel card, the rail carrier shall be obliged to carry them with their luggage, without charging new fares, on the first train of the same or lower rank, on the same or

another route, so that they reach their destination with the least delay. In the event of a train being suspended, if this fact was not known before departure from the starting station and the passenger does not wish to continue the journey by other trains or on other routes, the rail transport operator shall be obliged to bring them back to the starting station, with the first train in service, free of charge, and shall refund the fares paid for the distance not travelled. As an exception, if the interruption or suspension of a train has been announced the day before departure from the starting station, passengers will pay the fares for the detour.

At the same time, if the running of passenger trains is interrupted due to the poor condition of the railway infrastructure, the infrastructure manager(s) shall organise, under the existing technical conditions, a service for passengers and luggage transport by other vehicles. The fares paid for transport by these vehicles will be borne by passengers if the disruption has been announced before the departure of the train from the starting station (GO No 7 of 2005, Art. 10).

Obligation of the rail carrier to refund the consideration received for transport not wholly or partly performed. As a general approach, the refund of the consideration received by the rail carrier for transport not performed, in whole or in part, shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Rules and the rail operators' own regulations. In this respect, the Rules provide for a number of situations in which the transport charge shall be refunded in full or in part, as appropriate. By way of example, we mention situations such as: where the travel card has not been used or has been used only in part, where the passenger has not been offered a seat or has been placed in a class or train of a lower category than that indicated on the travel card, where the train for which the travel card was issued is no longer running, in cases of force majeure, etc.

The obligation of the rail carrier to provide the passenger with a seat corresponding to their travel card. Means of passenger transport are diverse, with different classes, levels of comfort, degrees of speed; they are means of transport where it is possible to travel standing up. For example, in rail passenger transport, pursuant to Article 12 of GO No 7 of 2005, the passenger can take a seat on the train, respecting the right to class and the services provided by their travel card. On trains with a reservation system, the passenger may only occupy the seats indicated on the travel card. A passenger who cannot obtain a seat and does not consent to travel standing shall have the right to request reimbursement of the travel card for the journey not made, to defer the journey or to pay the difference for travel in a higher class, in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Rules or the rail operators' own regulations, and if the passenger cannot occupy the seat reserved in accordance with the travel card, the train staff shall be obliged to provide them with another seat, within the limit of the seats available on the train, in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Rules or the rail operators' own regulations.

Obligation of the rail carrier to carry children travelling with the passenger free of charge or at a reduced fare. Special laws detail this obligation differently. Thus, for rail transport, according to Article 13 of the OG No 7 of 2005, children up to the age of 5, for whom a separate seat is not required, are carried free of charge without a travel card, and children up to the age of 10 pay 50% of the fare and of the train supplement and are entitled to a separate seat. On trains with reserved seats they also pay the full ticket. In national road passenger transport with payment, according to Art. 41 para. 4, children under 5 are carried free of charge if they do not occupy separate seats.

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The obligation of the carrier to carry without further payment the passenger's luggage in the quantity and under the conditions laid down. Although the Civil Code regulates luggage as a general rule, as a concept it does not define it or make a clear distinction between hand luggage and registered luggage, referring to special laws.

Thus, a more comprehensive regulation of the rules on luggage and possibly a definition of luggage is to be found in the special regulations on the carriage of passengers and luggage by rail. According to Article 17 of the 2005 General Ordinance No 7, passengers may take hand luggage with them free of charge in passenger carriages. Hand luggage, as a rule, must be easy to handle, well packed, so that it is not possible for the contents to leak, damage or dirty the carriages or inconvenience other passengers. The passenger shall have at their disposal for their hand luggage only the space above the seat they occupy or an equivalent space in the luggage compartment of the carriages. For rail transport, the total mass of hand luggage permitted per occupied seat is 30 kg. There are also prohibitions, in that the following may not be carried as luggage: materials and objects excluded from the carriage of luggage, objects likely to inconvenience or annoy passengers or cause damage to passengers, the rail transport operator or the railway infrastructure manager, objects prohibited by the regulations of the administrative authorities, certain living creatures. As a rule, animals, birds, reptiles, fish, live insects may not be carried in passenger carriages (Law No 110 of 2006, Article 18). The supervision of the objects that the passenger takes with them in the carriage is the passenger's responsibility and, in principle, the passenger is liable for any damage caused by the objects and living creatures that they take with them in the carriage. The carrier remains liable if it is proved that the luggage is lost due to their fault.

The carrier shall have the right to ascertain, in the presence of the passenger, the nature of the articles introduced into the passenger carriage or its premises. If it is not possible to identify the person in possession of the items to be checked, the carrier shall carry out the check in the presence of law enforcement authorities.

Obligation of the passenger carrier to have liability insurance. The carrier is obliged to have civil liability insurance, concluded under the conditions of the law, according to the general rules of the Romanian Civil Code. This obligation of the carrier is only generally applicable to the carrier of passengers and luggage, not to the carrier of goods. The importance of the carriage of passengers has determined that, regardless of the mode of transport or whether the carriage is remunerated or free of charge, the carrier is obliged to take out civil liability insurance (Scarlat, 2021: 9-22).

Closing arguments. The legal regime of the rail passenger carrier is provided for by the regulations of GO No 7 of 2005 in an almost complete manner, this regulation providing legal solutions for the essential aspects of the formation and execution of such a contract. In fact, the regulation of GO no. 7 of 2005 is broad in general, and it provides definitions for a number of terms specific to the field of transport that the common law, the Romanian Civil Code, neglects to define, although it uses them in its content: this is the case of the rules on luggage and its definition or the notion of reimbursement.

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Article Info

Received: October 22 2022

Accepted: November 02 2022

How to cite this article:

Stanciu, C. (2022). The Legal Regime of the Railway Passenger Carrier in the Romanian Legislation. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 124 – 136.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The integrity incident such as incompatibility of certain categories of public office with the status of individual trader - controversial issues in finding and sanctioning (II)

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Abstract:

In the matter of incompatibilities assessed and, as the case may be, sanctioned by the National Integrity Agency, the integrity incident generated by the incompatibility of certain categories of public functions with the status of individual trader requires a series of observations. The entry into force of the current Romanian Civil Code, and then of the amendments to the text of the GEO no. 44/2008 through the norms of Law no. 182/2016, impose a conceptual analysis and a nuance of the situations of incompatibilities within the sphere of competence of the National Integrated Agency. The discussions concern the evolution of the concept of individual trader and its implications in the identification of situations of incompatibility sanctionable according to the law.

Key-words: *National Integrity Agency, incompatibility, public office, individual trader, natural person authorized as PFA.*

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Identification of the category of trader natural person

In the Romanian legal system, the implementation of the thesis of the unity of private law through the current Civil Code has led to both a change in the nature and legal regime for legal relationships in which traders participate, and to a deregulation of trade (Gheorghiu, 2020: 510-517).

The professional, as a legal institution introduced as a novelty in the context of this regulatory approach, designates the natural person, the legal person or the entity without legal personality that operates an enterprise within the meaning of the Civil Code and, if applicable, under the conditions of special legislation (Stuparu, 2020: 49). According to the classification enshrined in the Law no. 71/2011 implementing the Law no. 287/2009 on the Civil Code (article 8 paragraph 1), the notion of "professional" includes, but is not limited to, the category of trader.

In the matter of the trader, including the type of natural person, the main normative acts that reflect the current view of the legislature on this type of professional are both those of general applicability in the national legal order (Romanian Civil Code and Law no. 71/2011) and those of particular applicability (various special laws such as: GEO no. 44/2008 on the performance of economic activities by authorized individuals, sole proprietorships and family businesses, the Law no. 321/2009 on the marketing of food products, G.O. no. 99/2000 on the marketing of products on the market, etc.).

At present, we consider that the terminology "trader" designates the natural person, legal person or entity without legal personality who organizes and carries out an economic activity for profit, becoming a professional under the law, and who, as a rule, is subject to registration in the trade register (Stuparu, 2020: 60).

With the entry into force of the Civil Code, doctrine (Cărpenu, 2019: 40- 41; Angheni, 2019:68; Nemeş, 2018:27) and practice have treated, as a rule, the professional trader natural person by reference to the three legal forms established by GEO no. 44/2008, namely: authorized natural person (PFA), sole proprietorship and family business. The justification for this approach is the designation of the trader by the Law no. 71/2011 as a category of professional (article 8 paragraph 1) and the 'equating' of the notion 'trader' with the term 'natural persons or, where appropriate, legal persons subject to registration in the trade register' (article 6 paragraph 1). According to Law no. 26/1990 on the trade register (article 1 paragraph 1), natural persons established in the three legal forms referred to in GEO no. 44/2008 fall within the scope of persons who are required to be registered in the trade register before commencing their economic activity. The formality of registration in the trade register is also maintained by the text of Law no. 265/2022 on the trade register and for the amendment and completion of other regulatory acts affecting registration in the trade register, this regulatory act coming into force on 26 November 2022 and repealing Law no. 26/1990.

Specifically, GEO no. 44/2008 regulates the general legal regime of the natural person trader registered in the trade register (a type of professional established by the Civil Code) in terms of the legal forms of conducting economic activity e. The three legal statuses are defined by law as economic enterprise and the entrepreneur is the natural person who organises the economic enterprise (article 2 letters g-i of GEO no. 44/2008).

Authorised natural persons (PFA), sole proprietorships and family businesses are defined as economic enterprises without legal personality. The meaning of the economic enterprise enshrined in GEO no. 44/2008 (article 2 letter f) is that of an economic activity carried out in an organised, permanent and systematic manner, combining financial

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resources, labour, raw materials, logistical means and information, at the entrepreneur's own risk, in the cases and under the conditions laid down by law.

In the case of the authorised natural person, the economic enterprise is organised by a natural person using mainly his labour force and professional skills. A sole proprietorship is an economic enterprise, without legal personality, organised by a natural person entrepreneur. In turn, a family business is an economic enterprise, without legal personality, organised by members of a family (this refers to the husband, wife, their children who have reached the age of 16 at the date of authorisation of the family business, and relatives up to and including the fourth degree) (article 2 letter d and article 28 paragraph 1 of GEO no. 44/2008).

However, we cannot ignore the fact that the status of natural person trader is also recognised by other special laws than GEO no. 44/2008, in which case the term "trader" will have the specific meaning of the provisions of these normative acts. In such cases, the status of trader relates to the economic activity that the natural person carries out (in principle, of a commercial nature), and its legal form of establishment and/or registration in the trade register are irrelevant.

Law no. 321/2009 on the marketing of foodstuffs is such an example of a special law, as it is explicitly mentioned in the provisions of Law no. 71/2011 (article 6 paragraph 2) in the scope of exceptions for which the title of trader is maintained. In other words, it is a case in which the term trader has survived after the application of the new Civil Code, not being replaced by new variants such as 'natural persons or, as the case may be, legal persons subject to registration in the trade register, in accordance with article 1 of Law no. 26/1990 on the trade register' (established by the legislature for 'references to traders' in the regulatory acts applicable at the time of the entry into force of the Civil Code) or 'professional' (a term imposed as a replacement for the term 'trader' in the legislation on the protection of consumer rights). According to Law no. 321/2009, a trader is defined as a natural person who is authorised to carry out activities of marketing food products to consumers (article 2 paragraph 2 point 9).

Clearly, natural persons who have the status of natural person trader, in the specific meaning of the provisions of various special laws (such as the one mentioned above), can carry out their economic activity in the forms established by the GEO no. 44/2008 of PFA, sole proprietorship or family business.

Controversy concerning the identification of the trader as a natural person for the purposes of GEO 44/2008

The rule on the trader as a natural person, represented by natural persons benefiting from the three legal statutes regulated by GEO no. 44/2008, is the occasion for certain observations motivated by the changes made to this normative act by its amending Law no. 182/2016. Moreover, the topic is an opportunity to expose some divergent opinions in national doctrine (Stuparu, 2020: 130-137; Angheni, 2019: 53-55; Cărpănaru, 2019:41-45; Tuleaşcă, 2018:61-63).

A first finding is that natural persons registered in the trade register and authorised to carry out economic activities as a PFA, sole proprietorship and family business operate businesses (both within the meaning of GEO no. 44/2008 and the Civil Code) and are professionals within the meaning of article 3 paragraph 2 of the Civil Code.

With regard to the term "trader", we note that the current text of GEO no. 44/2008 explicitly and exclusively retains the term "trader" only for the entrepreneur who

is a natural person and a sole proprietor (through and from the date of his registration in the trade register), while for the owner of the PFA and the members of the family business this terminology has been eliminated .

A final remark concerns PFA holders and members of family businesses, for whom the terminology "trader" can only have as a normative source the specific meaning recognised for this term by special laws other than GEO no. 44/2008, as a result of the choice of individuals for the two legal forms mentioned in order to carry out their economic activity for profit. In other words, the recognition of the status of natural person as a trader for the holder of a PFA and members of a family business no longer has the express legal basis of GEO no. 44/2008.

In conclusion, the changes in terminology concerning the "trader" covered by GEO no. 44/2008 were necessary once the Civil Code came into force, but Law no. 182/2016 provided a version that is open to criticism. This latter piece of legislation has succeeded in increasing the existing ambiguity on the subject of the 'trader' under the impact of at least the provisions of article 8 paragraph 1 of the Civil Code and article 6 of Law no. 71/2011. The current text of GEO no. 44/2008 is all the more open to criticism because, from a practical point of view, just like the proprietor of a sole proprietorship (the only one for whom this special law expressly preserves the status of 'trader'), natural persons authorised as a PFA or family business are obliged to register in the trade register and operate economic enterprises, the legislature not having introduced any differences for any of these enterprises as regards their object (production, management or disposal of goods or provision of services) and purpose (exclusively profit-making).

Consequently, the natural person authorised as a PFA, the owner of the sole proprietorship, as well as the members of the family business acquire the status of professional as a result of the operation of the business within the meaning of the law, are registered in the trade register before the start of the economic activity and are subject to the legal regime established by the GEO no. 44/2008 corresponding to the form of incorporation. However, with regard to the status of natural person trader, while this is always held by any owner of a sole proprietorship, for natural persons authorised as a PFA and members of a family business, the status of trader may be based exclusively on the application of a special law expressly recognising this status, irrespective of the form chosen for the conduct of the economic activity and registration in the trade register.

The position of the courts in identifying the status of trader of a natural person liable to be incompatible

Any natural person who falls within the scope of the regulatory framework establishing the legal regime of incompatibilities is under an obligation to comply with it, but the choice of compliance is of a personal nature.

Incompatibilities between the status of natural person trader and the various public offices/positions have generated numerous disputes over time, being referred to the competent courts in the common law procedure or to the Constitutional Court of Romania in the unconstitutionality exception procedure (e.g. Decision no. Almost all of them, the natural person traders concerned by the activity of the National Integrity Agency inspectors and parties to the above mentioned lawsuits, are natural persons authorized in the three legal forms regulated by GEO no. 44/2008. In other words, this normative act, and not other special laws that enshrine specific meanings of the term "trader", is the main or even the only regulation that the Romanian courts invoke when

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assessing the trader status of a natural person as a necessary condition for identifying and sanctioning the state of incompatibility for the categories analysed.

In summary, we note that, critically, the case law of the ordinary courts in Romania does not reflect a nuanced interpretation of the incompatibility between public office/dignity and the quality of trader natural person. We are strictly concerned with identifying the existence of the status of trader, which is the only condition imposed by law on an individual in order to determine whether he is in a state of incompatibility provided for by Law no. 161/2003 or other special laws.

Unfortunately, national courts recognise the status of trader to any natural person who holds the legal status of PFA, owner of a sole proprietorship or member of a family business, ignoring the fact that the text of GEO no. 44/2008 currently expressly and exclusively attributes the status of trader only to owners of sole proprietorships for the duration of their registration in the trade register. In the case of the latter, aspects such as the manner in which the natural person carries on his activity, the subject-matter or complexity of his activity, the nature of his income or the profit obtained are irrelevant to the issue under consideration, even if they are submitted to the attention of the court. In order to avoid the sanction, such a natural person trader has both a legal obligation and a personal interest to apply for the registration of the decision on the termination and removal from the trade register of the legal status associated with the status of trader within the legal time-limit, so that his appointment, designation or election to any public office giving rise to incompatibility avoids a breach of the legal regime associated with it.

In our opinion, for natural persons who are authorized as a PFA or as members of a family business, the determination of the existence of the state of incompatibility requires the determination of the status of trader by the court in relation to those normative acts that deal with the specific meaning of this term, the mere possession of either of the two legal statuses mentioned (according to the GEO no. 44/2008) does not in itself ensure the fulfilment of the condition required for incompatibilities sanctioned by law.

Regarding the position of the Constitutional Court of Romania on the incompatibilities between the status of natural person trader and the various public offices, we also note a not exactly clear-cut approach, which validates the freedom of appreciation of the common law courts seized with such cases.

Thus, we recall Decision no. 396/2013 which allowed the constitutional court to note that "the de facto qualification of a natural person carrying out an authorised economic activity as a trader must be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the competent institutions/authorities, according to the coordinates contained in the ordinary law (article 3 of Law no. 287/2009 on the Civil Code (...)) and article 6 of Law no. 71/2011 for the implementation of Law no. 287/2009 on the Civil Code (...)".

Last but not least, although the Constitutional Court of Romania rejected by Decision no. 420/2018 the unconstitutionality exception raised, it noted that "with regard to traders who do not carry out commercial activities in any form, being inactive in the sphere of professional relations under private law, according to its case law, the concrete determination of the state of incompatibility lies with the court, which, when deciding the action brought against the assessment report drawn up by the National Integrity Agency, analyses the specific features of each case in the light of the relevant legal provisions, so that the decision reached corresponds to the legal aim of ensuring impartiality and protecting the social interest.

Incompatibility through the assessment and sanctioning filter of competent authorities, bodies and/or courts

In the operation of the business, the professional trader natural person must respect the law, public order and good morals. To this end, a number of regulatory restrictions have been imposed on traders in the conduct of their business activities, in the form of incompatibilities, disqualifications, prohibitions and authorisations, any breach of which may result in civil, criminal or other penalties.

Put in the context of the subject under consideration, incompatibilities are restrictions laid down by special laws for certain individuals to operate a commercial enterprise, determined by the office, dignity, public capacity or public authority they hold or exercise. Such incompatibilities between the various offices, dignities or qualities referred to with the pursuit of economic activities or with the very quality of trader as a natural person are enshrined in numerous legal acts and are justified by the need to avoid a conflict of interest caused by such a concomitance.

It is mainly the legislation specific to the acquisition and exercise of various functions, qualities, public offices or public authority that establishes the incompatibilities of natural persons with such a status, i.e. regulates the penalty regime for violation of this type of restriction. The sanctions are of a disciplinary or professional nature, in the sense of not affecting the status of trader and the validity of legal acts concluded in this capacity by the natural person identified as being in a situation of incompatibility (Găină, 2017:83). By way of example, such sanctions are: the consideration of the natural person as having resigned, the suspension of the quality or exercise of the function for the duration of the incompatibility, the suspension or dismissal from public office, the automatic termination of the mandate or quality, the withdrawal of accreditation or appointment, the obligation to resign from public office. The application of sanctions shall comply with the terms, procedures and conditions laid down in the relevant regulations.

In addition, from a legislative point of view, the various normative acts establishing the legal regime of the National Integrity Agency (A.N.I./Agency) also apply, in view of the role established by the legislature for this authority in the field of integrity incidents such as incompatibilities between various categories of public functions and the status of natural person trader.

In case of such integrity incidents, we remind that *the integrity inspectors of the Agency* are those who exercise the duties set out in Law no. 176/2010 on integrity in the exercise of public functions and public office, for the amendment and completion of Law no. 144/2007 on the establishment, organization and functioning of the National Integrity Agency, as well as for the amendment and completion of other normative acts. In summary, the inspectors of the ANI. carry out the following activities: 1) receive, collect, centralize and process data and information on the situation of incompatibilities concerning persons holding public offices or dignities; 2) assess incompatibilities of persons holding public offices or dignities; 3) draw up assessment reports if, following the assessment, they identify elements of violation of the legislation on the incompatibilities regime, as well as, where appropriate, of the disciplinary, contravention or criminal legislation; 4) draw up assessment reports if, following the assessment, they do not identify elements of violation of the legislation on the incompatibilities regime; 5) apply the sanctions and take the measures provided for by law within their competence. (article 10 letters a, e, f, g, and h of Law no. 176/2010)

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The assessment report on the existence of incompatibility must have the structure regulated by law, i.e. it will contain the descriptive part of the factual situation, the point of view of the person under assessment (if expressed), the assessment of the elements of incompatibility and the conclusions. The assessment report shall be communicated within 5 days of its completion to the person who has been the subject of the assessment and, where appropriate, to the criminal prosecution and disciplinary bodies.

The actual sanctioning of the person subject to the assessment is influenced by the course of the incompatibility assessment report drawn up by the integrity officers.

If the assessment report is challenged before the administrative court within 15 days of receipt by the person who was the subject of the incompatibility assessment, the sanction will be that decided upon completion of the procedural steps by the court. Thus, situations of incompatibility found by the ANI may or may not be maintained by the court's decision. The procedure is that laid down in the Administrative Litigation Law no. 554/2004 and applies accordingly, insofar as there are no provisions derogating from it.

If the incompatibility assessment report is not contested within the legal deadline, the National Integrity Agency will be able to proceed to the next procedural step. Depending on the specific situation, the Agency will refer the matter to the competent bodies within 15 days to initiate disciplinary proceedings and, if necessary, within 6 months to the administrative court, with a view to annulling the acts issued, adopted or drawn up in breach of the legal provisions on incompatibilities.

In this context, we consider it appropriate to mention the role of the various *disciplinary bodies* that receive the assessment report drawn up by the integrity inspectors, which identify elements of violation of the incompatibility regime, and which will carry out the disciplinary procedure according to the law. They operate either as structures within the public authorities/institutions in which the persons assessed to be in a situation of incompatibility work (e.g. the disciplinary committee/council for civil servants; the Chamber of Parliament to which the parliamentarian belongs in the case of senators and deputies) or are public authorities/institutions distinct from them (e.g. Parliament receives communications concerning the President of Romania, the Prime Minister or members of the Court of Accounts, the Ombudsman and his deputies). The disciplinary bodies exercise the powers assigned to them under the relevant special laws, with the power to ensure the investigation, when referred to them, of the acts of persons who are deemed to have committed disciplinary offences and to propose the applicable disciplinary sanction or the closure of the case, where appropriate.

As regards disciplinary sanctions, Law no. 176/2010 (article 25) provides that the act of a person who has been found to have issued an administrative act, concluded a legal act, taken a decision or participated in taking a decision in violation of the legal obligations regarding the state of incompatibility constitutes a disciplinary offence and shall be sanctioned according to the regulations applicable to the dignity, function or activity in question, insofar as the provisions of Law no. 176/2010 do not derogate from it and if the act does not meet the constitutive elements of an offence. The act of the person found to be incompatible shall be grounds for dismissal from office or, as the case may be, shall constitute a disciplinary offence and shall be punished in accordance with the regulations applicable to the dignity, office or activity in question. In addition, the person dismissed or removed from office (in the situations mentioned above) or found to be incompatible shall be disqualified from exercising a public office or public dignity covered by Law no. 176/2010, with the exception of electoral offices, for a period of 3

years from the date of dismissal or removal from the public office or public dignity in question or from the date of termination of the mandate. If the person has held an eligible office, he/she may not hold the same office for a period of 3 years after the termination of the mandate. If the person no longer holds a public office or dignity at the date of the finding of incompatibility or conflict of interest, the 3-year prohibition operates according to the law, from the date of the final outcome of the assessment report or the final and irrevocable court decision confirming the existence of a state of incompatibility.

As revealed in a recent report on the activity of the ANI, in cases of incompatibility (including with the status of natural person trader) brought before the various disciplinary commissions, various sanctions have been applied over the years, which we present here as examples. Depending on the case, the person found to be incompatible has resigned, been transferred to another institution, been demoted or removed from the post giving rise to the incompatibility, been dismissed, had his salary reduced for a certain period of time or been banned from holding a management post in the institution for 3 years. There were also situations where it was found that the period within which disciplinary sanctions could be applied had expired, so that no action was taken by the Disciplinary Commission, and there were also situations where the Commission refused to take any action or to discuss the cases of persons in a state of incompatibility. Last but not least, decisions of the Disciplinary Commission to dismiss were annulled by the courts after the person evaluated had lodged a complaint in accordance with the law. (https://www.integritate.eu/Files/Files/Rapoarte/068b%20Raport_Activitate_Anual_ANI_2021.pdf : 13)

Cases of incompatibilities are referred to *the prosecution authorities* when the National Integrity Agency, following its assessment, has indications of a breach of criminal law. The assessment reports drawn up are sent to the competent prosecutor's offices and/or courts. In the cases submitted to the Public Prosecutor's Office, by application of the relevant criminal and criminal procedural legislation, the prosecution may be ordered to be initiated, the prosecution may be dropped, the prosecution may not be initiated, or the case may be dismissed. In cases before the courts, the decision may consist of a criminal fine, an administrative fine, acquittal or a criminal prison sentence. In terms of sanctions, the fact that the Agency's assessment report has also been communicated to the criminal prosecution authorities does not mean that the disciplinary sanction, if imposed, cannot be applied within a maximum of 6 months from the date of the final decision on the assessment report.

Complaints against administrative fines imposed by the National Integrity Agency also fall within the jurisdiction of the courts. Depending on the case, a court decision may order that the contraventions imposed be maintained or annulled.

Last but not least, through the provisions of Law no. 176/2010 (article 25 para.5) the legislature has ruled that civil or administrative liability, disciplinary, for the acts that determine the existence of the state of incompatibility of persons in the exercise of public office or public functions is waived and cannot be incurred if the general limitation period of 3 years from the date of their commission is exceeded, in accordance with article 2.517 of Law no. 287/2009 on the Civil Code.

The integrity incident such as incompatibility of certain categories of public office with the status of individual trader - controversial issues in finding and sanctioning (II)

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- https://www.integritate.eu/Files/Files/Rapoarte/068b%20Raport_Activitate_Anual_ANI_2021.pdf

Article Info

Received: October 30 2022

Accepted: November 08 2022

How to cite this article:

Stuparu, L. E. (2022). The integrity incident such as incompatibility of certain categories of public office with the status of individual trader - controversial issues in finding and sanctioning (II). *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 137 – 145.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Placing students' emotions at the heart of the learning process, a challenge for teachers

Daniela Scorțan¹⁾

Abstract:

School is the place where emotions can constitute an obstacle to learning or facilitate it. Feelings of insecurity and even fear are often the cause of failure. It is then a question of trying to control parasite emotions in order to promote a meaningful and more serene learning. This article focuses on students' emotions as processes which, given their cerebral implementations in relation to the systems involved in motivation, attention and memory are at the heart of learning process. Researches suggest that emotional skills are beneficial to both well-being and academic performance. Emotions support attention, working memory, encoding, memory consolidation or processes related to executive control (inhibition). Those cognitive processes are also necessary for academic learning. Emotions therefore accompany the students within the classroom, and may interfere with learning or consolidate it. Research on emotions, their cerebral bases and functions, invite us to question the idea according to which emotions hinder school learning; on the contrary, even if emotions can indeed sometimes affect learning, experimental results suggest that they often facilitate cognitive processes such as attention and memory, which are essential for learning. Moreover, the fact that emotions have an important role in the process of learning suggests that it is important for the student to be able to know, control and use them, in an academic context.

Keywords: *emotions, learning process, motivation, affective communication, instructional strategies.*

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Introduction

A traditional proverb states that „a wise teacher must make learning a daily pleasure”. This adage raises many questions, both on the side of the learner and on the side of the trainer. Can learning be a source of pleasure? What is an emotion in a learning situation? How can the emotional experience be beneficial for academic success? What is its role alongside the motivational engagement of the student in the task? How can the trainer make his teaching interesting? Our emotions occupy a significant place in our daily lives. They mark almost all the significant moments of our lives (birth, professional success, failure, etc.). Moreover, we remember not „objective” events, but events evoking emotions, whether positive or negative. Throughout history, there have been many definitions of emotions and they have emphasized the different aspects of emotion such as its bodily, personal, social and cognitive dimensions. Currently, a so-called multicomponential definition of emotion is often used in cognitive science research. According to this approach (Sander, 2014), emotion is defined as a rapid and transient modification of state in two stages: an initial trigger due to the relevance of an event (real or imagined) leading to a response in several components (peripheral nervous system, tendency to action, motor expression and conscious feeling).

As John Dirkx (2001) suggests, emotions are intrinsically involved, just like cognition, in the learning process. The scientific literature notes that the learning activity is increasingly recognized as an emotionally charged experience (D’Mello & Graesser, 2012). Thus, it is crucial to consider emotions to understand an educational context (Pekrun & Stephens, 2010). The work of Reinhard Pekrun and his colleague highlights the importance of emotions directly linked to „context”. These authors suggest that the emotions felt, whatever the academic context, can be considered as part of four large families. The first family of academic emotions refers to the subject studied, the topic emotion. According to the authors, these emotions are linked to the theme addressed by the learner, and refer to an emotion such as anxiety when the learner finds himself in a mathematics course or boredom when studying plastic art. The second family focuses on the social dimension represented by a classroom learning situation: students interact with their peers and teachers, and may feel emotions directly related to this situation (for example pride or shame). The third and fourth families have been studied in more detail in the literature and refer to epistemic and achievement emotions respectively.

If the first refers directly to the cognitive dimension involved in all learning, the second concerns the consequences linked to this learning, such as success or failure. If the learner focuses his attention on the cognitive aspect of a task (for example, a frustration directly related to the possibly unsolvable complexity of a problem), the emotion will be considered epistemic. On the other hand, if it focuses on the activity as such (for example the fact of studying) or on the consequences of this task (for example, a potential failure in an exam), the emotion felt will be categorized as accomplishment (Pekrun & Perry, 2014).

The majority of research has been particularly interested in the impact of epistemic and achievement emotions on various aspects related to learning such as attentional resources, motivations towards learning, strategies and regulations of learning. In general, the results suggest that epistemic emotions with a positive emotional valence such as curiosity induce self-regulated learning, during which the learner resorts to proven learning strategies, for example by attempting to apply strategies used to other similar cases. (Pekrun & Stephens, 2012).

The results concerning negative emotions are more mixed. Indeed, depending on whether the emotion felt is activating or deactivating, it will be linked to different strategies. As Pekrun and Stephens (2012) suggest, activating negative emotions, such as frustration or confusion, can lead to a strong tendency to avoid failure, and induce greater investment in the task. Conversely, deactivating negative emotions, such as boredom, is linked to disinvestment in the task (Pekrun et al., 2010). Research on the emotions of achievement has also highlighted their importance and their link with academic performance.

Positive and negative emotions

If the results do not show any impact of the emotional content of the text on the emotional state of the students, they do reveal an effect of the emotional content of the text on the performance: the students presented more errors when they were confronted to emotional texts (of positive or negative valence) compared to neutral texts, and all the more so for positive texts. These results were replicated by Michaël Fartoukh and Lucile Chanquoy (2016) suggesting a negative effect of emotional content on students' spelling performance. Tornare and colleagues (2016) suggest that an induction of joy can impact performance, but it depends on the task. In particular, these authors showed that joy was linked to better performance in a grammatical task, but not in text comprehension or dictation. Related to the above, Pekrun et al. (2010) showed that positive emotions were linked to positive outcomes in terms of academic achievement. Pekrun suggests that the positive impact of positive accomplishment emotions is directly linked to the fact that they increase the interest and effort put into the task as well as the quality and regulation of metacognitive strategies of learning.

These positive and activating emotions promote the use of cognitive strategies that are more beneficial for learning. They promote both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They promote self-regulation of learning. They are linked to a greater effort provided as well as greater attentional resources allocated to the task.

In contrast, negative emotions, and in particular disabling ones, are linked to a decrease in student achievement and ability to learn. Indeed, research suggests that this impact is caused by a decrease in motivation, interest and effort in processing information as well as to attention problems. Activating negative emotions can be linked to a renewed metacognitive commitment as well as to an increase in extrinsic motivation to invest in the task. The link between emotions of achievement and academic success is mediated by motivational and cognitive processes (Putwain, Sander & Larkin, 2013).

Another aspect of research on the importance of emotions in the school context has focused on the emotional content as identified or included in various educational materials and the impact of the latter on emotions, and secondly on the learnings. Research suggests that the emotional content of educational materials, even when enjoyable, does not necessarily facilitate comprehension or the acquisition of spelling skills in a dictation context. Indeed, the results reveal that the more pleasant the content, the more the performance is altered. Tornare and his colleagues (2016) show that this result is due to the fact that the emotions induced reduce the attentional resources that would normally be dedicated to the task (for example to understand the text, or find the spelling of a word). If the elements presented so far highlight the individual functions of emotions (such as the impact of emotions for the individual himself), the learning context implies a dyadic relationship between student and teacher. Emotions emerging in this context thus have a communication function (Niedenthal, Barsalou, Winkielman,

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Krauth-Gruber, Ric, 2005). Indeed, the communication of an emotion to others allows the sender to convey to the recipient his understanding of the situation and to induce an emotion in him so that he modifies his behavior or the type of reaction expected, depending on the context.

As suggested by Perkon and his colleagues (2010), the emotions emanating from teachers and students will also have reciprocal influences on each other. For example, a teacher showing enthusiasm when introducing a new topic to his students can induce enthusiasm in them as well. Similarly, if the teacher sees that his students are enthusiastic about a subject he is teaching, he may also feel enthusiasm. Thus, the importance of understanding the emotions of his students appears crucial for the teacher who can confer on them a diagnostic value (Boekaerts, 1996): indeed they can be the reflection of the cognitions of the learners but also of their commitment. These elements, based on the principle of emotional contagion (Hatfield et al., 1993), clearly highlight the interactional and emotional stakes involved in school and more generally in academic training. The literature has highlighted the importance of emotions in the learner in a learning context. If these can emanate from different aspects of the learning situation (for example, the situation, such as an exam situation, the cognitive dimension of the learning content or the relationship with the pairs), their impact is on different components of learning, such as motivation, regulation of learning or attention.

The importance of students' emotions in the classroom

Current models therefore suggest that emotions and cognitive functions act together and diffusely, with a cerebral base highly distributed within neural networks. In this perspective, emotions support attention, working memory, encoding, memory consolidation or even processes related to executive control (e.g. inhibition). These cognitive processes are also necessary for school learning. Emotions therefore accompany students in the classroom, and can interact with learning. Frequently, at school, students experience intense emotions that need to be both identified and understood in order to be able to be managed in such a way as to promote school learning and maintain positive relationships with the teacher and peers. Undoubtedly, effective emotional regulation is an essential prerequisite for adaptive functioning. Becoming progressively „emotionally competent” therefore constitutes one of the major challenges of the first levels of schooling. It is not always easy for the teacher to manage very different profiles of emotional skills (Raver, 2002) for several reasons, in particular: the lack of knowledge and tools to assess and develop these skills in pupils, conceptions relating to the „teacher's job” (e.g. is it the role of the teacher to „educate”, „to teach” emotions?). We believe that it is possible to improve children's emotional competences by supporting them indirectly through the development of teachers' emotional competences and/or by directly challenging them through the labeling of emotions, emotional conversations and pretend play.

Teaching is in itself a real emotional enterprise. Hargreaves (2000) emphasizes the emotional nature of the teacher's work. This involves the emotions of the teacher, the understanding of the emotions of the students in the relationships he establishes and teaching as an object of learning emotions. However, before being able to effectively develop the emotional skills of the student, it is for the teacher to be able to develop his own emotional skills, in particular to leave room for emotions, to prevent them from parasitizing learning, listening to emotions with empathy or mastering any emotional

contagion (that is to say, succeeding in keeping calm and moving towards understanding the thoughts of others without being overwhelmed by their emotions).

Moreover, studies have revealed emotional contagion, both for unpleasant emotions (fear, anger) and for pleasant emotions (joy, interest). For example, research by Oberle and Schonert-Reichl (2016) found that self-reported burnout by teachers was linked to difficulties in regulating their students' stress measured by the variability in the rate of cortisol. With this in mind, it is essential that the teacher can, first of all, become aware of his own emotional skills, by examining in particular his personal way of expressing his emotions in class as well as the strategies he mobilizes to regulate them. This awareness can be fostered by asking different questions such as: do I express emotions in class? Am I allowed to do this and how? Are the strategies I use to regulate my emotions appropriate and functional? It is also necessary for him to be able to analyze his reactions to the expression of pupils' emotions in class: are the emotions expressed by the pupils welcomed with kindness? Are they verbally mediated? Conversations? Are they minimized, ridiculed, ignored?

Both teachers and parents manage the emotional climate in which students will learn about their emotions. The adult as well as the peers in class will play the role of external regulator (by providing help, support) so that the students can gradually learn to self-regulate (necessary passage from hetero-regulation to self-regulation). Teachers who are unaware of their own emotions most often ignore students' emotions, tend to use punishment, provide little comfort to those who express negative emotions, hardly notice students' positive emotions, such as joy.

Qualities of an emotionally competent teacher

In the same way, teachers who present a higher level of socio-emotional skills establish more positive interpersonal relationships with their students, testify to more effective classroom management by making more skilful use of emotional expressions and verbal support to foster enthusiasm, enjoyment of learning and to manage student behavior.

Create a positive emotional climate, recognize and work on one's own emotions and those of the students, demonstrate an ability to listen to the expectations and interests of all students, develop awareness of one's strengths and needs, its values, and also being attentive to one's own bodily sensations would constitute the essential qualities of a teacher who would be emotionally competent (Ergur, 2009).

Teachers can try on a daily basis in the classroom to develop their own emotional skills. Regulating emotions involves in particular the cognitive evaluation of an event. Appropriate strategies can be learned such as: focus on planning and on the positive (e.g. thinking about the steps to take and how to handle the negative event, thinking about happy and pleasant things instead of thinking about the negative event). Accepting and positively reassessing a situation (e.g. finding an adaptive or positive meaning to the event in terms of personal development); put into perspective (e.g. relativize the seriousness of the event by asking yourself „Will I think about it again next week? And in a year?“)

Regulating emotions in the teaching profession also involves successfully expressing (e.g. expressing an emotion in the right way, with the right intensity, at the right time, to the right person) one's own emotions and listening carefully to those of others. Verbalizing feelings can be particularly tricky, and using certain methods of communication can help a great deal.

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In classroom teachers should describe the situation in a factual way, without judgment: saying „there are people waiting...” rather than „you always want to go ahead of everyone”; express their own feelings by using the pronoun „I” and avoiding the „you”; explain the needs that are not being met in this situation: saying „I feel upset because I wanted to...” rather than „you are terrible”; propose a concrete solution (or ask the interlocutor how he suggests to solve the problem): saying „next time I would like you to...” rather than „make an effort from now on”.

The stress at school

In general, the literature on stress in the workplace education covers several phenomena related to the school and the learning situation. The causes of tension are multiple and can be caused by many factors: physiological, pedagogical, socio-psychological, such as, among others, relationships with the teacher, peer judgment, demands of parents or even various daily hassles in various fields which can affect learning: school, family, peers, future, etc. According to most research, school stress influences the three variables of the educational environment in a fairly equal way: the emotional adaptation of the pupils, their behavior and their academic performance. These variables are articulated within the school environment, and their interactions concern all the actors of the educational community: students, teachers, educators, but also parents. Overall research shows that academic progress is often affected by school stress and by the pressure that students put themselves in relation to the results or the anxiety they perceive in their parents, their educators and even their peers.

The student-teacher relationship or student-student (interpersonal conflicts, harassment, etc.) can create stress for students. Nevertheless, the pressure perceived by students from teachers is one of the most important causes of school stress compared to other types of pressure coming from parents or peers. Other major causes, revealed by all the studies, are stress in the face of performance pressure and problems related to learning. There are several categories of sources of stress in adolescents: those predictable and avoidable (drug use, delinquency), those unforeseeable and unavoidable (illnesses) and those foreseeable and unavoidable (controls and evaluations). Failure to cope with one or more sources of stress from these categories cause the individual to experience emotional symptoms such as, respectively, anxiety, depression or anger. Family issues are a very big source of tension that can interfere with the work of the child at school, as well as with regard to social problems.

In more recent works, school stress can be defined as a state of stress chronic in students who have set themselves unattainable goals, at a given moment in their schooling with regard to their abilities, or whose perception of the expectations that their entourage, especially the parents, exceeds their capacities. Some researchers studying the problem of school stress have introduced the term „school burnout” (Meylan et al., 2015), a phenomenon initially studied in adults and referring to professional burnout.

Meylan et al. (2015) postulate that this phenomenon is due to the increase in performance and success requirements that characterizes the evolution of modern liberal societies. According to this work, these requirements test the „narcissistic resources” of the individual and lead to the stress that generates the suffering of children and adolescents at school. Thus, school burnout corresponds, for these authors, to a syndrome of exhaustion, cynicism and inadequacy towards school: emotional exhaustion in the face of demands for school with chronic fatigue linked to an overload of school work; from cynicism to towards the school, such as a loss of interest and an inability for

the students to give meaning to their education; a feeling of inadequacy which results in a lack of accomplishment in school work and in the school in general. Even during a short knowledge test, in class, when the teacher announces that it is going to be graded, the students show a considerable increase in stress. Grading is therefore a stress factor for students. And even if the link between the presence, continuous or occasional, of this evaluation stress and performance is difficult to establish, however, the student performance on difficult tasks during a graded test was found lower than the unscored test. Furthermore, limiting the response time is a strong stress factor during knowledge checks and evaluations done in class. This stress factor turns out to be even stronger than that caused by the rating.

In ordinary classroom situations, during regular activity, the strongest increased emotional reactivities have been observed in interaction situations of the teacher with his class. When the teacher approaches the student for a short written evaluation by making a comment to him, or even to check whether he has understood the instructions, the student manifests periods of stress and this reactivity can prevent him from focussing on the task at hand. Moreover, it has been observed that the class reacts emotionally in a very strong way to the words of the teacher who, trying to mobilize the students to do the written test well, insists on the importance of the results. We also found that students show more stress reactions towards the end of the test (when there is little time left), and this stress increases significantly when the teacher announces the remaining time out loud. This research reveals that, in line with the importance of taking into account factors likely to cause students to experience evaluation stress (response time limited, grading, etc.), the role of the teacher-student relationship should not be underestimated, because the figure of the teacher, his posture, the image he sends back, his gestures, his words strongly influence the emotional balance of students. Stress is not so easy to detect. To renew their pedagogical posture, teachers can collect information on the student's activity. An approach that must be based on what he does (his written records), on what he says (his verbalizations) and on his behavior. From this set of data, the teacher, if trained, will be able to know if the student is stressed.

In addition, to limit stress or even create virtuous links between positive emotions and learning, teachers can play on the notion of pleasure. It is more a question of mobilizing the curiosity of the student than of engaging him in „gamification” activities.” Pleasure can come from arousing intellectual curiosity about a given topic. In this context, the student wants to formulate or discover the right answers. Since this situation brings the student into a process of cognitive pleasure, it is ideal for pushing him to mobilize knowledge. In teaching situations, teachers regulate the learning activities of their students. Within this general framework, they may be led to diagnose the effects, positive or negative, due to emotions. However, it often happens that these emotions produce a positive effect, even when it comes to so-called negative emotions such as stress.

Stress thus plays a role of stimulator in learning, but in some cases causing negative effects of blocking cognition. Another consequence of stress: the effect of cognitive overload which, in a school situation, results in the mobilization of very old knowledge. This is a very negative effect because prior knowledge, which is easier to access, is not enough to produce the right answers when faced with a given problem. More generally, research shows that negative emotional systems manage to inhibit cognitive processes such as attention, concentration, reasoning skills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, valuing emotions (rather than rejecting or disapproving them) allows teachers to develop their emotional skills as well as those of their students, through learning and the classroom climate. Conversations support students in their zone of proximal development and engage them in a higher level of reasoning and problem solving than when they are alone. The same goes for conversations about emotions. Talking about emotion should include conversations about: specific emotions (such as fear, anger, sadness, joy); description of the causes and consequences of emotions; asking questions about these emotions. Understanding emotions also comes into play in social behavior, especially in cooperation with classmates to perform a school activity or resolve a conflict, in the ability to regulate inappropriate behavior related to intense emotions both pleasant and disagreeable and pro-social behaviors. These social skills help in part to explain that students who understand well their emotions are also more popular with their peers and teachers. Although there is no clear definition of the concept of stress in the educational literature school, this phenomenon includes in a broad sense the negative affective states that can occur among students at school.

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Article Info

Received: November 02 2022

Accepted: November 10 2022

How to cite this article:

Scorțan, D. (2022). Placing students' emotions at the heart of the learning process, a challenge for teachers. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 146 – 154.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The historical values of legal reality

Roberta Ploscă¹⁾

Abstract:

Explaining law, from a historical perspective, is opportune and useful in order to understand its essence. The possibility of knowing law must be accompanied by the integration of the historical phenomenon in determining reality. Undoubtedly, the understanding of legal reality is conditioned by the recourse to historical sources whose role is noteworthy in changing the life of law.

The broad content of history, the diversity of circumstances of this kind reveal their influence and, therefore, their importance in the mobile construction of law. The creation of law can be perceived as a consequence of the effects of a concrete historical fact that configures, in time, a distinct legal phenomenon.

The legal orientation actually follows the social-historical and political trajectory of each society. This relation of law to history is permanent. The harmonization of current law with all past events ensures the creation and proper application of the social-legal norms.

Keywords: *law analysis, historical research, social norm, legal norm.*

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Introduction

What I am trying to discuss in this paper is nothing new from the point of view of knowledge, but only a pertinent return to the unfolding of our current existence, while bringing to the fore some generally valid arguments in support of the idea of national historical and legal continuity, of compatibility and coordination of historical realities with the legal system, in the creation of which the social needs had a conclusive contribution and the historic events that took place in our society determined the articulation or even the transformation of legal reality. I thus begin my brief approach with the presentation of the historical values that constitute the essential support of the legal phenomenon and represent an important framework in the creation of the rules of conduct and their adjustment to the circumstances of our people's life.

Through their specificity, the Romanian historical values acquire the merit of creating a legal system whose authenticity cannot be doubted.

The values that became and are preserved as a national support, unworn by time, worthy of demonstrating and permanently renewing the bond between the conscience of the Romanian people and national values arose from the conscience of our people. "Far from exerting, as static objective elements, a constant influence on conscience, values are created by it, but their creation does not come to an end, it is constantly being fulfilled, as the conscience that creates them is also being fulfilled." (Moutsopoulos, 2005:76)

Determining one's own values is the result of transposing and directing our conscience towards good, towards success, towards authenticity, towards effectiveness. Variations in conscience cause variability in value. The more vibrant our conscience is, the more enduring our values become, untainted by the inevitable upheavals of a life tried by hardships, shortcomings, or even venality. Aspirations towards a good, truthful and self-protective spirit give the viability of values and provide the much-needed vigour to a society. "The personality - the subject of the value - enters into a relationship with other personalities, enters into a social connection, in which it exercises an activity, which is subject to appreciation, therefore a process of valorisation." (Andrei, 1997: 175). In general, "the value system covers the entire conscious life of existence, to the extent that it draws from this very existence its own force to impose itself on it". (Moutsopoulos, 2005: 93).

Considerations on the historical values

It is considered that "a phenomenon acquires historical character only through the relationship with a *value*" (Andrei, 1997:1169) and values "must be understood in their historical-social dynamics". (Ceterchi, Craiovan, 1998: 26). It is obvious that, constantly, within the society of any era, what emerges as important and acquires, as a consequence, a special significance, remaining in the collective memory, are the facts likely to be essential for social life.

The values of the past are strengthened, through the natural effect of time, expressing, in a just way, their historical character, and contemporaneity in turn creates values under the seal of the present, which, without jeopardizing the previous ones, come to enrich and enliven, in turn, in an original way, this heritage, so that "compared to the abundance at our disposal, the past can seem very poor." (Cassier, 1994: 39-40).

However, it sometimes happens that people are seized with a sense of contempt for the age in which they live, and instead they love and admire unreservedly a period of the past with such devotion so that it is clear that, if they had to choose, they would live

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during that period rather than the present one". (Berlin, 2004:19) It follows that each of us can observe the historical periods from different points of view, but, as a whole, history is of unbroken essentiality for both collectivity and man. The role of history to clarify in the sequence of time "the relationships between people and the relationships established between people and the environment" is recognized. (Berlin, 2004:51) " 'In order to get to know yourself', says Comte, 'get to know history' ". (Cassier, 1994: 94) Historical values form the national and universal scenery which never changes because they are the effect of our actual and continuous efforts which imprint time without exhausting themselves.

History emanates from individuals and enshrines itself in a society. Consequently, the truth emerges that everything we develop under the auspices and strictly personal interest without creating a general perspective in the form of a convenient gain for the collectivity is not valued from a historical standpoint, being considered, in other words, worthless. But, "although value is constituted by relating objects to social needs, historically determined by practice, the name of value is assigned to the things, ideas or actions that certain human communities value and to which they aspire." (Craiovan, 2001: 5) Moreover, "the depth of the human being, based on an elevated spirituality, has as a criterion of valorisation 'to be' and in its highest sense it can even go beyond any valorisation." (Dănişor, Dogaru, Dănişor, 2006:10).

As a natural part of things and our earthly existence and out of an explainable interest, every human being thinks at least once about his origin as man, thus reaching providence or not in relation to his creed, or to special theories in this respect in order to identify himself, as a member of a family in which he was procreated and of a collectivity in which he developed. Of course, "just as each man is interested in his parents and ancestors, so are nations interested in their past." (Giurescu, 2000: 13) "The need to know the origins unites disciplines and generations, in a defining effort for the very human condition." (Zub, 1994: 12).

As in any sphere, in the legal sphere, we are also driven by the desire to know as accurately as possible remarkable elements about the origin of law, resorting in this sense to historical sources worthy of helping us to intuit truths.

But, the objectivity of the facts that reveal our legal identity can appear differently in relation to the optics of an individual or a social group and in conclusion, it cannot be generally valid because the very configuration of our universe as a being reflects special habits, different attitudes, confrontations which life offers and which in no way can be identical to those of other beings. Moving forward in life is ultimately about developing through a personal process of will, progressing through different skills, projecting your perspectives differently. "Space and time constitute the framework within which the whole reality is involved." (Cassier, 1994: 66).

There were recorded transient situations, as well as facts which received historical consecration because, by their magnitude, they became fundamental in the construction and foundation of legal concepts and, although they were subject to the inevitable irreversible course of their own duration, they remained for future generations as the victors of time. The conclusion is therefore that "*...everything new and valuable that will be achieved in the determination and definition of historical time represents valid contributions for general time.*" (Tănase, Isac, 1980: 93).

Fidelity towards history is preserved in an evolutionary way because our reality becomes a past explored by our descendants, invited to research it, to subsume its guiding ideas, to develop them, to modify them or to substitute them with their own that

will surely become, at a given moment, past too, adding to it and thus amplifying, through their substance, the historical phenomenon.

The historical valences of various facts are accurately stated by specialists in the field. "A historian aims to emphasize what is specific, unique in a certain human character, in a certain chain of events or historical situation, so that the reader faced with such an account is able to understand 'the concreteness' of that situation, i.e. the way in which it happened at that specific moment, in that specific place, as a result of specific antecedents within specific events in which it and only it appeared - the points in which it differs from whatever came before or may come after it." (Berlin, 2004: 44).

It follows that the durability of a legal conformation coincides with the durability of the historical era in which it was designed. But, "to understand human development over time, the historian needs not only the *mind*, but also the *heart*, that sympathy which makes him participate somehow in the life of the vanished worlds." (Zub, 2000: 312).

Awakening a past era is an impossible thing, but the history of that era can remain evocative from certain points of view for the future.

Due to the current acceleration, one can observe distinctions in many respects compared to the past, on the one hand, many more possibilities of knowledge, but, on the other hand, also many inconveniences which, even if of a different nature than those in the shadow of the past, can be found, undoubtedly, unfortunately, successfully, at present.

As we have already emphasized, we cannot deny that we direct our attention in our existence in relation to the environment in which we live to values perceived through the filter of our own concerns, that we train ourselves in the sense of obtaining advantages in the private sphere, that we try to smooth our way of social, intellectual, professional evolution somehow shaped according to our demands, while becoming neutral towards the significant aspects of society.

Our predispositions are to potentiate activities considering their usefulness over time within the perimeter of our needs, ignoring that they could also represent a contribution to peers and posterity.

"This is what it means to bring a past era to life! The road is beset by deceptive traps; each age, each group of people, each individual has its own perspective, and these do not remain static, but change [...]. Moreover, every perspective from the past differs from the perspectives of all subsequent observers." (Berlin, 2004:48)

The attitudinal peculiarities prove to be natural because the relationships through which we pursue what is of personal interest are natural, but it is not natural to raise ourselves too high in our position, causing real chasms between us, in order to reach our own goals. We are careful to choose, in general, what is propitious for us, promising us satisfaction. I don't consider the habit of noting the particular effectiveness of things to be new, but we must never ignore the fact that sharing our experience and not avoiding being providers of what we know or will know, emphasizes a generic good whose spirit sheds light over everyone, including us.

It is natural and confirmed that "humanity's life is constantly changing: peoples, languages, laws, customs appear and disappear or are transformed; after some time, the appearance of mankind is different; [...] the leading ideas are different." (Giurescu, 2000: 13). We can give as an example regarding these changes the very revolution that took place in our state in 1989, considered a real source of law, because it determined radical changes at the political level and not only that, and these changes also extended

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to other levels of our life producing, as a consequence, a substitution of the previous legal system with a new, democratic structure. “The first concern of the servants of history and culture was directed towards the process of repair, of eliminating what was harmful and bringing to the surface, in the sight of all, the truth unencumbered by distortion or concealment.” (Saizu, 2008: 173)

Not only will such an event forced by the precarious circumstances of life that have marked generations remain, in a motivated way, in our historical memory as a form of collective revolt by virtue of the effects of which another content of Romanian law was created and substantiated, but our entire life under the sign of its changing meanings in the actual unfolding of time.

In fact, each historically consecrated event ultimately reveals a particular conformation and effects that we feel as the result of certain needs expressed over periods of time through the inevitable reference to existential circumstances, to our characteristics as individuals belonging to a particular society and the evolution of our relationships within it. We can state, however, that the successive unfolding of historical episodes, even with the physiognomy specific to certain times, promises the continuity of the historical process, from which it follows that “the history of law must not be understood as a series without unity of some legal institutions, but as an attempt to discover the laws of the evolution of institutions”. (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006:13)

It is obvious that we should not permanently imprint the present with the emotions of the past, but we can appreciate that the past can become educational, that a society learns from the past like any person who learns from difficult situations or life imbalances to adopt elementary but correct rules to avoid conjunctural inconveniences, learns how to dissociate between useful and useless and comes to the conclusion that, over time, the dimensions of good must be promoted mainly by cultivating and idealizing it, in this sense dripping from the symbols of the past in the process of developing a continuous present that is clearer, more open and more valuable. “Man and time therefore remain essential concepts, without which history cannot be thought of.” (Zub, 2000: 266)

Considerations on legal reality

“Legal reality, in its capacity as an object of legal science, is a historical one.” (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006: 13) In other words, the representation and impartiality of law engages historical reality in the creation and consecration of legal values. It follows that when “we talk about law as a science of norms, we introduce the *notion of value*.” (Andrei, 1997: 231) The practical meaning of law and the meaning of the rules of conduct that constitute it provide the necessary balance for our society, “guiding people's behaviour in the direction of promoting and consolidating social relations according to the ideals and values which govern that society.” (Craiovan, 2001: 212) “Law as a way of crystallization of value regulates types of conduct and ensures compliance by the addressees.” (Mihai, 2003: 5)

It is argued that “value appears to us as a fulfilment of knowledge, in which the product of knowledge is related to man, to his needs, aspirations, goals.” (Craiovan, 2001: 3) “By this general value, two things can be understood: 1. *a value recognized in a real way by all individuals*; 2. *a normative ideal*.” (Andrei, 1997: 174) “The very process of establishing the legal norm involves an inherent value-related dimension, because the former concerns the fullness of possibility and virtuality, the will relating to what is not yet, to an ideal towards which a reality must aim.” (Craiovan, 2001: 212).

There is a refinement of the urge that my will in congruence with the will of my fellows illustrates a general will, the will of the social group identified under its own, idealized juridical physiognomy.

The further integration of the law of the national social group into a universal legal system is only possible under certain generically conjugated aspects because each legal system values itself differently, mainly in connection with the values of its own traditions.

But there are concepts which emerged and remained regardless of the interpretations subject lively received by generations under the harshness of time, and never burnt their substance, such as the concept of freedom, equality, fairness, truth and justice on which the adversities of their time were felt but they penetrated and roamed that time becoming perpetual symbols of our existence. “Not contemporaneity, but *the community of values* binds people to their peers from other times.” (Gulian, 1967: 13) The values recognized as permanence of time are, however, received, from a practical standpoint, in a special manner.

For example, “since there are different interests at the level of individuals or social groups, justice will have a different content for each of them.” (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006: 10) With reference to the value of freedom, professor Dan Claudiu Dănișor believes that “we do not mean by concept a given objective thing, but only a mental reality, strongly individualized for each subject and towards which we can have no certainty that it will be identical to the representation of any other subject”. (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006: 25). As for the first life form of law in the specialized literature, it follows that “law, in terms of legal rules of cohabiting life, arose with language, an instrument of communication, of consensus and disagreement among people, once, and in interference with morality and religion.” (Mihai, 2003: 104).

Therefore, the insight into law and the considerations on its emergence represent a sensitive and intricate topic because we cannot say that there is a definite demonstration regarding a single moment or a set phase denoting the first legal adaptations, the more so as it is well known that other spiritual skills already acclimatized to the living environment pre-existed among people, and legal norms could easily have been combined and consequently confused with them. It results that “the genesis of law is an integral part of the historical process, of the historical becoming of society itself, in which a multitude of factors and relations of determination, influence, interaction, quantitative accumulations and qualitative leaps can be identified”. (Craiovan, 2001: 5) “Each branch of modern law has its own history.” (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006: 14).

Later, the rules were identified in a comprehensive normative structure whose configuration coincided with the state organization. However, it is considered that “the state, no matter how important, is not everything.” It cannot express or absorb all the other activities of man”. (Cassier, 1994: 94).

Consequently, it can be considered that, in order to balance coexistence relationships, the human community issued rules in this regard, during the period prior to the assimilation of the state concept and its constitution. Somehow fitting these rules into the existential framework of our predecessors determined and enshrined what we call today customary law, which stands out, in conclusion, as the law preceding the state. “Chronologically speaking, the custom was the first form of manifestation of law.” (Craiovan, 2001: 228).

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The content of these unwritten rules mediated the relationships between individuals, mitigated shortcomings, expressed a social stability needed at any moment. Although simple by construction, the unwritten rules determined man's caution to the challenges of the environment, they transformed him into a better observer of what was more useful and worthy for him and his family by implementing the idea of the rigour of a behaviour and thus shaping the manifestation of each through adherence to the group mindset, as a whole, which thus began to develop in other terms. Custom also meant the history of national law, which it characterized temporarily, until the creation, naturally in time and under special circumstances, of written rules.

From the moment individuals knew and appropriated a state organization, some of the unwritten legal rules were reformed, framed, fixed and authorized under the written law or new rules were established, all knowing a new process of historical becoming because no rule on both written law and unwritten law can remain the same for good. We can thus say that the legal ideas arose through the thinking of times. "The emergence of the state only determined an intensification of law by widening the social field for regulating conduct, changing its form of expression and amplifying coercion." (Guțan, 2017: 4).

The presentation of unwritten law under a different guise did not, at least immediately, have the effect of suppressing it by decreasing people's receptivity to the old prescriptions. Law was enhanced and over time the written rules were strengthened, harmonizing with the new social perspectives and becoming binding for the individual. Ultimately, we are the possessors of the paths to progress, the only ones whose occupation is to change their route in our becoming, to avoid difficulties, and to install and maintain the measures of our existence.

This is why we cannot just stop and assess the law in force on the basis that it is within our reach, neglecting its historical dimensions. As such, the History of Romanian Law is the discipline which deals with the characteristics of our old law, presenting it and advancing it chronologically under the burden of time from the source to the present.

The history of law engraves, from the depths of the past to the tumult of the present, the actions of great emotional charge without ignoring any of them and by explaining them successively it gives them a well-deserved appreciation because they all represent the path to the unification of the nation and an urge for generations to be strong, to sediment what is worthy for them, to cross the thresholds of time with courage and to maintain themselves in positions worthy of the possessors of some values of their time. All these actions not only of the past but also of the continuous present can be qualified as real sources capable of shaping the progressive image of a legal system.

To the present, the past recommends wisdom acquired by practical experience, experience acquired by patience and courage. Similarly, "*understanding* can of course contribute to a cognitive reproduction of historical facts, to the creation of bridges between the spirit of generations [...]" (Tănase, Isac, 1980: 250). Advancement in the field of knowledge nowadays gives us the chance to accurately discover common or disjunctive conceptual elements from the influx of the past, to reflect, even if sometimes under dilemmas, on the dimension of the legal universe. Travelling along the path of law under the variations of time, people preserved, modified, interpreted the historical-legal values in every respect, acquiring the quality of founders, interpreters, guardians of times. "But no matter how extensive the field that sciences would manage to control, no matter how detailed [...] and coherent the accounts of the best historians may be, a huge

amount of data is inevitably lost sight of at both sides of the scale - both the deepest and most pervasive categories that enter too much into the composition of our whole experience to be easily detached for observation, and at the other side the ever-changing conceptions [...], which constitute the uniqueness of each individual and each of his acts and thoughts, [...] the particular pattern of a life, [...] of an institution, [...] of an entire culture, era, nation or civilization.” (Berlin, 2004:40).

But what remains remarkable is the access that each of us has to our own past. Voluntary concerns to often launch ourselves into knowing it, constitute an evaluation of its sources and consequently a gain of ideas, and the addition of new ideas into the value field represents the balance between origins and the current state, favourable for the whole society. Moreover, “some of the solutions of the current law do not date from our era, but have their origins in more or less distant periods of human history.” (Dănişor, Dogaru, Dănişor, 2006: 13).

Conclusions

“There is a system of values for every human community, historical and social changes entailing changes regarding the criteria for valorisation as well as those for chaining and ranking values and imprinting a certain dynamics of values.” (Craiovan, 2001: 321). As for the legal value, it occurs as “a measure of the facts, because it deems the facts according to the compliance with the rules and laws established by the legislature.” (Andrei, 1997: 233) “Because historical facts never repeat themselves exactly, history cannot reach the laws... However, they have a common goal: finding out the truth [...]” (Giurescu, 2000: 13).

The accumulation of decisive historical elements is perpetual because each people clarifies through history aspects of its origin and continuity. It is not only the theme of the past of a particular importance that acquires historical character; history also characterizes the present viewed in the exercise of the role of becoming history, able to open horizons intended to predict a future. “History, which apparently comes to us from the mists of the past, but which actually also besieges us from the future, like an inexhaustible river, can be recreated by moving *upstream*, to the sources, and somewhat ‘predicted’ through meditations on its future dimension” (Zub, 2000: 268) [...] “because we do not see in which area of existence, other than that of everyday life, historicity could be reflected.” (Veyne, 1999: 34). Moreover, it is considered that “all our actions take place in a relative present because their roots are in the past and their tendencies are directed towards the future.” (Tănase, Isac, 1980: 259) or “history is the discipline that methodically investigates, objectively explains and causally clarifies the development of all mankind.” (Giurescu, 2000: 13).

In general, history is of particular interest to the individual who looks strictly at himself or looks at himself collectively. An idea emerges from the specialized literature (Giurescu, 2000: 13) that “researching the past is not only an act of curiosity but also one of piety and spiritual strengthening”. The particularities of a people's history are cultivated under its dome and arc over time, eternalizing themselves in a specific form for each generation, therefore “the same legal institution can have different meanings in different social climates, in time or in space.” (Dănişor, Dogaru, Dănişor, 2006: 15).

In today's society, ideas are practically transposed by experts in the field and not only. Through his skills the individual thoughtfully endows his own universe whose significance is imprinted accordingly to its founder. The judgments that evoke the past can be appreciated as famous examples in the complex creation of the legal universe,

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since they come to consent in addition to the effects of human quality in constituting a normative configuration originally and permanently matched to the new. From the current perspective, we see the previous values enhanced in accordance with the ways of living, the environment, customs, claims, and under the rule of the current human universe we demonstrate ease, strength, determination in the edification of our lives and in the knowledge of our legal history, considering that the past will never end, because, “without going back along the thread of history, some of the current institutions would seem obscure, unjustified, bizarre.” (Dănișor, Dogaru, Dănișor, 2006: 13).

We agree that “the meaning of duration isn’t therefore, from the perspective of knowledge, unequivocal, but has a double meaning and a double finality: the present gives meaning to the past, through a reverse movement, of returning to the source, and the past enriches, in turn, the values of the present”. (Zub, 2000: 268).

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Article Info

Received: October 30 2022

Accepted: November 10 2022

How to cite this article:

Ploscă, R. (2022). The historical values of legal reality. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 155 – 163.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The changing in the postwar economy trend and the economic reconstruction of Romania (1945 – 1965)

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Abstract:

The article reveals a significant aspect on addressing the contemporary history of Romania: the twenty years period after World War II. Romania, at the Peace Conference of Paris from 1947 was considered a non-belligerent country, and obliged to pay war reparations to USSR. Until 1958, Red Army had permanent garrisons in Romania.

In 1948, 1949, in Romania, it was started the process of nationalization, industrialization and collectivization of the agriculture. These were the bases for the post-war changes in the economy course, and the economic reconstruction in Romania.

There were major transformations, there were complex and violent social changes amongst the social classes. Romania succeeded to reduce the differences between its economical industrial course and the states from Western Europe. By 1964, after the declaration of sustaining the Chinese vision for the constructing of the socialism, the independence of Romania in the relation with USSR was accelerated.

Keywords: *post-war, economy, changes, Romania, reconstruction, 1945-1965 period.*

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The Changing in the Postwar Economy Trend and the Economic Reconstruction of Romania (1945-1965)

The period 1945-1965 was, as a wholesome, the era when the most intense economic transformations from the contemporary history took place. Basically, the most important moment, in scale but also as dramatism, was the change addressing the ownership. The Romanian economy had been severely affected by the war. The Romanian leu was very weak compared to the dollar. It was a memory of the leu from 1938, when about 90 bani equated to a French franc, for example (Nacu, 2018: 57-64).

Romania was confronted with the famine of 1946, when Moldova was hit by drought and many people headed for Muntenia and Oltenia.

By the Paris Conference of 1947, Romania had to repay \$300 million in damages to the Soviet Union. In addition, the Soviets chose to install the SovRoms, the mixed units for the exploitation of the Romanian economic assets.

The next stage was the nationalization of the houses, the means of production, followed by the monetary denomination and the collectivization. The last action lasted until 1962.

The abolition of the SovRoms was made until 1954. The Soviets maintained their right to have troops linked to Austria in 1947 for 90 days, but, in reality, the troops withdrew in 1958.

The Soviets had economic, military, political advisors (who were obviously the NKVD people) through which they tried to reorganize the Romanian economy according to the Soviet model: cooperative agriculture, construction industry, and petrochemical industry.

In the present study, there is attempted a presentation of the general elements, to which some statistics and some references to the work of some established historians in the field of analysis of industrialization and collectivization of agriculture were added. We chose to make references to contemporary testimonies as well.

It is about the elements of political decision-making applied in everything that meant the economic and social life of Romania. The industry and the agriculture were approaches that Romania wanted to use to catch up with the contemporary states of both Eastern and Western Europe.

There cannot be neglected some aspects of technological progress and living conditions, especially after 1958. Large and new neighbourhoods appeared, especially in the cities that had been bombed by the Americans and the Nazis in 1943-1944, such as Bucharest (Grivița area, completely rebuilt near the North Railway Station and Basarab Railway Station), Turnu Severin (the Port area, the Railway Station, the Shipyard), Ploiești (the area of the oil refineries).

Therefore, there could be distinguished three periods on addressing the industrialization of Romania, a transitory one, in which the private property resisted, between 1945 and 1948, the period 1948-1958 with the existence of SovRoms, and the period 1958-1964, when it began the distancing from the Soviets and the search for a new development path meant to bring the Romanian industry closer to the West, which was considered to be the capitalist one.

The period 1945-1948 was influenced by a terrible famine in Moldova, caused by two very dry years, but also by the fact that Romania had to provide a part of the harvest for the Soviet occupation, as war reparations.

Law 119 of June 11, 1948 concerned the nationalization of industrial, banking, insurance, mining and transport enterprises. There were nationalized “the riches of any kind of the subsoil, the mining deposits, the forests, the waters, the sources of natural

energy, the communication ways, the railways, the roads, by water and air, the post office, the telegraph, the telephone and the radio” (Borzan, 2010: 8).

The nationalization took place after the moment when, between October 15th and 24th, 1947, a kind of centralizing report was done in detail, with everything that meant industrial activity in Romania.

The nationalization process consisted in the “etatization” of 1060 industrial, banking and insurance enterprises. The enterprises consisted of 28 annexes, from the big companies downwards.

Decree 84 of March 2nd, 1949 was starting the collectivization of the Romanian agriculture, starting from the expropriation without compensation of the properties exceeding 50 hectares. In the period from 1949 to 1962, the agriculture was organized into cooperatives and farms. At the end of 1949, there were already 56 G.A.C. units (collective agricultural organizations), which gathered a total of 4,085 peasant households, on a total area of 14,692 ha (Borza, 2010: 11).

As of April 1962, 96% of the country's arable land and 93.4% of the farming area, on which 3,201,000 families worked, was already state-owned.

The creators of Romania's socialist industrialization plan started from the premise that the real industrialization had to ensure the development of a sensitive sector, somehow deficient in the interwar Romania, that of the heavy industry. Within it, a major role was played by the mechanical engineering and machinery manufacturing industry, followed by the petroleum and chemical industry.

The defining and the promoting of the leading role, held by the socialist state, was not at all a purely theoretical problem, but had profound practical significance. The socialist state used economic laws to set development priorities. Everything had to take place through the complex activity of planned management of the national economy, the realization of the state plan using the main national references, the finding of the balance between the development of the industrial branches, the actions of storage, distribution and consumption. Basically, the state was a coordinator, a regulator, an administrator of everything that could represent something for the Romanian economy.

Thus, everything that involved a political decision could only be taken during the party meetings, whether it was about the executive leadership, the plenary sessions or the congresses. Thereafter, it occurred the popularization of the decisions made at the level of all party organizations, going as far as the basic ones.

The socialist economic manner of thinking had a political component, in the sense that there was no initiative outside the doctrinal framework of the party. There was something else that distinguished the capitalist thinking from the socialist one. The socialist thinking emphasized massively that work was an act of patriotism and responsibility towards the party, the people and the country, which also implied volunteering, as it happened in Bumbesti-Livezeni.

Romania's transition to the centralized and planned state economy, with a private property reduced to the minimum, began with the agrarian reform, decreed on March 23, 1945, so 17 days after the instauration of Petru Groza Government. This reform was legislated by Decree Law no. 187 of March 20th, 1945. Over 400,000 families of landless peasants were appropriated, in order to attract the peasants to the communist cause, because, in 1949, the cooperativization of agriculture would be started. The land, the agricultural inventory was to be immediately transferred to the state property. The spring of 1948 was known to expropriate 155,823 properties, larger

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than 50 hectares, the total expropriated area being 1,468,945 hectares of farming land (Borza, 2010: 9-10).

The regime in Bucharest knew how to use the effects of drought to show that the state, if owning the means of production, could manage the productive forces better, and avoid the vicissitudes of nature. It ought to be mentioned that the terms of productive forces and means of production formed the basis of the Marxist-Leninist conception on history and economy.

The period 1949-1958, also called the “haunting decade”, was marked by actions such as monetary stabilization and nationalization, in parallel with the beginning of the collectivization of agriculture.

There was another action that eventually came to be criticized even by the communist power itself, the monetary stabilization of 1952, when it was tried to strike at the interests of those who had large sums of money in the cash registers of their residences. However, the fall in the money supply and the tiny change of the capital possessed by the rich did not have the effect of creating a stronger currency because it was not supported by economic power. A currency in a free market is strong and stable if the economy of that state has exports. Nonetheless, the socialist Romania had to deliver everything to the USSR.

Nicolae Magherescu, former secretary of the Minister of Finance Mihai Romniceanu, employed at the National Bank of Romania in 1952, declared: *“The monetary reform was made in February 1952, I was at the bank. But it was not that successful; then they tried to take the money from the agricultural producers who were not yet in the collectives and had made a lot of money, and the government did not know what to do with that money, how to get their hands on it and then they made a second correction, or a second monetary reform and they did it at the parity of 1/20 and up to some limit amounts, so, all the money that was extra, you could very well put it in the fireplace, that it had no value whatsoever”.*

Mihai Romniceanu offered a detailed explanation of the differences between the competitive system, specific to the market economy, and the centralized system, specific to the state economy. The state controlled all economic levers, so it decided the minimum and maximum price of products, the exchange rate etc:

“However, through this, the Communist Party came out much stronger, because the money supply that was extra on the market was withdrawn and money was given, less new money, and then there was a correlation between wages and prices, that we were taking a loaf of bread with 40 or 50 bani. That was luck, you see, the centralized system also has a good side, because the state is able to control absolutely all the economic and financial phenomena and the effects in the country. And then, they agreed as the state wanted, the prices with the wages that were given, and so they continued, and the wages were only increased in the five-year rounds.” (historica-www.rra.ro).

On the industrial level, the Bucharest regime has set itself great objectives: the construction of petrochemical plants, hydrotechnical dams, the realization of Bumbești-Livezeni railway communication system, started since the interwar period. We leave behind the Danube-Black Sea Canal because this channel did not have, from the beginning, the best route, or the best management. It was designed to destroy the "enemies of the people", being a construction site for political prisoners. Precisely because it was not working with skilled labourers, but with persecuted inmates, because the technology was lacking, the project was abandoned and the failure was blamed on the sabotage of the enemies of the people. In 1974, Nicolae Ceaușescu would resume the

project by keeping only the excavated segment on the Karasul Valley, completely changing the technology, the route and the labour force, appealing to volunteers, military men, builders and subsequently to detainees as well.

The Communists also needed factories for tractors, farming machinery and trucks, train cars and locomotives taking over the existing infrastructure and wanting a development of these areas.

As relations between working-class men and women were encouraged, the wives had to work, so an active concern was to build factories of textiles, light industry, food.

Attention was also paid to wood processing, insisting on mining, oil drilling, shipyards, locomotive construction, in 1949 being founded Electroputere Craiova.

The truck factories emerged in Braşov, and the off-road car factories appeared in Câmpulung Muscel.

Each port city had a scaffolding port, and the most important ones had shipyards that repaired or produced ships.

In the third analysed stage, 1959-1965, Romania was again approaching the neighbour from the South-West Yugoslavia, after Tito was no longer the tool of capitalism and the enemy of the communist order.

Romania and Yugoslavia decided to build the modern hydrotechnical and navigation system at the Iron Gates, in order to align the circulation on the Danube to the standards of modernity and to be able to have a surplus of electricity.

There was a logical approach in the industrial development of Romania. For example, when the decision was made to build a large plant, a factory, when the decision was made to open a mining operation, it was begun with the construction of the future locality next to these objectives or with its modernization. There were blocks of flats, canteens, children's education institutions. It was mandatory to ensure the railway connection with the new industrial entity.

This is how the big dormitory-neighbourhoods appeared on the outskirts of the big cities, or the colony-towns. In the socialist logic, there was something else, namely that heating, utilities had to be provided by the main plant in the locality. Basically, that was when a dependency system was designed and would cause, in the case of hypothetical closure of a factory, the abandonment of a colony locality, for example, or the restriction of housing in the major cities and neighbourhoods.

There were situations when in a colony, the ore that had caused the beginning of exploitation to be more than prospecting and the colony to become a city, and afterwards, to benefit of industrial reorientation.

Another characteristic of the communist regime was that the factories, taken over at nationalization, were reorganized and developed according to the economic priorities of the system planned by the state.

Another characteristic of the mentioned stages, was that of the planning period. Since 1949, the annual plans had been introduced, and since 1951, the five-year plans had been implemented, according to the Soviet model, the first being the five-year period 1951-1955. Between 1960 and 1965, an attempt was made for a more extensive six-year plan. These multiannual plans had to be somehow fulfilled, if possible, at least half a year before (Anghelache, 2018: 62).

In 1949, the USSR set up the Comecon, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, through which it wanted to create an internal market of the socialist states, establishing mandatory export quotas and aid quotas for each member state. Some

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equivalences were also established between imports and exports, in the sense that a state could import what it needed by paying for exports from its surplus goods.

In an analysis of “Transilvania reporter”, it is shown that: *“In the period 1950-1989, the total industrial production of Romania increased 44 times, at an average annual pace of 10.2%. The pace was higher until 1980, after which it dropped to 3.3% a year between 1981 and 1989, and 2.6% a year between 1986 and 1989. As a result of these investments, the production of the main industrial products per capita has increased”*.

The cited economic analysis shows the fact that the electricity production share has increased significantly, the coal extraction share has increased. The production of shoes, meat, refrigerators, automobiles also increased in significant proportions in relation to the existing population.

The analysis also shows that steel production has surpassed similar production in the US, Sweden and France. In the case of the USA and France, the Romanian production share was double and in the case of Sweden, the Romanian production exceeded it by almost 20%:

“For example, the electricity production increased from 130 to 3276 kWh, coal extracted from 239 to 2871 kg, footwear from 1 to 5 pairs, meat from 9 to 30 kg, refrigerators from 1 (in 1960) to 20 pieces/1000 inhabitants, cars from 1 (in 1960) to 62 pieces/10000 inhabitants, etc. It is often mentioned the particular increase in steel production, which, in 1988 reaches 621 kg per inhabitant, exceeding the production from countries as the USA of 363 kg, Sweden of 577 kg and France of 319 kg.” (<https://transilvaniareporter.ro/opinii/industrializarea-comunista-si-dezindustrializarea-capitalista/>, accessed on May 12 2022).

In a recent article, Petre Oprea observed, referring to consumer goods in the period 1952-1954. The historian presents the beginning of the production of radios, washing machines, kitchen stoves, bicycles: *“After the enlarged plenary session of the C.C. of the P.M.R.-Romanian Work Party (August 19-20, 1953), the authorities in Bucharest imposed a plan of measures for the development of the consumer goods industry. Based on this, in 1954, two bicycle models and an accordion (“Timiș”) began to be manufactured in Romania, and at the “Electromagnetica” plant in Bucharest, a new radio was launched into series production (E.M. 541)”*.

Historian Petre Oprea emphasizes the fact that the regime wanted the radios, through which the regime's propaganda and vision could enter every home, within the official broadcast programs, the only ones that could be listened to (the devices had frequencies that did not allow listening to stations from the capitalist world, understood) to reach the homes of an increasing number of Romanians. In order to make essential household activities such as cooking, preserving food and washing clothes take less time so as not to reduce the time spent at work, the regime aimed for more and more homes to have cookers, refrigerators, washing machines. They consumed electricity and solid fuel, which ensured that the costs of the energy produced were covered by the citizens' money:

“At the same time, at the “Radio Popular” factory in Bucharest, the first 100 pieces of the “Bucharest S. 543 U” model (designed by engineer Gheorghe Terza with three lamps and two wavelengths) were made in August 1954, and at the I.S.A.R. enterprise in Ploiești, there were produced, for the first time, kitchen stoves (1200 items until August 23, 1954), ice coolers for home use (410 pieces), metal coppers for

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washing the laundry (14,500 items) and water cranes, type I.S.A.R. 70 (230 pieces), necessary in the Romanian households”.

At that time, bicycles were an easy and economical way to travel to work or for various activities. Romanian designers managed in record time to design bicycles of Romanian design obviously inspired by the technologies of the socialist bloc states:

„The first bicycle model was designed in Bucharest, in 13 days, by engineers Constantin (or Ion) Xenachis and Gheorghe Ghemuşliu, together with the designers Vergu, Lucia Petrescu and Gheorghe Nicolae, under the coordination of engineer Nestor. The model was given the name "Pioneer" and 500 pieces were prepared for sale in March and April 1954. Gheorghe Ghemuşliu said, at that time, that the first prototype (called "B. 28") combined the technical solutions applied to three bicycle models: "Stadion" (Czechoslovak), "MIFA" (manufactured in R.D.G., at VEB Mifa-Werk from Sangerhausen) and "Harkov" (Soviet)" (<https://www.contributors.ro/coexistentapasnica-si-industria-bunurilor-de-larg-consum-din-romania-1952-1954/>, accessed on May 13 2022).

Moreover, in the years of 1958-1960, in Romania, the local production of trolleybuses began, model “Tudor Vladimirescu- TV 2 E”.

A particularly important aspect is the defence industry. The historian Petre Opriş presents in detail the essential elements of the production from this period. It ought to be noted that Romania was looking, at that time intensively as well, to reduce its dependence on the import of military products from the states of the communist bloc even if the technology was mostly of Soviet conception: *“the Romanian military production diversified and, at the beginning of the '60s, it was resorted to the manufacture of S.K.S. carbines, calibre 7.62 mm, anti-tank RPG-2 grenade launchers, calibre 40 mm (with the afferent ammunition, of combat and exercise), LPO-503, light flamethrowers, ZU2 anti-aircraft machine guns, calibre 14.5 mm (with the ammunition), spare parts for infantry weapons, UMIV-1 mine detectors, gas-protecting masks (models 1952 and 1958)...”.*

The Romanian defense industry had to keep pace with regard to chemical weapons, ammunition for small-caliber weapons and large-caliber strategic weapons, high-performance military means of transport, adapted to different types of terrain and different situations, broadcast-reception stations:

”special chemicals, antichemical protection materials made on the basis of oppanol, ammunition for A.A. guns, calibre 57 mm and 100 mm, ammunition for the cannons on tanks and self-propelled artillery (calibre 85 mm and 100 mm), trucks with two differentials (type SR-132 and SR-114), machinery workshops, radio stations of low and medium power (transistorized, type R-105, R-116 and R-311)”.

A specific increased level of attention has been paid to chemical decontamination as an action both from the point of view of material endowment and from the point of view of specialized training:

„Furthermore, the individual antichemical decontamination package model 1958 (which became known as P.D.I., model 1960) was modernized, and antichemical training kits and luminescent paints were made”.

Since 1949, a complex plan for the capitalization and development of the country's hydropower resources was conceived and launched. Dorin Pavel and Cristea Mateescu, the founders of the Romanian school of hydrotechnics, were appointed to elaborate this comprehensive plan.

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In fact, it was an important feature of the communist regime. Those scientists who could not be accused of being members of historical parties, or of having links to the Legionnaire or Antonescu-Legionnaire governments, or were not of an "inappropriate" origin, were able to work in research teams on large industrial development projects. Sometimes, after the release of political prisoners in 1963-1964, some scientists, having stayed for a while under observation with forced domicile, received approval to work in the design research. Almost all the major factories had centres if not even design institutes within them, the collectives having to find solutions to optimize consumption and increase production to many machine tools, some imported, others planned, as a result of the economic espionage actions.

The hydropower development of the watercourses with great potential had led to the construction of a significant number of dams. The water accumulations made through the retention constructions had to ensure the hydrodynamic force, useful for the production of electricity, but also as water supply for the urban localities and the industrial infrastructures, irrigation, flood control, etc.

In Romania, there are 246 dams nowadays, with a height of at least 10 m. In 1953, Gozna dam on Bârzava River, in Caraş Severin, made of rocks with upstream steel enforcement, with an addition of 8–10 mm thick copper, was put into use with a height of 47 m, ensuring the storage of a volume of 11.5 million cubic meters.

The trial by fire followed, which was the construction of Izvorul Muntelui dam, from Bicaz. The dam, put into use in 1961, was made of concrete, with a height of 127 m, totalling an accumulation of 1,230 million cubic meters of water.

Bicaz dam, which is in the top 10 European hydrotechnical developments, was built according to the plans developed by the Institute of Energy Studies and Design (ISPE). The project manager was Alexandru Diacon, helped by: Alexandru Constantinescu, Constantin Constantinescu, Mihai Constantinescu, Dan Dragomir and Mircea Vasiliu. Professor Ion Băncilă supervised the geotechnical situation (Spinei, 2019: 491).

The period 1961–1963 displayed the construction of Vidraru dams, on Argeş River (number 20 in the world, having 930,000 m³ of concrete, of which 400,000 m³ underground and 6300 tons of electromechanical equipment), and the beginning of the works on the hydropower and navigation system Iron Gates I, on the Danube, the Romanian-Yugoslav project, which remained has emblematic (www.irongates.ro).

The Iron Gates I hydropower plant is the largest hydropower plant on the Danube River. It has an installed capacity of 1080 MW. Downstream, there is also the Iron Gates II hydropower plant, with an installed capacity of 250 MW. Both hydropower plants are operated in partnership with the Serbian side. The Romanian and Serbian power plants at Iron Gates I cumulate 2160 MW, while those at Iron Gates II cumulate 500 MW. The maximum capacity of the turbines is 8700 m³/s. Iron Gates I power plant is located 15 km upstream of Drobeta Turnu-Severin. Iron Gates II power plant, 60 km downstream, was erected between September 7, 1964 and May 16, 1972.

The navigation on the Danube is ensured by locks made on both banks for the both objective points, together having a traffic capacity of 52.4 million tons / year for locking in one direction and 37.2 million tons / year for locking in both directions.

The Iron Gates I system is one of the largest hydrotechnical constructions in Europe and the largest on the Danube River. Its reservoir has a volume of over 2200 million cubic meters. The lake mainly includes the Danube Gorge area, the largest gorge in Europe, between Baziaş and Orşova. The Iron Gates area is characterized by a rich

archaeological, historical and touristic potential. In order to protect its special natural habitat, the Danube gorge region was included in the Iron Gates Natural Park. The original turbines of the hydropower plant were built by LMZ Leningrad, but later their construction was licensed by UCM Reșița.

In conclusion, the analysed period was marked, on the one hand, by the need for Romania to pay the war reparations. Thus, the existence of the SovRoms, until 1954, determined Romania to send a part of its production and resources to the USSR.

Nonetheless, Romania managed to find a way for the industry and the agriculture to circumscribe the socialist vision, with strong Stalinist accents, at least until 1954-1955, the nationalization and collectivization of agriculture. If the nationalization advanced rapidly, until 1949, the collectivization lasted until 1962, with the risk, at some point, of being abandoned. However, the strong political leader of the period, Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej, managed to blame Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca, Teohari Georgescu for the excesses of collectivization, and he remained the only leader of the communist power structure until his death, in 1965.

In April 1964, the declaration of independence of the Romanian Communists, who declared to have agreed with the solutions of the socialist construction path elaborated by the Chinese, meant a major criticism of the Valev Plan. The Valev plan aimed to include Romania in an agricultural complex alongside Bulgaria.

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Article Info

Received: September 12 2022

Accepted: October 03 2022

The Changing in the Postwar Economy Trend and the Economic Reconstruction of Romania (1945-1965)

How to cite this article:

Nacu, F. (2022). The Changing in the Postwar Economy Trend and the Economic Reconstruction of Romania (1945-1965). *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 164 – 173.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Creating Online/Offline Spaces for Knowledge Transfer and Competitiveness in Teaching English to University Students in Romania

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Abstract:

The global pandemic, together with the ever-rapidly growing pace of Internet technologies, prompted a paradigm shift in university education, along with changes on various societal levels. Online spaces replace offline knowledge delivery, but will they supersede the offline experience and effectiveness? In the case of English language teaching, the multitude of electronic materials, the often enhanced circumstances for exploiting such resources via the available online platforms, joined with the convenience and cost-effectiveness of online courses, might determine many learners' preference for this form of interaction, or at least a mixture between the traditional and the newer means. The role of academics is examined not only as repositories of knowledge, but also as facilitators among the myriad of possibilities, and as forecasters of needs and realities, which will require new spaces and places for development or adaptation. With universities revisiting their educational offers both according to economic realities, and to the students' "likes", educators have the responsibility of keeping structure to the educational process; moreover, they are the human "interface" that mediates what is lost and what is gained in the space in front of the screen.

Keywords: *online teaching, university students, EFL, MOOCs, mediators.*

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1. Introduction

The paper starts from the premise that the role of universities is not limited to knowledge delivery; they have always been spaces which have formed individuals on several levels: professional, cultural, behavioral, ethical, economic, etc. Being part of an academic community shapes one's character in certain parameters which further determine the way in which that individual will perform as an active member of the society in a broader sense. The university as a physical place, the knowledge that it can access and impart, together with the academics, staff and students, they all interconnect and interact, resulting in a space that propagates a number of results that is in direct proportion to the ever growing number of university graduates and the fields of activity to which it relates.

Before the global pandemic, when the university physical campus was totally replaced by online spaces for some time, gradual steps towards the digitalization of the academic experience had already been taken on various levels in the previous years: digital libraries and resources; simulation programmes; the university web page as a first interface with the general public; training programmes encouraging all actors in the academic sphere to use computers and the internet; the development of digital platforms allowing synchronous and asynchronous interaction by crossing space and time limits (e.g. Zoom, Meet, Moodle etc.); the emergence of MOOCs (massive open online courses), which allow an unlimited number of participants and open access through the Internet (e.g. Coursera, edX, LinkedIn etc.); the appearance of social digital networks and apps facilitating interaction and the formation of groups belonging to any imaginable social sphere (e.g. Facebook, Tweeter, WhatsApp etc.); widening the coverage area of mobile and Internet networks, as "95% of the world population now has access to a mobile broadband network" (ITU, 2022); following the large-scale production and diversification of ICT devices and software programmes, their improved accessibility by the general public from the price point of view; the increasing preference for digital transactions, digital information exchange, or digital authentication in all fields of activity. Thus, the period of global online education that we underwent during the pandemic emerged against a complex background of factors: the digital era was able to reach an extreme expression of its inexorability.

The global pandemic period might be regarded as an experiment which has proved that totally and indefinitely transferring the whole academic experience to an online space is not desirable, as students worldwide cheerfully welcomed universities reopening their gates after restrictions were lifted; conversely, ignoring the advantages that can be brought by the relocation of certain academic activities towards the online area is counterproductive. As always, a middle-ground solution should be sought.

The article wishes to stress how strong points of both online and face-to-face approaches could be integrated in a hybrid space that can be functional in the long run. Practical observations in the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) at the University of Craiova, Romania, will be included. Being based on EFL, and more specifically ESP (English for specific purposes), which is the author's field of activity, a disclaimer should be noted: the observations are not supported by quantitative research, but remain at an anecdotal level, backed by general observations, intuitions and informal discussions among the author and other members of the academia.

The main aspects through which the university space (and more specifically, for the teaching of EFL at the University of Craiova) could be enriched are identified two-

dimensionally: the social space, with its human factor; and the knowledge space, marked by the information component. In broad lines, the main directions of improvement converge as follows: providing more opportunities for interaction and constructing a more profound feeling of belonging to an academic community both online and offline; earmarking activities that can migrate from one space to another by (re)assessing and redefining their scope; constantly getting feedback from academia members regarding the appropriateness of the status quo, in a continuous effort to streamline the educational experience in a flexible manner.

2. The social space: the academic community

Probably the most significant element that contributes to the formation of an individual is the community to which that person is affiliated. While the accumulation of information can be gained individually, the way that information is put into practice depends on the practices, habits and openness towards innovative development which are cultivated within the individual's environment. Starting with family education during early years, which neuroscience deems to be the most momentous, continuing with peer influence, the wider social sphere and formal education, the role of the academic community at a higher level of professional development cannot be underestimated. The academic community has traditionally been identified by the sharing of a physical space, which is the university campus. But along with the transfer of educational activities online, that space needed to be redefined: the space and (in the case of asynchronous activities) even time limits were transcended.

It has been rightfully argued that, since the advent of mass online education, university administrators may be tempted to abandon physical spaces just for the sake of economizing on resources, without taking into account the loss of effectiveness in the educational act. As Pursell and Iiyoshi note, "from a senior administrator's perspective, maybe the convenience, efficiency, cost-effectiveness – and, in this case during COVID-19, safety – dominate policy decisions. Too often, we are not really talking about effectiveness or the meaningfulness of a student's experience in the classroom, and on campus, too. It's kind of dangerous to believe everything can be replicated or recreated using technology." (Pursell&Iiyoshi, 2021: 536-537)

Indeed, this is true to the extent that we are trying to replicate the same classical model of interaction which presupposes the permanent sharing of the same physical space during educational delivery. Since the students' experience and teaching effectiveness are directly linked to the possibility of creating direct human contact by sharing a physical place, for the sake of conserving resources, maybe we should consider introducing the practice of regular face-to-face meetings between students and professors in order to calibrate the human factor, while keeping the delivery of theoretical knowledge online. Physical meetings should also be organized for practical subjects when simulation software does not cover that subject's needs.

The key to triggering the formation of a feeling of belonging to the academic community lies in the opportunity among its members for interacting and getting to know one another. At a formal first level, a university's website should provide enough details about the possibilities of interaction with both the teaching and administrative staff, and with student leaders and organizations. Additionally, students could be guided how to set up clubs and societies according to their own interests, and here the online tools are able to reach wide audiences. Such interest groups may meet online or offline, leaving it to their respective members to decide upon the appropriateness of the location.

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Regular meetings should also be set up for the teaching staff, not only to fulfil contractual duties, but also in order to maintain a supportive environment, in which to address various issues and exchange ideas. Again, it is for them to decide upon whether the meeting place should be virtual or physical, depending upon their availability at different times.

Regarding the nature of relations in the workplace, here Hofstede's "power distance" cultural dimension should be mentioned, with Romania being a country with a large power distance index: "In the large-power-distance situation, superiors and subordinates consider each other as existentially unequal; the hierarchical system is based on this existential inequality. Organizations centralize power as much as possible in a few hands. Subordinates expect to be told what to do. [...] In the small-power-distance situation [...] subordinates expect to be consulted before a decision is made that affects their work, but they accept that the boss is the one who finally decides." (Hofstede, Hofstede&Minkov, 2010: 73-74)

Thus, in a culture whose members are reluctant to cooperate in order to solve problems that may arise, the initiation of a meeting itself for such a purpose is often a problem in itself. Generally, in the Romanian culture, meetings are called by the boss and the boss is expected to provide the solutions and to set the general trend for the discussions; as the status quo is not easily challenged, formal meetings will perpetuate these traditional parameters, which are also reinforced by a traditional physical space with a formal setup. A physical space is a significant resource, as well as other assets (e.g. the participants' time or money for transport to get to the location etc.), which not anyone may feel entitled to access. Consequently, the ready availability of online meetings may encourage academic staff at all hierarchical levels to establish and engage in constructive dialogue.

Similarly, students may find it easier to start online dialogue among their peers or upwards in the academic hierarchy. Furthermore, they may be guided to interact by providing contact details with different actors and events on the academic ground all along their university itinerary. And even more significantly, it is for the teaching staff, as mentors, models and authority figures, to instil the drive towards and practice of dialogue into their students.

For students and even the teaching staff to get to interact outside the set limits of courses and formally organized meetings, it is important to know about one another. Hence, we always welcome a TV show such as "Personalities: Portrait Gallery" ("Galeria Personalităților") hosted by the University of Craiova TV station, "Tele U Craiova", which presents leading figures among the University of Craiova academics. Moreover, more numerous video presentations of other actors in the academic community could be made available on each faculty and department's webpage. Also, a good idea would be to increase the number of video recordings on the website of that department / faculty with instances of their different activities, this also being a marketing strategy meant to attract students.

A special note should be made about older students, for whom peer interaction is essential. As one author stresses when analyzing mobile-assisted language learning in older adults, "Older learners value peer teaching and collaborative learning, and appear to perform best when encouraged to plan, self-regulate, and control their learning process." (Puebla, Fievet, Tsopanidi & Clahsen, 2021: 170)

Another element of the online space is social media. Even if not directly linked to a university's space, it can be used as a connecting element among its members and

beyond. While we might be tempted to ignore it and purport that the thin air around the academic ivory tower should not be tainted by the brutality of a minimally controlled environment, this is an impractical stance. Social media constitutes a significant part of a student's experience and instead of trying to discount it, we could try to embrace it and beat the devil at its own game. Thus, irrespective of the students' chosen specialization, faculties may provide courses in order to raise their awareness about the nature of the content present on social media networks, and also to teach them how to turn their personal social media profiles to their advantage, in view of their future professional lives. Considering that the employment process involves personnel managers inspecting candidates' profiles on social networks, there is much at stake when it comes to what is and what is not to a person's advantage to be disclosed publically. An idea would be to invite human resources managers from various domains and companies to student meetings and discuss what they look for when they select their employees. For this purpose, seeing that those people have very busy schedules, or live in remote areas in relation to that university, online sessions will provide unique opportunities for such encounters.

Inviting guests for discussions via online platforms is a way of making the lecture room global and also of opening new pathways for future development. Discussing the role of virtual exchange in language teaching and learning, authors note that "Much research into VE [virtual exchange] language teaching practices tout positive gains in language learning by foregrounding functional, sociolinguistic, grammatical, discourse, strategic communicative competences and intercultural competences. [...] VE has been found to be particularly useful for drawing learners' attention to formulaic sequences, communication strategies such as fillers and sociopragmatic features that are common to 'everyday' talk without resorting to contrived role plays or repetitive drills." (Dooly & Vinagre, 2021: 397-398)

The quality of the social space during a lecture course or seminar also varies according to the number of students who attend it, whether physically or online. In the case of foreign language teaching and learning, the effective acquisition of communication skills is achieved through interaction, which a teacher can manage more easily when the class size is smaller. The careful planning of interaction, promoting a relaxed atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, making an effort to find out about the students' particularities, preferences and styles of learning, about their experiences and opinions, making them feel that they are seen and appreciated, these will all contribute to strengthening the sense of belonging to a safe space, which nurtures growth and learning.

Regarding which space is more appropriate for interaction, online or offline, again, the main question is whether we use the advantages of each in a proper manner. There have been complaints from the part of students that they find it harder to concentrate during online lessons, as they get distracted more easily. But distractions do occur in the physical lecture room, too, as students are often tempted to check their smartphones, chat to their deskmates and consequently disturbing those who are trying to focus, or simply switch off because of tiredness or boredom. Personally, I have heard colleagues say that they cannot realize whether they are successful in their approach when they teach online, as they "cannot read the reaction in the student's eyes". While acknowledging the tremendous importance of body language in communication, I also believe it is a little self-delusional to persist in the idea that we can or should exert absolute control over our students, or underestimate their dissimulation talents. As

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someone who was a quite successful student during my school and university years, even the teacher's pet in some cases, I confess I often managed to look deferentially into my teachers' eyes pretending to be interested while my mind was light years away. And my suspicion is I was far from being the only one resorting to such means in order to avoid sanctions or get some form of reward. The "sticks and carrots" method Daniel Pink (2009) discusses will only be efficient on a lower level: while generating immediate and external results, it will block creative processes in the long run.

Maybe we, as instructors, should start to renounce our deep-seated beliefs that control gives the measure of effective learning, and seize the opportunity created by the online space as a challenge to succeed in motivating our students without being able to control them as much as in a physical space: setting meaningful tasks or giving students the power of choosing between these, making connections between subjects, stimulating critical thinking, giving students entrepreneurial hints or about how to use the acquired knowledge in their future professional lives, encouraging them to express themselves in a persuasive manner, these are but a few ideas.

Sam Baddeley (2021) also gives some suggestions about how to boost student concentration online:

•Greeting students by name at the start of the lesson, using student names throughout, and asking students to repeat instructions back to me.

•Laying out expectations at the start of the lesson with respect to switching off mobile phones and closing redundant browser windows to minimise distractions [...].

•Monitoring student activity during the lesson via live marking of work completed [...], and engaging with students who do not seem to be completing tasks (e.g. by sending them a direct message in the chat) [...].

•Monitoring the work completed by students during asynchronous periods [...].

•Cold-calling and in general having high expectations of students in terms of the level of contribution expected. Short quizzes (five questions maximum) and opportunities for contribution at regular intervals [...]" (Baddeley, 2021: 113)

Among the Ofsted (2021) findings in relation to "What's working well in remote education", we note that "Feedback, retrieval practice and assessment are more important than ever." (Ofsted, 2021)

There has been a lot of emphasis in Romania on the idea of keeping webcams open all the time during online sessions, in an attempt to get feedback from students at a visual level, but also as a manner of checking that students do not leave the front of the screen in order to engage in activities unrelated to the lessons. I have also received feedback from some of my students that they find it easier to concentrate when they communicate if their webcams are turned on. On the other hand, most students prefer to keep their webcams turned off, even when they actively engage in current activities, either by pleading technical issues, or by openly arguing that they feel more comfortable this way. And indeed, it is stressful to constantly look at yourself in a mirror and knowing that anyone of those present can check for flaws in the way you or your private space looks (often applying visual effects makes the Internet connection weaker), with the camera presenting details on your face that interlocutors would not normally perceive when sharing the same physical space. Ramachandran (2021) also discusses the work of Stanford researchers who signal the phenomenon of "Zoom fatigue", and among other solutions, urges us to turn off webcams regularly in order to have some "audio only" rest, or to use mobile keyboards to take distance from the screen. In my view, when students are not engaged in active interaction, they should be allowed to turn off

their webcams, instead of forcing them to rigidly sit in front of the monitor. In this case as well, when instructors feel that using the webcam adds value to the interaction, it is for them to help their students overcome their anxiety of public exposure, but by convincing them with logical arguments, not by threatening, blaming or shaming them into compliance. Given that during their working lives, people in an ever increasing number of professions will probably carry out some if not all of their activities online, and online synchronous sessions can represent a significant part of those activities, university professors should be able to train students to perform successfully in those roles. As Mediafax.ro (2022), one leading news company in Romania announces, “Romanians prefer working from a distance: this month there have been 130,000 [representing 15% of the total number] applications for remote jobs [...] Companies started to transform into benefits for their employees the opportunity to work from home permanently or a certain number of days per week.” (my translation) (Cornea, 2022)

3. The knowledge space

The knowledge space is informed by three factors: information per se; the professor’s or lecturer’s role, as information expert; and the role of technology, as navigational, exploitation and liaising tool.

Regarding the professor / lecturer’s role in the academic sphere, it is becoming a more and more complex one. Pursell and Iiyoshi (2021) wonder how professors will manage to keep their intellectual property rights for recorded lectures once they have become public. In the Internet era, students can access information from the most prestigious universities without even being enrolled at those universities. From repositories of knowledge, professors will need to increasingly act as curators of information, having in view the students’ need to gain structured knowledge: “Part of our responsibility as faculty is not just to know “facts,” but to have an understanding of what students need to know. I think we can assume that they don’t know what they *need* to know. They know what they *like*. They know what they’re interested in, but highly educated grown-ups have a sense of, “Well, that’s fine. Indulge in that. But you really ought to know this topic.”” (Pursell&Iiyoshi, 2021: 539) The authors also consider the need for professors to anticipate future trends and developments, as these should determine the choice of information to be delivered to students.

Besides creating conditions for interaction between the students themselves and between students and other actors in the academic community, professors also need to mediate between students and the myriad of existing information channels. On the other hand, the complexity of information and technologies might become so extreme that we might need other technologies to navigate the existing ones: “With sixteen thousand MOOCs and zillions of open learning materials, everyone can be a teacher of something. That can be a wonderful thing, but it’s also very chaotic, and I think, as you said, people just don’t know where to go. In the future, I think we might need that kind of a smart technology for all learners and people to navigate through, and then enable them to learn whatever they want to learn. Increasing complexity requires increasingly complicated technologies.” (Pursell&Iiyoshi, 2021: 540)

But will this mean that professors will be replaced in this role by machines or smart search software? To a certain extent, they already have been, and Google is an example. Their mission then will be to do things that computers cannot do: being creative, showing students how to make use of information, how to make connections in

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order to get to innovative results, how to discern between valid and misleading data, how to promote critical thinking in a specific field.

Among the online resources that are available to study in any domain, a more and more prominent place is occupied by MOOCs (massive open online courses), offered by leading universities and organizations, and where an unlimited number of students can enrol. Regarding language MOOCs (LMOOCs), authors note that “studies of LMOOCs have reported low engagement and completion rates (as with other MOOC subjects).” (Chong, Khan & Reinders, 2022: 2) Among the reasons why LMOOCs are not totally successful, the same authors note that most learners on those platforms are mainly “viewers”, who lack the self-discipline and motivation to complete the courses. More specifically, LMOOCs are more appropriate for receptive (reading and listening) than productive (speaking and writing) skills, as they do not have strong interactivity features. (Chong et al., 2022)

In Romania, universities could consider LMOOC platforms both in order to include them as references for their students, so as to enrich bibliographical data, and to develop such platforms that would be informed by local features in the study of foreign languages (e.g. difficulties encountered by native Romanian speakers). Furthermore, in order to cater for the needs of local industries, ESP teachers could develop LMOOCs with a stress on interactive features. As a general approach, this would mean involving a large number of ESP teachers to be made available for interaction, and to identify the particular needs of their students, so as to cater for these successfully by offering diverging paths of study in the structure of the platforms.

With reference to how university distance learning could be improved in Romania through technological means, a lot more emphasis should be laid on the purchasing of simulation software for practical courses, along with enriching digital libraries. Maybe contracts could be negotiated with companies such as Amazon to offer subscriptions for digital resources, which can be accessed through their products, e.g. Amazon Kindle, which is an e-reader application that can be promoted and used by both teachers and students.

An important aspect in relation to the use of technology is represented by the training of the teaching staff, which can be formally imposed at a certain level, but most importantly, Romanian universities should start mutual support groups, which would offer collaboration, confidence, feedback and practical help to its members, as training in this field is a dynamic and continuous process.

In the same line of thought, Elliot (2021) reflects upon the complexity of this mechanism: “After introducing a new technology, take some time to stop and reflect. Jot down a few notes about what worked, what didn’t work, and how it might work better in the future. The next time you use the technology, make any necessary adjustments and afterward reflect again. Don’t be afraid to keep an eye out for new technology that might do the job better. Finding the right tool for the right job, and knowing the right way to use it, takes time.” (Elliot, 2021: 304)

The teaching of ESL can be hugely boosted by the use of technology in universities, by following the trend towards “adaptive learning” (Ofsted, 2021), “personalized learning”, or “precision education”.

In language learning, technology has evolved so much as to allow full-body movement in virtual reality interactive video games developed to that purpose, which triggers processes in both brain hemispheres, thus facilitating language acquisition. Moreover, as Li & Lan (2021) explain, “ITS [intelligent tutoring systems] can give

feedback containing detailed, content based corrections, comments, and suggestions, in response to and tailor-made to the individual's learning behavior and outcome.” (Li & Lan, 2021: 13)

As someone who teaches ESP to IT students, I have always observed how easily fluency in English is acquired by learners who are generally passionate about computers, watching films and engaging in multiplayer video games. Even if their grammar accuracy or level of formality is not always perfect, their starting point does not bear comparison with ordinary students. If we accessed technology that can address the specific needs of every learner, combined with the teachers' expertise, who can calibrate tools and provide the linking factor with all the other processes and spaces, the results would probably be even more spectacular.

4. Conclusion

A considerable number of academics in Romanian universities are still reluctant to access the online space to its full potential. Among the members of a society with a large power distance index (in Hofstede's terms), change will occur later if it is to be initiated only by the higher authority figures. Whether for that cultural reason or also because of a more widespread global phenomenon, online higher education is still being considered sceptically, and often rightly so, since it is not without its faults. Finding the middle ground, getting the best out of the two worlds (the physical and the online space) will bring us closer to people's real needs against a background permeated by technological tumult. And irrespective of some people's preferences, the trend of education will naturally follow developments in society at large, in its attempt to prepare learners for what lies ahead.

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Article Info

Received: October 31 2022

Accepted: November 10 2022

How to cite this article:

Popa, A.-R. (2022). Creating Online/Offline Spaces for Knowledge Transfer and Competitiveness in Teaching English to University Students in Romania. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 174-183.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Integrated Skills in Online Technical English Classes

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Abstract:

In this paper, we have sought to investigate some specific challenges pertaining to the integration of skills during Technical English online classes, a modern reality that we have recently been confronted with in an unprecedented way in post-communist education. In order to obtain a balanced approach to Technical English learning and teaching, we shall try to identify a number of key aspects that require careful consideration, particularly in respects that make online education different from face-to-face knowledge delivery and acquisition. With a newly emerging reality of online educational dependency, we seek to analyse how online education can become a competitive approach to content delivery and skills formation rather than a compromise on educational goals and results. The paper will also focus on identifying the major shifts in technical students' needs, goals and expectations in the post-communist age and how they can be tackled during online classes to the best possible outcome.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes, Integrated skills, Post-Communist language trends, online technical English.*

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Integrated Skills in Online Technical English Classes

Introduction

In a language teaching and learning, it is of the utmost importance that the four primary skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing be developed to work in tandem with one another as well as with other associated skills such as knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, syntax, meaning, and usage. Remote education, particularly on topics of technical language, can benefit from an integrated skills approach due to the nature of its outcome, i.e. for students to become integrated into a professional community. Integration is facilitated if and only if former students are accustomed to reacting to content verbally or in writing, if they are able to produce meaningful technical solutions, analyse ideas and crystallise findings into opinions and express them in a professional manner. Pre-communist language instruction used skills segregation to a large extent as it rendered language classes more manageable and it required less effort in terms of planning, delivery of knowledge and particularly because it gave a clearer understanding of what was being taught during a specific class.

The treatment of skills in segregation, however, is contrary to the integrated way that people use language skills in everyday communication, and it clashes with the direction in which language teaching scholars have been moving in recent years. Particularly for technical English classes carried out in remote learning mode, the development of skills in isolation is far from satisfactory since the ultimate goal of the technical student is to become integrated into a hyper-specialized community of professionals with whom interaction is part of the job description. Thus, the focus of language classes should be on developing the students' skills in an operative manner, with a view to facilitating their integration by providing them with the ability to understand and react to specialized content, to recalibrate actions and reactions and ensure social and professional cooperation, teamwork and task management.

In Favour of an Integrated Skills Approach

With the advent of globalization and free travel and movement along with the emergence of English as the new *lingua franca*, there has been serious concern and conviction that preparing technical students in segregates skills classes will no longer suffice in preparing them for communication in the newly emerging borderless environment. Moreover, as future members of the international scientific community technical students find themselves in need of a skill-set composed of technical abilities (comprehension and usage of jargon, technical tasks management, technical argumentation and description etc.) alongside social skills (negotiating, summarizing, expanding, persuasive argumentation, team work etc).

Since the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) represent the manner in which language is used for communication (Richards & Schmidt: 2002), target language skills will be used in professional life in integration to ensure optimal functioning of the individual in a community. As the term *skill* demonstrates, the manner in which language is use by learners is perfectible through practice and effective use of resources. During the communist period, the four language skills were most often tackled in isolation, probably due to the precedence of the traditional language teaching methods, namely the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Structuralism Approach, the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach. Moreover, teaching traditions relied heavily on the predominant role of the teacher during instruction as deliverer of knowledge with very little focus on students' production capabilities. Or, as Dubin and

Olshtain (1986) pointed out, the language was approached as an end in itself rather than a means to an end, i.e., the authentic interaction and communication with a view to fulfilling specific social functions.

The integrated-skills teaching pedagogy specific to the post-communist education of the last three decades has been associated to a more natural learning approach because it enables the development of genuine communicative skills in foreign language students (Pardede: 2017). Davies and Pearse (2002: 99) correctly emphasized that “*Real success in English teaching and learning is when the learners can actually communicate in English inside and outside the classroom.*” Failure to communicate in the foreign language only goes to show that approaching skills in segregation will hinder the outcome of communication in the foreign language as we often witness students who are capable of writing with great accuracy and display excellent reading comprehension yet experience great difficulty with listening comprehension or speaking when travelling, working or living in a foreign country.

Skills Segregation versus Skills Integration in Remote Learning

Distance learning, also referred to as remote learning or online education in the globalized world of the Internet has brought about a number of specific challenges for language teachers and technical students alike. Technology is unprecedentedly being used to deliver learning and improve skill both from the perspective of teaching materials creation as well as from the perspective of delivery, communication and teacher-student/ student-student interaction. Teaching materials are now relying heavily on genuine video/audio/written content produced by native or non-native speakers, students have the opportunity to practice speaking with speakers from all over the world, teachers can easily access world banks of teaching materials and engage in peer collaboration to improve teaching methods and techniques. This dynamic environment for educational delivery and constructive feedback sets the background for an integrated skills approach during online language classes and infuses the new learning environment with a fresh burst of energy.

The skills segregation approach that dominated the 70s and 80s relied heavily on the assumption that teaching was much more manageable if lessons were organized around one dominant and often singular skill and focused on it for a period of time, thus obtaining an in-depth immersion of the student into it. For technical classes, in particular, there was a common misconception that by simply exposing students to technical reading or listening material packed with jargon would make students operational in technical English. Most teachers also believed that by focusing on one skill separately from the others would ensure thorough skill development and that focusing on more than one at a time can be an impossible endeavour from an instructional point of view (Oxford: 2001). Such beliefs might have been brought about by the notion that teaching language skills separately would make the learners an ‘accurate’ user of language (Klimova: 2014:88) because the approach allows students to gain complete command over one particular language skill that was given attention to. Tajzad and Namaghi (2014) pointed out that even though segregated skills styles might help students improve their knowledge of the language, it does not empower them with the ability to use the skill in actual communication. In that view, according to Pardede (2017:218) “*To enable the EFL students to develop their knowledge of English and their competence to use it in real communication, implementing the integrative skills approach is unavoidable*”. Similarly, Oxford (2001) agreed that although it is possible to

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focus on one or two skills in absence of the others during classroom activities, discrete skill approach would fall short of preparing the learners for academic, job oriented or day-to-day communication. Pysarchyk and Yamshynska (2015:79) added that “*In the real life each person can't use reading, listening, writing skills in isolation. All these skills serve as a bridge that connects a person with a society.[...] Integrating skills is essential for communicative competence that is the main aim of learning foreign language, for logical structuring of sentences to express ideas and desires both in oral and written form.*” Therefore, if communicative competence is the ultimate goal of language classes, integrating multiple skills into the instructional process is what teachers should do.

As demonstrated by a great number of scholars in the last two decades (Sanchez: 2000; Bose: 2003; Dawid: 2004; Askildson: 2008; Akram & Malik: 2018; Mitrofanova & Chemezov: 2011) skills integration will benefit learners and teachers equally as this approach will inspire teachers to create variations of the learning activities, enable learners to employ the learned language genuinely and passionately, enhance students' ability to express their thoughts and take on challenges in employing the language, while effectively improving learning outcomes from the communicative point of view. With remote learning, these advantages are additionally enhanced by the students' ability to resort to unlimited banks of resources provided by internet access: dictionaries, video tutorials, glossaries, community interaction, discussion forums etc. Additionally, students' access to specialized communities of learners and/or professionals has been made possible by the advent of the internet and has harness an environment of free ideas exchange, has set new standards for students to achieve and has provided a much desired stimulus for self-improvement and learning autonomy. Therefore, an integrated skills approach to technical online classes is desirable if students are to develop and improve internal knowledge independently of English alongside their linguistic accuracy and performance.

Moreover, the integrated skills approach seems to be most effective because it seeks to teach language as a means of communication to serve the purpose it was originally created for, which can be motivating and realistic as well (Brown: 2001; Tsung-Yuan & Oxford: 2002). In remote learning this may translate into becoming a functional member of a specialized professional or learning community, it can ensure integration and progress in the learning process, provide instant feedback and correction, ensure emergence into the target language culture, incorporation of and adherence to target language cultural, economic, trade and societal. Moreover, learning is no longer confined to the classroom (be it physical or virtual) but it stretches to involve the students into a community of shared values and interests, activated by curiosity and unhindered access to people and resources that were not available in traditional education.

Raimes (1983) argued that in order to make language learning classes as close as possible to real-life communicative situations, there is stringent need for activities that allow students use all the language skills in the same way they would use them in their mother tongue. For example, in remote learning students are expected to react dynamically to content rather than merely access it to resolve a static task. Moreover, students are empowered to listen or read attentively in order to react, to negotiate, readjust and refine their standpoint, ask for or provide additional details in the same way they would if the interaction occurred in their mother tongue. As Richards and Schmidt (2002:262) pointed out, “*integrated approach is the teaching of the language skills of*

reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in conjunction with each other, as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing". Consequently, as the skills are approached interactively, the development of one particular skill will lead to the development of multiple other skills working in conjunction with one another to create response or reaction, societal integration and collaboration. The use of a single skill in isolation would be improbable if not impossible to produce such results because every time people engage in conversation, in interaction with another person, they are listening as well as speaking in a continuous flow from one to the other. Hersan (1998: 22) pointed out that in daily life the four language skills "*are seen in integration ... So, in the classroom, the activities should be taught in integration in order to arrive at ease in communication.*" And, we might add, when people connect with one another, this entails input and output must flow both ways with exposure, reaction, readjustment and action in a continuous cycle.

Benefits of the Integrated Skills Approach in Online Technical Education

As remote learning is becoming increasingly dominant in the age of the Internet, we have sought to investigate how the integrated skills approach fits into the online framework of skills development for students of English. The key distinctions between face-to-face education delivery and remote education have forced teachers to adapt to a faster results-oriented approach to language teaching in which the development of skill takes precedence over mere content delivery and teacher-centered classes. Moreover, the students of today are particularly interested in key-skills development as they no longer study with an interest in language for the sake of language, but rather because they want to achieve a number of objectives with the language they learn: to study abroad, to get a job, to move house and blend into a new culture, to travel etc. It is, therefore, visible to the naked eye that they rush into foreign language autonomy and wish to develop the communication skills that will ensure such autonomy as quickly as possible. Furthermore, most of the significant content they access in view of attaining their objectives is available mainly in English, which entails they already possess some skills and wish to enlarge upon them. Particularly for technical students engaged in remote learning, there are large banks of tutorials, handouts, visual and listening material that they can easily access and often do so outside the language class.

Based on some benefits mentioned by Carols (1990: 73-74) and to a more recent literature overview as provided by Kebede (2013) we have identified and further elaborated on the key advantages of integrated skills teaching that should provide useful in online education for technical purposes. We shall derive from them with some explicit ramifications and practical observations:

1. **It ensures more purposeful and meaningful learning** at all proficiency level. Most of the times, when skills are approached in a segregated manner, students are under the impression they can only tackle one skill at a time because this is the learning style they are accustomed to in individuality. But, when experienced with learning in multi-skills classes, the learning style they have absorbed makes them aware that after reading or listening they will do something with information obtained (be it ideas or items of vocabulary), they will need to react to it and put it to good use to achieve communication with peers. They will feel comfortable achieving communicative goals based on their

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mindset's acknowledgement of communicative purposes associated to the language learned.

Example: Integrating speaking/ writing into reading

The task of having to read a technical text thoroughly can be furthered in view of: creating a debate; arguing if favour or against the main ideas mentioned in the text; expanding the time frame further with *What would you do next?* questions; using key vocabulary items in a personal account of the text content etc.

2. **Consistent teaching and better communication are ensured.** Skills integration provides **continuity** in the process of teaching-learning as in this approach tasks are closely related to each other. When exposed to informational input through receptive skills such as reading or listening, students are expected to react to it with productive skills such as speaking or in writing, answer comprehension questions, fill gaps or write a responsive paragraph to a newly introduced concept. In the next stage, they may be asked to express an opinion about the ideas of the text, replicate grammar or phraseological structures in a spoken/written paragraph, create word families for specific vocabulary items, imagine being in a specific role and voice out/react/explore the implications of specific behaviours. Thus, continuity is ensured throughout the lesson and students absorb the input ideas/vocabulary/phrases and put them to good use to create communicative output. As a result, it develops much-needed transferable skills that students can repurpose and remap onto a number of situations they will encounter in their field of professional activity, thus increasing communicative achievement and confidence.
3. **Variety and collaboration are brought into the classroom**, enabling teachers to enrich classroom instruction by integrating language skills cooperatively. Skills integration **boosts confidence** and can **ensure learning autonomy and team-work**, which is, in fact, the ultimate goal of any good teaching methodology. How can it do that? By simply empowering students to feel they can tackle input regardless of its challenging nature and create output in a variety of forms. Variety can be ensured by the intelligent alternation of receptive skills with productive skills, by turn taking and roles exchange, by using increasing level of difficulty for input etc. Students learn to handle tasks collaboratively, draw inspiration from peers and formulate better answers, enrich ideas produced by peers and contribute to class interaction more open-heartedly. Additionally, the output derived from collaboration will be an example of mitigation strategies, finding middle ground and negotiating put to use .
4. Language learning with integrated skills **resembles** the way people operate in **real life**. As part of a human society, we see, read, hear things and we are expected to react, to create something based on the newly acquired information, to adapt to it, to act out, to report it based on our understanding and capabilities, to voice an opinion. When we create input for others, the cycle starts over with different roles assigned to different actors. Similarly, the integrated skills learning approach will train students to play a variety of communicative and technical roles in class as preparation for what they will encounter in target language life situations.

5. **It develops students' communicative competence:** grammatical/linguistic competence, strategic competence, socio-linguistic competence and discourse competence. Lessons relying on the integrated skills approach can be creatively designed to provide **input before output**, which increases self-confidence, idea generation and willingness to express opinions.
For instance, the teacher can elicit new vocabulary with a reading activity paralleled with listening and in the second stage of the lesson students can be tasked to use some specific vocabulary items provided to articulate a response to an idea or concept in a guided speaking activity or in a paragraph/report/essay writing task.
6. **Provides exposure to authentic language** learning environment so that students can **interact** naturally in the target language. It ensures **realistic learning** as skills integration allows for the development of four skills within a real-life communicative framework. Language skills integration provides more purposeful and meaningful learning as students are exposed to genuine learning situations that make them feel integrated into a professional environment, react to real-life situations and understand what is expected of them when faced with a particular scenario. Moreover, the language they are learning is actually put to use with the aim to provide reactions from them rather than merely expose students to content, which increases its meaningfulness and ensures long-term retention.
7. **It can develop students' critical thinking** so that they can analyze, synthesize and evaluate information better, enabling them to practise language skills successfully. The integrated skills approach draws the student away from being fed target language structures and activates their processing power by enabling them to produce output creatively in a manner that is adapted to students' level. Additionally, they can elicit and internalize an understanding of inherent target language rules, structures and replicate observed language patterns in conversations, create their own language items based on patterns etc.
8. **It increases motivation** in students and **boosts learning morale** by drifting away from a routine language practice that often results in boredom and loss of interventional motivation. Integrated skills in remote learning provide opportunities to meaningfully **introduce** and **reuse** the language and structures learned by students in a variety of contexts and modes and it can be valuable for increasing intrinsic motivation as it allows for the recycling and revision of language which has already been taught. For example, when students are exposed to the definition of a concept in a reading or listening activity they will be able to replicate the structures used for defining concepts for their own needs and should be encouraged to do so for a number of different concepts. Thus, they will develop the confidence that they can later on define, explain and refine other work-related concepts. Or, when students listen to native speakers sequencing their speech with linking phrases, discourse markers or hedging devices they will apply similar linking/ hedging strategies to sequence their own ideas immediately as part of a task and as part of their future spoken or written statements. Moreover, while interacting with peers in a like-minded community, students will be equipped to expand learning, provide and receive feedback, become autonomous and confident as the community validates their contribution.

Integrated Skills in Online Technical English Classes

9. **It provides a student-centered and a humanistic approach** to language teaching and learning. When genuine content from the target language culture is provided, students become familiar with a variety of cultural, economic and professional realities that exist worldwide. Moreover, with integrated skills put to good use, students are faced with the challenge of debating, negotiating and rethinking some previous concepts and ideas that they inherited from their own culture and reintegrate them into a globalized culture. Not only will students thus feel empowered to become part of the target language culture, but they will also increase their conceptual flexibility, cultural tolerance and easy integration in a complementary universe endowed with people from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. Moreover, students can achieve their goals in cooperation with like-minded students with whom they share a common purpose, interest and outcome.

Conclusion

Using an integrated skills approach entails that language should be treated as a mode of interaction rather than an academic study subject. Thus, technical students will benefit from an increase in the motivation to learn a language if they feel they are able to use it to interact, rather than to merely possess knowledge about the language. It has the potential to empower technical students to use their target language strengths to grow into future professionals that are perfectly apt to employ language skills to optimally operate in a community of people with a shared interest, similar capabilities and an aim to succeed professionally.

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Article Info

Received: October 29 2022

Accepted: November 10 2022

Integrated Skills in Online Technical English Classes

How to cite this article:

Boncea, I. J. (2022). Integrated Skills in Online Technical English Classes. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 184 – 193.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Communicating Resilience, Transformative Resilience, Transformative Change and Transformative Adaptation Policies in Eco-Social Systems Management Literature

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Abstract:

The study discusses the occurrence and conceptual association of “resilience”, “transformative resilience”, “transformative change” and “transformative adaptation” phrases set within the wider context of the management of change literature. The purpose of the study and objectives stem from the need of conceptual tracking, conceptual occurrence tracing and the identification of conceptual associations in the scientific literature over a period of time. The research design deploys a three-stage applied methodology: (S₁) identifying conceptual longitudinal developing use in the scientific literature of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation using the *Google Ngram Viewer* instrument, (S₂) identifying the concept frequency in scientific articles and comparison across citation metrics databases *Crossref* and *Google Scholar*, and (S₃) identifying the conceptual associations and related frequency for selected concepts employing the *Google Ngram Viewer* tool. The study succeeds in identifying occurrences in the scientific literature for the selected phrases resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation, in comparing the related concepts and phrases frequency in scientific papers, and in identifying the conceptual associations for representative concepts in the field of eco-social systems management of change literature.

Keywords: *communication, resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change, transformative adaptation, policy.*

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Communicating Resilience, Transformative Resilience, Transformative Change and Transformative Adaptation Policies in Eco-Social Systems Management Literature

1. Literature review

Coining the concepts of “resilience”, “transformative resilience”, “transformative change” and “transformative adaptation” within the wider context of the management of change literature has developed innovative strands of research (Olimid, Georgescu, Gherghe, 2022: 38-51; Georgescu, Olimid, Gherghe, 2022: 82-96). Conceptualising the differences between resilience and transformation has fueled the work of many researchers pinpointing resilience-driven changes in practices while acknowledging the role of deep transformation in institution design (Hordijk, Sara, Sutherland, 2014: 130-146). Consequently, within the overall discussion of deploying responsibility and change sustainability, the concepts of resilience, incremental change and transformation appear as gradient facets leaning on participatory action (Olimid, Georgescu, 2017: 42-56).

1.1 Employing “capacity building” for “transformative adaptation”

The literature around the terms “transformative adaptation” and “adaptive change” has dwelt heavily during the recent period with the “capacity building” actions intertwined at community level inducing the policy response (Ziervogel, Enqvist, Metelerkamp, van Breda, 2022: 607-622).

1.2 Conceptualizing “transformative change” as “path development”

The conditionality on immersing into change has preoccupied scholars who studied “grand societal challenges” that society needs to address. Transformative change as such has received peculiar attention from the literature, one direction of research being guided by the connection to “innovation policy” at different levels through “path development”, manifesting itself including at micro- or macro-regional level through technical advances, logistics innovation and financing, regulating legal matters and other aspects of social life policy options (Martin, 2020: 2409-2427). Studies rooted in addressing environmental concerns and climate change have targeted thoroughly the social-ecological allegiance as a milieu for transformative change in their efforts to foster efficient eco-social governance (Gillard, Gouldson, Paavola, Van Alstine, 2016: 251-265). “Sustainability transformation” is an innovative concept deeply connected to society in its capacity as “transformative agent” amongst ethics, responsibility and awareness-based sustainability concerns (Moriggi, Soini, Franklin, Roep, 2020: 281-298; Mitu, 2016: 77-87). Transformative agency was studied along the two-phased “participatory development of activity” in which the first phase is triggered by an initial need for change, while sustainability is maintained through a subsequent long-term involvement in transformative actions (Haapasaari, Kerosuo, 2015: 37-47).

1.3 Bonding resilience and structural transformative change

Structural transformative change in its deep reforming capacity was studied in areas such as: (1) community action towards “social justice”, and also society’s transforming potential knowledge-based actions towards addressing climate change (Rosengren, Raymond, Sell, Vihinen, 2020: 427-444; Barbu, Florea, Ogarcă, Barbu, 2018: 373-387) and water management (Pahl-Wostl, 2020: 397-415); (2) transformative practices within a certain institutional milieu (Hebinck, Galli, Arcuri, Carroll, O’Connor, Oostindie, 2018: 398-413); (3) international bodies climate action, especially within the

context of EU climate governance, and the political actors' potential for leverage (Kreienkamp, Pegram, Coen, 2022: 731-748).

A significantly growing interest has been lately directed towards recovery, after crises in general and pandemics in particular, in its double capacity as resilience or as structural transformative change operating under a complex governance framework involving selected transformative principles (Kamstra, 2020: 763-773; Greyling, Patel, Davison, 2017: 52-65) encompassing different layers from the societal realm, supporting the economy, building critical infrastructure, addressing climate issues, supporting public health (McClelland, Shaw, O'Grady, Fattoum, 2022; Sorea, Csesznek, Rățulea, 2022).

In the context of change, society's role becomes crucial, being manifest in studies from participating in transformative change in education and entrepreneurial policies (Walker, Loots, 2018: 166-181; Cunningham, Menter, 2021: 343-364) with a special focus to higher education and the academia (Bularca, Nechita, Sargu, Motoi, Otovescu, Coman, 2022), the economy, enterprises and consumers' consumption behaviour (Burlea-Schiopoiu, Mihai, 2019; Burlea-Schiopoiu, Ogarca, Barbu, Craciun, Baloi, Mihai, 2021) to sustainable transformative change and the environment (Lidskog, Stranding, White, 2022: 255-266), transformative adaptation to the challenging context represented by the environment and climate change (Fedele, Donatti, Harvey, Hannah, Hole, 2019: 116-125) and the intricate relationships between communication and adaptation (Vlăduțescu, 2014).

Fostering resilience and adaptation

Adaptation as a form of transforming response was intensely addressed in the climate change governance literature within the background of incrementalism (Magesa, Pauline, 2019: 745-754), or together with increased learning (Orderud, Naustdalslid, 2020: 15-27) through the agency of eco-social systems (Colloff, Wise, Palomo, Lavorel, Pascual, 2020: 137-150). The literature has also coined the term "adaptive capacity" and "transformational adaptation" in relation to environmental governance in general and water management in particular (Ross, Chang, Cantor, 2022). Furthermore, the literature focused on "adaptation planning" in relation to building resilience (Lyles, Berke, Heiman Overstreet, 2018: 1994-2014; Shi, Chu, Debats, 2015: 191-202; Walawalkar, Hermans, Evers, 2022). Thus, the relations between resilience and adaptation are built in strong connection to the environment and action framework (Wong-Parodi, Fischhoff, Strauss, 2015: 1-7).

2. Problem statement

The current study explores the concept stretch in anchoring resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation policies in eco-social systems by de-constructing the theoretical frames of communication and information constructs. The research employs the conceptual scheme among "resilience", "transformative resilience", "transformative change" and "transformative adaptation" to investigate the theoretical and scientific display of eco-social systems dynamics. As such, the study encompasses the academic dimension of conceptual theoretical framing within the scientific literature pertaining to the communication and information scheme.

Communicating Resilience, Transformative Resilience, Transformative Change and Transformative Adaptation Policies in Eco-Social Systems Management Literature

2. Purpose and objectives of the study

The study aims at identifying and discussing the conceptual and communication dynamics of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation policies within the eco-social systems management literature. In this sense, the objectives of the study stem from the overall purpose of tracking the promotion and amplification of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation concepts use: (O₁) resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation policies concept tracing; (O₂) resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation concept use dynamics within the eco-social systems management literature; (O₃) the inter-connectedness with other concepts in related disciplines and fields of research.

3. Applied methodology and research design

The research methodology deploys a three-fold study condensed on three stages: (S₁) firstly, identifying the footprints of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation conceptual longitudinal developing use in the scientific literature using the *Google Ngram Viewer* instrument, (S₂) secondly, identifying the concept frequency in scientific work and comparison across citation metrics databases *Crossref* and *Google Scholar*, and (S₃) thirdly, identifying the conceptual associations and related frequency for selected concepts also employing the *Google Ngram Viewer* tool.

4. Launching the research questions

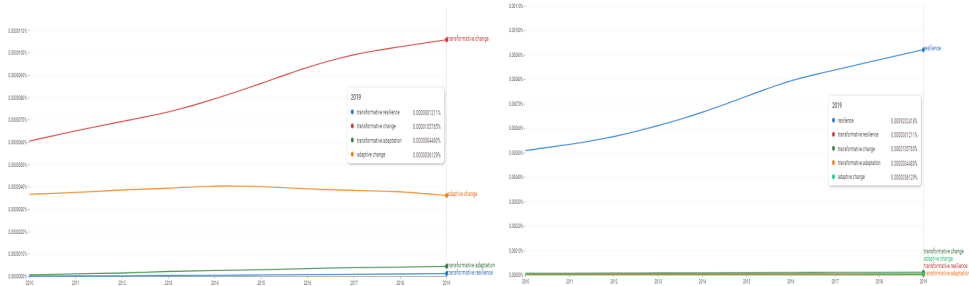
At this stage of the research process, a set of three research questions guide the analysis: (Q₁) What is the depth of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation policies concept tracing? (Q₂) Can we determine the concept use dynamics of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation policies within the eco-social systems management literature? (Q₃) Can we trace the inter-connectedness with other concepts in related disciplines and fields of research?

5. Results and discussions

5.1 Concept identification in scientific literature citation databases

The first stage of the analysis aims at identifying the use of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change, adaptation and transformative adaptation conceptual use in the corpus of scientific literature during 2010-2019 period employing the *Google Ngram Viewer* search and occurrence measurement tool.

Figure 1. Resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change, adaptation and transformative adaptation conceptual use in the scientific literature



Source: Author’s contribution based on Google Ngram Viewer

5.2 Concept frequency in scientific articles

The second stage of research consisted in the identification of resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation and other related concepts in scientific literature citation databases, following the selection of several tags from the literature review: (1) resilience and transformative resilience, (2) transformative change, with the add-ons transformative change in education, transformative change in environment, transformative change and climate change, transformative change and water management, transformative change in health, transformative change and urbanization, transformative change and urban planning, transformative change and civil society, transformative change and social capital, transformative change and social entrepreneurship, (3) transformative innovation and transformative innovation policy, (4) transformative principles, (5) adaptive capacity, adaptation planning, transformative adaptation and adaptive transformation. For this goal, we deployed a documentation using the search engines of *Crossref* and *Google Scholar* databases which were selected due to their associated citation metrics within the scientific literature. Table 1 subsequently presents the results associated to this search.

Table 1. Concept frequency in scientific papers

Concept	Value		Percentage difference
	<i>Crossref</i>	<i>Google Scholar</i>	
Resilience	85,703	3,740,000	191.04%
Transformative resilience	103,675	461,000	126.56%
Transformative change	777,436	3,630,000	129.44%
Transformative change in education	3,010,814	3,240,000	7.33%
Transformative change in environment	1,637,806	2,740,000	67.29%
Transformative change and climate change	967,479	1,020,000	5.28%
Transformative change and	4,822,775	643,000	152.94%

Communicating Resilience, Transformative Resilience, Transformative Change and Transformative Adaptation Policies in Eco-Social Systems Management Literature

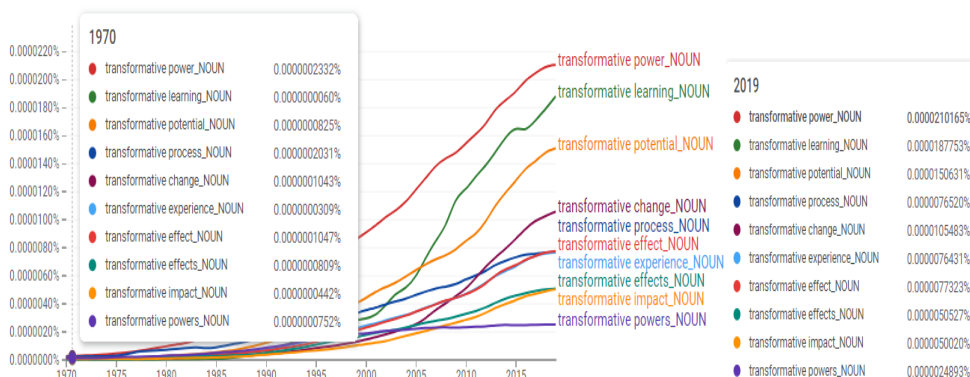
water management			
Transformative change in health	3,367,030	2,630,000	24.58%
Transformative change and urbanization	797,153	130,000	143.91%
Transformative change and urban planning	1,719,985	683,000	86.31%
Transformative change and civil society	4,829,343	1,140,000	123.61%
Transformative change and social capital	2,998,476	1,270,000	80.99%
Transformative change and social entrepreneurship	2,934,904	207,000	92.95%
Transformative principles	330,641	2,170,000	147.11%
Transformative innovation	404,171	1,670,000	122.06%
Transformative innovation policy	1,302,062	1,270,000	2.49%
Adaptive capacity	574,236	4,260,000	152.49%
Adaptation planning	653,890	4,750,000	626.42%
Transformative adaptation	178,200	809,000	353.98%
Adaptive transformation	639,915	5,890,000	160.80%

Source: Author's contribution based on *Crossref* and *Google Scholar* databases comparison.

5.3 Concept stretch and relatedness

The third stage of the research targeted the longitudinal identification of conceptual associations within the corpus of literature. The wild card noun search using *Google Ngram Viewer* has revealed the following conceptual associations for the term “transformative” for the reference period 1970-2019: “transformative power”, “transformative learning”, “transformative potential”, “transformative change”, “transformative process”, “transformative experience”, “transformative effect”, “transformative impact”.

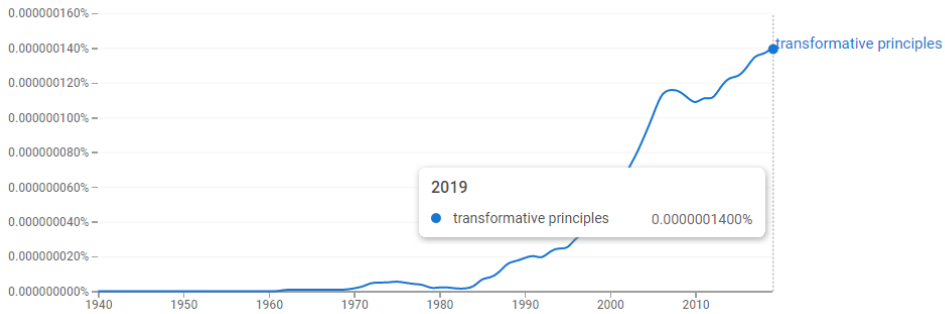
Figure 2. Conceptual associations for the “transformative” and noun wild card search



Source: Author's contribution based on *Google Ngram Viewer*

Moreover, the study applied *Google Ngram Viewer* in order to detect the frequency of transformative principles in the scientific corpus of literature, the results showing a growing research interest and occurrence, the peak being registered in 2019 (0.0000001400%).

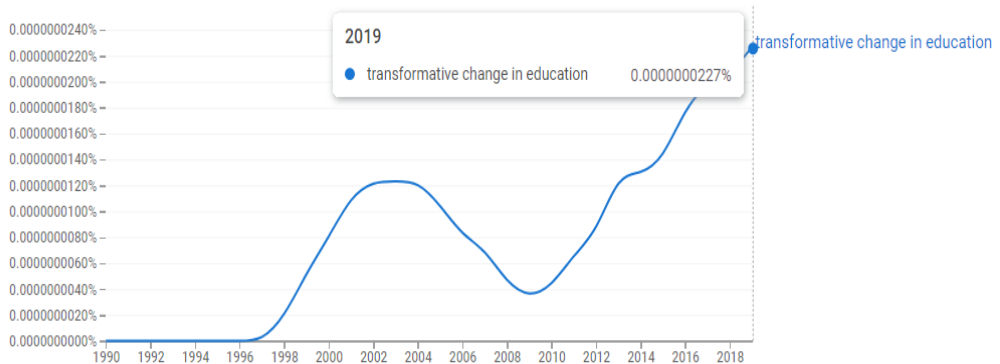
Figure 3. Analyzing the occurrence of transformative principles



Source: Author’s contribution based on Google Ngram Viewer

Next, the online instruments involved in the research rendered the occurrence of “transformative change in education” phrase, which reached its highest value in 2019 (0.0000000227%) while on an ascending trend.

Figure 4. Analyzing the occurrence of transformative change in education

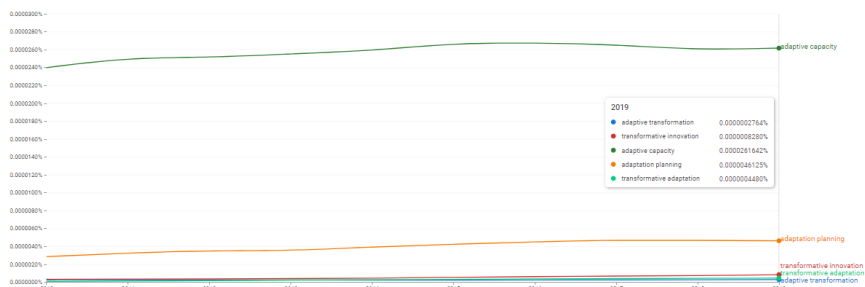


Source: Author’s contribution based on Google Ngram Viewer

Further, the analysis involved the identification of the conceptual association occurrences amongst adaptation, transformation and related concepts, such as: adaptive capacity, adaptive transformation, adaptive planning, transformative innovation, and transformative adaptation selected from the literature review phase of the research.

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Figure 5. Analyzing the conceptual associations amongst “adaptation”, “transformation” and related concepts



Source: Author’s contribution based on Google Ngram Viewer

Conclusions

All in all, the study succeeds in attaining its stated purpose and research goals, by identifying occurrences in the scientific literature for the selected phrases resilience, transformative resilience, transformative change and transformative adaptation, by comparing the related concepts and phrases frequency in scientific papers, and by identifying the conceptual associations for representative concepts in the field of eco-social systems management of change literature. However, the discussions remain open as to delve deeper the conceptual use in related disciplines, especially crisis governance and recovery from calamities, following the shift of meaning among adaptation, building resilience and structural transformative change. Moreover, it is expected to further the analysis when the results of conceptual occurrences of the corpus of literature become available in order to sketch a more detailed picture of the concepts in question use during the pandemic crisis.

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Article Info

Received: November 10 2022

Accepted: November 18 2022

How to cite this article:

Georgescu, C. M. (2022). Communicating Resilience, Transformative Resilience, Transformative Change and Transformative Adaptation Policies in Eco-Social Systems Management Literature. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 194 – 204.



ORIGINAL PAPER

Fiscal performance, desideratum of public administration

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Abstract:

The field of finance has always aroused a remarkable interest, both among the politicians, the population, as well as among the specialists and researchers in the field. Therefore, the study of fiscal performance has recently become a concern among specialists, thus we could argue that, at present, it has even obtained an autonomous particularity of scientific research, based on its own approaches and concepts. The difficulty of increasing voluntary tax compliance and tax collection by the state are some of the most important targets to achieve for every tax administration. A high level of tax collection guarantees the indispensable financial resources of each Government, to have the ability to maintain the expenses to meet the general needs of society. Alongside with actions to combat and prevent tax evasion, the collection of due taxes supports, to a large extent, the provision of these needs.

Keywords: *fiscal performance, efficiency, effectiveness, levels of performance, behavior, compliance.*

JEL Classifications: G40, H21, H30.

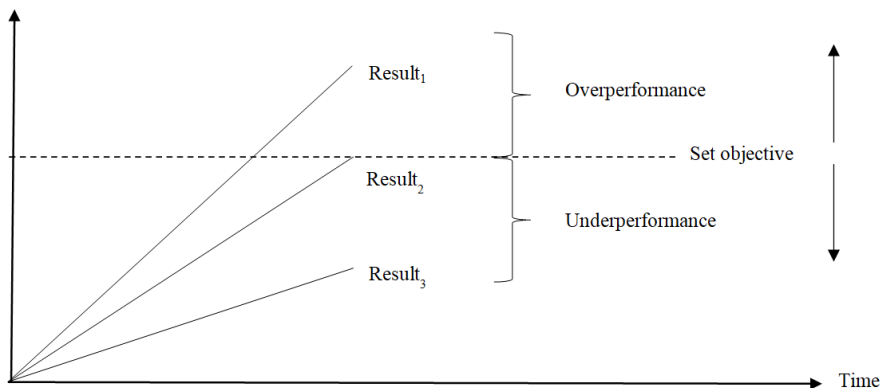
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Introduction

If we consider the linguistic form of the word, according to the explanatory dictionary of the Romanian language, performance is "a particularly good result [...], in a field of practical activity, etc.; the best result given by a machine, an apparatus, etc." (Breban, 1980). It is "a prestigious result achieved by an athlete or a team; by extension, outstanding achievement in a field of practical activity. The best result given by a technical system, a machine, a device, etc." (Stănciulescu, 2005). On the other hand, another very famous dictionary namely the Oxford English dictionary considers performance as "how well or badly you do something" or "how well or badly something works", it is also defined as "the act or the process of performing a task, action, etc., while the verb "perform" means to function well or poorly. Through the literature, scholars continually insist that there is no standardized or uniform definition of performance and argue that it is a multidimensional concept. However, Samsonowa (2012), claims that all the different definitions that the literature should review, regarding performance measurement, have a common feature; they are all related to two terms: effectiveness and efficiency; effectiveness as an indicator of an objectives' degree of achievement, and efficiency as an indicator of the resources that were consumed to achieve the level of achievement.

Grüning (2002), defined three levels of performance: level (-1) is the level of underperformance, in which one goes through a certain process of reaching predefined objectives and tries to achieve them; level (0) is the level of performance, in other words the level of achievement of the objective, it is the stage in which the predetermined objectives are successfully achieved; level (1) is the level of overperformance, which the author defines as the level of excellence, at this level expectations are exceeded to achieve the goals only, the expected results are exceeded and better results are achieved.

Figure 1. Performance as set objective



Source: Ghalem and colab., 2016

In the last ten years there has been an exponential interest in the development and definition of the concept of performance. According to (cf. Ilgen & Schneider, 1991; Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997) Performance is not defined by the action itself, but by the processes of judgement and evaluation. (Campbell et al., 1993) argue that only measurable actions are considered constituents of performance. When we discuss outcome we refer to the consequence or result of an individual's behaviour. The

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behaviours mentioned above may lead to outcomes such as: quantity of parts bilt, sales figures or number of successful medical operations. Quite often, the behavioural and outcome aspects are empirically linked but are not completely overlapping.

Campbell (1990); McCloy, Oppler and Sager (1993); Kanfer (1990); Roe (1999), agree that when conceptualising performance, a distinction has to be made between an action (i.e. behavioural) aspect and an outcome aspect of performance. The behavioural aspect refers to what an individual does in the work situation. It includes behaviours such as selling personal gadgets, assembling the component parts of an aircraft, teaching children writing skills or performing a medical intervention. Only behaviour that is relevant to organisational goals is subsumed under the concept of performance, not any kind of behaviour. The outcome aspect refers to the consequence or result of the individual's behaviour.

The resulting aspects of performance also depend on factors other than those of the individual's behavior. For example, imagine a teacher who teaches a perfect reading lesson (the behavioral aspect of performance), but one or two of his students, nevertheless, fail to improve their reading skills because of their intellectual deficits (the outcome aspect of performance). In practice, it might be difficult to describe the action aspect of performance without any reference to the outcome aspect. Public sector efficiency is a crucial issue for both developed and developing countries in recent public finance reforms. To solve this problem, governments are looking for various reforms, especially related to the process of globalization.

Fiscal performance could be defined as all the ways implemented to ensure a sustainable global fiscal situation. We also consider here that tax rules are a tool to drive good tax performance. Determination of fiscal performance illustrates "fiscal performance" as a function of tax deferral and level of development (represented by recorded per capita income). Haldenwang (2010), expresses the fact that some countries fail to ensure that their citizens and businesses make an adequate contribution to the financing of public tasks. But not all countries with a low tax rate automatically fall into this category. Taking Haldenwang's (2010) observation, there is a well-established positive relationship between a countrys' ability to collect taxes and its level of development.

Fiscal performance, determinant element of voluntary compliance

The first relevant research became visible starting from the 1972 period - Allingham and Sandmo - they appreciated the following: "to increase tax compliance, a sanction based on the level of undeclared income must be applied". Understanding the taxpayer's fiscal behavior has become the subject of a study by the tax department in Ireland "Understanding Taxpayer Behavior - New Opportunities for Tax Administration", which emphasizes the idea that "in addition to the legal (tax) rules that suggest the taxpayer's fiscal behavior must be taken into account and other factors that can influence the tax behavior of taxpayers, among which one of major importance is trust in the tax administration".

The knowledge and ways of persuasion of the tax compliance behavior of the taxpayer revealed an interest also within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Forum on Tax Administration-Understanding and Influencing Taxpayers Compliance Behaviour, November 2010", study which reveals the fact that research on taxpayer behavior is a new and indispensable field for determining strategies for increasing and strengthening voluntary taxpayer compliance. In the other countries, a

greater emphasis is placed on the analysis of the behavior of the taxpayer and the factors that can direct the increase in the degree of voluntary compliance of taxpayers, including by concluding a "psychological contract" between the tax authorities and taxpayers whereby both partners have rights and obligations, as stated in the research carried out by Feld and Frey, (2007). The theory-inspired model preferred by the Australian Taxation Authority is a proven fact that theory can be combined with practice.

So, it would be necessary to mention the role of taxes, from a social perspective, through which the state intervenes in the economy to apply different public policies. Thus, from the perspective of fiscal policy, taxes are given a fiscal leverage attribute. The use of tax as a fiscal lever differs from one country to another and is absolutely consistent with the public policies of each government. From a psychological point of view, Listhaug and Miller (1985) demonstrated that the unfolding of taxpayer behavior is achieved through two manners that are interconnected. A first explanation emphasizes the "rational" type, while the next type targets incidental symbolic or political factors. A large-scale debate had as its starting point the morality of the taxpayer, a fact that led to multiple researches in the field of psychology, especially in studies that refer to the taxpayer's behavior regarding the payment and declaration of taxes.

In Romania there is a small number of scientific research in this sphere of compliance. In the Ministry of Public Finance (MFP) and the National Agency for Fiscal Administration (ANAF) have not yet been treated with an analysis based on theoretical findings regarding the tax behavior of the taxpayer, the only approaches consisting of the application of sanctions or the collection of penalties and late fees for non-payment of taxes on time, respectively by imposing legal norms in this field. According to literature, there are numerous determinant factors of taxpayers's fiscal behavior.

1. Economic factors;

- Fiscal controls - Some of the main factors that influence the behavior of taxpayers are those of an economic nature, namely the measures aimed at taxpayers to be subject to a fiscal control, to be sanctioned by levying fines and penalties provided by the legislation in the field. Some studies support the fact that tax audit intervals have a positive impact on tax evasion (Jackson and Jaouen, 1989; Shanmugam, 2003; Dubin, 2004). These findings suggest that tax audit intervals can play an indispensable role, their essential role being to enhance voluntary compliance. The frequency and thoroughness of the audits could encourage taxpayers to be more cautious about completing tax returns and reporting all income. Conversely, taxpayers who have rarely been audited may be tempted to underreport current income. The probability of being audited is positively correlated with tax compliance. However, some studies identify conflicting results, concluding that a high level of probability of being controlled may decrease compliance (e.g. Slemrod et al., 2001; Braithwaite et al., 2009).

- Knowledge of government spending - According to Cullen et al. (2018), a smaller percentage of income tax is evaded when a larger percentage of taxpayers have a positive opinion of Government. Taxpayers who pay large amounts are more sensitive to how their taxmoney is spent by the Government. There is a higher change that voluntary compliance will increase when taxpayers notice their the Government spends national revenues cautiously, for example, on basic facilities like health, education, infrastructure, public transport and safety. At the other end of the spectrum, if taxpayers perceive that the Government spendings are high on something they deem unnecessary, then they might try to escape their tax obligations.

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2. Institutional factors;

- Role (efficiency) of tax authority/Government - For many aspects of tax compliance there is a debate in the literature about how effectively the tax system works. The role of the tax authority in minimizing the tax gap and increasing voluntary compliance is clearly very important. Hasseldine and Li (1999) illustrated tax compliance as placing the government and the tax authority as the main party that must be continuously effective in administering the tax system to reduce tax evasion. In addition, the study of Richardson (2006) also suggested that the role of a government has a significant positive impact in determining the attitude towards taxation.

3. Social factors;

- Social factors - Determinants of tax compliance from a social perspective refer to taxpayers's willingness to comply with tax laws in response to the behavior of other people and their social environment (eg: Government, friends and family members), (Torgler, 2008). On the other hand, Kirchler (2007) suggested that social factors should be viewed in a broader sense than Torgler's perspective, including the psychology of taxpayers.

- Perceptions of equity or fairness - One of the basic principles of tax system design is equity or fairness, which can be perceived through three-dimensional perspectives – horizontal equity (people with the same income or wealth categories should pay the same amount of taxes), vertical equity (taxes paid increase with the value of the tax base) and exchange equity (Wallschultzky 1984; Richardson, 2006). Certain conditions need to be met in order to be able to respect equity, according to Lazar, Inceu and Babici (2010), there should be a non-taxable minimum, it should be "universal, general", it should be decided "according to the contributory power" that he owns and that there is a "comparability of the fiscal burden", both horizontally and vertically. In order for a tax to be effective, it would be necessary to have an elastic character, to be sustainable and to have the cost of administration as low as possible. Tyler and Lind (1992), add other criteria to the concept of procedural fairness, such as decent attitude by the authorities and neutrality.

- Changes in government policies – According to Engida, and Baisa, (2014) an important role in determining tax avoidance behaviour is played by the political stability and ruling party of a country. For example, if a taxpayer favors the ruling party, they may choose to comply because they believe the government is trustworthy, efficient and fair. Conversely, if a taxpayer perceives that the opposition party is not on his or her side he or she might be non-compliant. Many studies have shown that policy changes and government decisions in line with the economic and political situation have a significant impact on compliance. As another example, it is likely that a positive government move such as an increase in tax relief (Hasseldine and Hite, 2003) will increase taxpayer compliance.

- Reference groups (family and friends) - Research establishing the importance of reference groups, such as family and friends, in tax compliance is limited, although Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), in "Theory of Rational Action and Theory of Behavioral Planning" theorized that reference groups play a significant role in determining people's intentions and behavior. Decisions whether or not to evade taxes are sometimes influenced by family members or friends, for example, Allingham and Sandmo (1972), although the extent of the influence was not clearly stated in this research. Therefore, the influence of reference groups is apparently important in making a decision, especially the involvement of monetary aspects and compliance with laws (tax compliance). There

are two salient factors that define behavioral intentions: a personal or "attitudinal" element and a social or "normative" element. As numerous researches have shown, individuals are actively involved in the influence they have on others (Swan, 1985).

4. *Social factors;*

- Individual factors – Decisions on evading or not their tax obligations depend, to a large extent, on the personal judgement of taxpayers. (Mohani, 2001).
- Personal Financial Constraints - Personal financial constraints are considered to have an impact on tax evasion because the financial difficulties faced by a person may encourage them to prioritize basic needs (food, clothing, housing, etc.) rather than tax obligations. People experiencing personal financial problems are likely to be more prone to evasion compared to people in less financial distress (Engida and Baisa, 2014).
- Awareness of offenses and punishments - A theoretical economic model introduced by Allingham and Sandmo (1972) clearly indicated that penalties as well as the likelihood of control have an impact on tax compliance. The greater the penalty and the potential likelihood of control, the greater the deterrent to potential tax evasion. If taxpayers are aware of the crimes they commit through tax evasion and the consequences of being non-compliant taxpayers, they could reduce their tendency to commit tax evasion.
- Fiscal knowledge - The influence of fiscal knowledge on compliance behavior has been described in various researches. The level of education received by taxpayers is an important factor that contributes to the understanding of taxation. According to Palil (2011), tax education is the knowledge of tax laws to determine the compliance behavior of taxpayers. Tax education promotes the taxpayer's understanding of tax systems, processes, the law and the associated penalties. This tends to increase people's inclination to comply with tax obligations. Asrinanda (2018), argues that the level of tax knowledge affects the tax attitude towards a fair tax system. Knowledge of tax laws by the taxpayer affects the compliance of the taxpayer himself in fulfilling his tax obligation and affects the tax revenues received by the state. The legislation is loaded with countless severe, ambivalent rules and exceptions, which often create a lack of functionality. Tax laws and regulations are legal documents with specific language that is complicated for ordinary taxpayers to understand. Tax laws should be simplified to save time and reduce administrative costs, thereby improving tax compliance (Kasipillai, 2005).

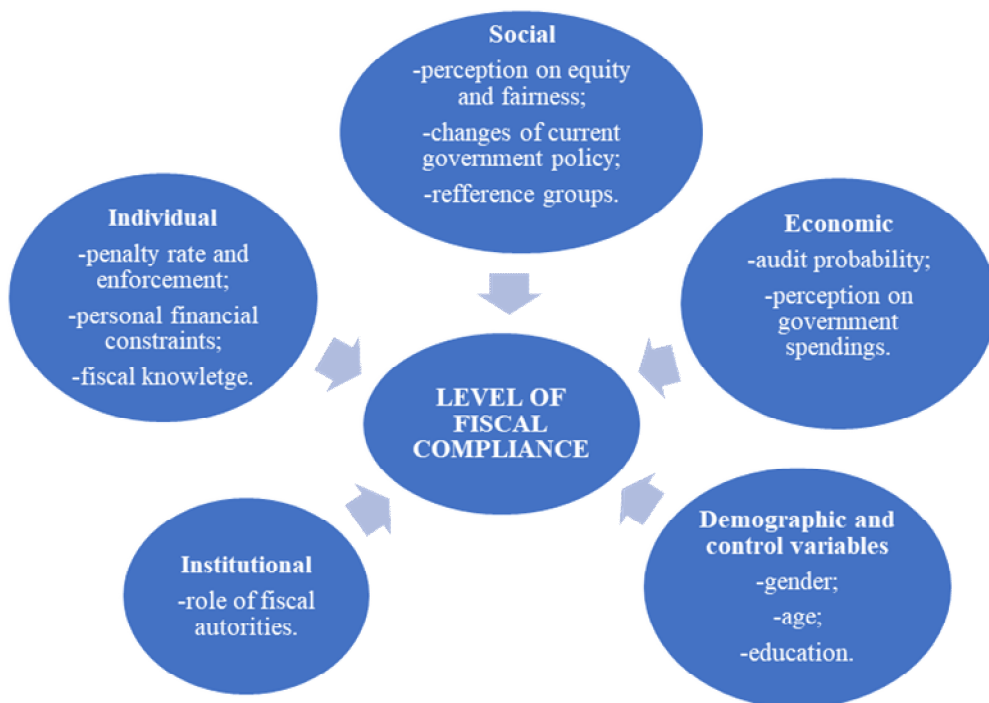
5. *Demographic factors.*

- Gender - Engida and Baisa, (2014) argue that some studies have found that men comply more easily, although other studies have revealed conflicting results or no significant difference. Studies done by Hasseldine, Hite (2003) and Tittle (1980) showed that a higher degree of compliance is shown by female taxpayers. A divergent opinion is presented by Richardson (2006); Amina, Sniy (2015) and Niway (2016) who reinforced the fact that gender does not have a significant role on taxpayer's compliance attitude.
- Source of income - Jackson and Milliron (1986) found that income level has a mixed and unclear impact on compliance, and some subsequent research agrees with this statement (Christian and Gupta, 1994). For example, progressive tax rates might encourage higher income groups to commit evasion rather than the lower income group because the tax rate and taxable income are high (for the higher income group) and consequently tax liabilities are higher than those for the lower income group. In a country where income redistribution is unsatisfactory, the higher income group tends to evade more (Mohani, 2001).

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- Age - Age is a demographic factor that has been the subject of a lot of research. Authors such as Wahlund (1992); Title (1980); Wärneryd and Walerud (1982), have argued that older people are more non-compliant than younger people.
- Education - Chan, Troutman and O'Bryan (2000) argue, that the level of education is directly related to the likelihood of compliance. Educated taxpayers may realize the opportunities for noncompliance, but may better understand the tax system. Higher levels of intellectual and moral development promote a more advantageous attitude and greater taxpayer compliance. Education refers to the ability to understand the importance and purpose of taxpayers paying taxes, complying with regulations and voting. According to Jackson and Miliron (1989), there is a positive and direct relationship between the level of education and taxpayer's responsibility, this relationship being backed up by previous literature.

Figure 2. Variables description, expected effect of the determinant and control variables



Source: own design

Conclusions

Regarding the concept of fiscal performance, we can state the following: although the term performance is widely used, defining it as a concept is quite difficult, this having as its main cause the multiple meanings it carries. Thanks to these meanings of the concept of performance, we can state with certainty the following fact: there is no general and exhaustive definition of the term performance, it being defined differently over time according to the meanings and purposes. Often, according to many authors, performance is identified or equated with efficiency or effectiveness. On the other hand,

in the case of other authors, as we could see, this term is equivalent to financial results. At the same time, the term "performance" is a relative concept that requires and demands both interpretation and judgement. The definition of this concept is influenced by the situation and the interpretive context of the types of information and the types of key parameters of the actual conjunctural situation. From this point of view we can affirm that regardless of the type and variant of the stated definition, the concept of performance is more than something observable or measurable, being a fact, the result of a deliberate mental construction. The concept of performance, in fact, is an extremely relative concept, it being defined and interpreted in terms of an evaluator who identifies and causally relates, through a coherent set, certain indicators with certain processes or activities, in the desire to highlight certain results present, necessary for the future achievement of other new results and to interpretively link future results in accordance with present or current activities and processes.

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Article Info

Received: November 05 2022

Accepted: November 20 2022

How to cite this article:

Ene, S. M. (2022). Fiscal performance, desideratum of public administration. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 205 – 214.



ORIGINAL PAPER

The socio-economic effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Romania. A sociological perspective of the impact of the war on the attitudes and behaviors of Romanians

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Abstract:

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict that succeeded the Covid 19 pandemic marks the end of the winter of 2022 and continues to deepen Europe's socio-economic fragility. Whatever the causes of its outbreak, any armed conflict has immeasurable effects on combatants, allies and opponents alike. The leveraging of financial resources in support of one side and the triggering of pecuniary sanctions for the other implies an enormous consumption of resources with global economic effects. These are compounded by the social effects of war: loss of life, family segregation, refugee crisis, severe material deprivation, unemployment, crime, etc. As an EU and NATO member state, Romania has had to reinforce its responsibilities of support (as a geopolitical supporter of Ukraine) and responsibility towards war refugees. However, it is precisely Romania's geographical proximity to Ukraine that has led to an increase in the population's fear of the risks of conflict close to the country's borders, but also to a natural solidarity of citizens with its innocent victims: the civilian refugees in our country. Based on an analysis of the scientific literature, at the heart of which will be placed the theory of conflict (Marx, Weber, Lake, Woon, Sharma, etc.), the communication aims to present the results of a quantitative research carried out by means of an opinion survey based on a questionnaire administered to a nationally representative sample. The sociological study aims to identify Romanians' perceptions and fears regarding the social and economic effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war and to find out the mechanisms that determined the spontaneous cohesion that was at the basis of the mobilisation of citizens to support temporary refugee migrants or those seeking asylum in our country. of law specialization, aiming to highlight their views on the perspectives offered by migration.

Keywords: *war conflict, social and economic problems, human cohesion and solidarity, opinion survey.*

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About the war in Ukraine

The Russian-Ukrainian war has immeasurable effects not only on the belligerent states but also on global level, the negative social and economic effects being felt more and more deeply. We see "growing imbalances and instability of the global economic and political order" and a risk of "possible large-scale, if not global, conflicts" (Mariotti, 2022: 2). At this moment it seems that an agreement between the belligerent states cannot be concretized in order to end this war. The propaganda used by Russia and Ukraine is different (Anghel, 2022). Both Russia and Ukraine aim to change the states' positions in their favor, but also the thinking of the masses and the population. In short, both states are trying to scare, Ukraine to involve the states in the war and Russia to keep them out of the war. Ukraine's propaganda relies heavily on attracting the sympathy of the member states of the European Union and NATO, but also on involving the civilian population in the war, and Russia's more elaborate propaganda tries to erode the population's trust in the authorities, in NATO and the EU, and tries to convince the population that sustaining war is not the business of other nations.

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on 8th of November 2022, there were 7.824.440 refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe (90% of them being women and children) and 4.460.847 refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe (UNHCR, 2022a). Most refugees have fled to neighboring countries, first of all Poland, but also significant numbers fled in Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, and other countries in the region. Of the refugee population, some have continued onward to other European countries (UNHCR, 2022b).

According to Pascale Moreau, Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Ukraine Situation UNHCR: "The response to the refugee exodus from Ukraine has been characterized by unprecedented solidarity, collective action and clarity of purpose" (UNHCR, 2022c).

This war is very expensive. Humanitarian support actions for refugees but also for Ukrainians remaining in the country who urgently need help, requires massive funding both from Ukraine, from the refugee destination states and especially from international organizations (UN-IOM, UN-UNDP, UN-UNFPA, UN-UNHCR, UN-UNICEF, UN-WHO, UN-WOMEN). Thus, in November 2022, UNHCR reports 1.4 billion US\$ for their activities, UN reports 4.29 billion US\$ needed to ensure humanitarian assistance and protection to 11.5 million people across Ukraine, and 1.7 billion US\$ needed for regional refugee (UNHCR, 2022a).

Even more, in September 2022, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said that due to the inflation and energy supply shock stemming from the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, it is projected global economic growth to slow to 2.3 in 2023 and estimated that this war "will cost the global economy \$2.8 trillion in lost output by the end of 2023, and even more if a severe winter leads to energy rationing in Europe" (OECD, 2022).

The Standard Eurobarometer survey conducted in June-July 2022 (Directorate-General for Communication, 2022), "indicates strong support for the EU's response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine". The summer 2022 Eurobarometer, shows that citizens confirm "their strong support to EU's response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. When it comes EU actions, humanitarian support is the most approved

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(92%) followed by welcoming in the EU Ukrainians fleeing the war (90%). A percent of 78% of Europeans support economic sanctions imposed by the EU on the Russian government, companies and individuals. A 68 percent of the interviewees are in favour of financing of supply and delivery of military equipment to Ukraine” (European Commission, 2022).

Summer 2022 Standard Eurobarometer shows that the majority of EU citizens support investments in renewable energy and action to reduce the EU's dependency on Russian energy sources (European Commission, 2022).

An analysis made by the Chicago Council of Global Affairs think tank, shows that the Eastern Europeans are divided in relation to the war in Ukraine (The Epoch Times, Romania, 2022). Although the majority of European states, as well as other Western countries, have a firm position regarding the war in Ukraine, disapproving Russia's position, imposing economic sanctions on Russia and supporting Ukraine economically and with combat arms, the population of various European countries manifests different opinions regarding the aid granted to Ukraine and the punishment of Russia. These differences are most pronounced in the states of Eastern Europe, where national security considerations, economic interests and common historical elements influence a lot (The Chicago Council of Global Affairs, 2022).

Thus, the degree of support for sanctions on Russia across Europe varies a lot, ”with northern publics much more united in their support for sanctions than southern ones” (Ex: Poland – 93% and Bulgaria- 46%). Big differences appears also ”when these same countries are asked about the extent to which they would support financially supplying and delivering military equipment to Ukraine”. The difference in commitment is large, from Poland with 91% to Romania with 61%. In ”southeastern European countries, the percentage of people that agree with financial and military assistance is between 61 and 38 percent”. According to Globesec Poll, from March 2022, ”the northern countries of Eastern Europe are more willing to support Ukraine or punish Russia because they perceive Russia as more of a threat than their neighbors to the south do (Ex: Poland – 90% sense of threat, Bulgaria – 33% sense of threat) (The Chicago Council of Global Affairs, 2022).

Romania and the Russian-Ukrainian war

The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war right on the border with Romania, has recently brought a series of economic and social problems for our country. As a result of the reduction or even interruption, in some areas, of the economic relations that Romania frequently and traditionally had with Russia and Ukraine, the economic effects can be felt today in our country. The sanctions imposed on Russia affect Romanian industry, businesses are closing, jobs are being lost. A significant increase in prices can be observed due to rising inflation, financial instability and the energy crisis. Romania is struggling to cope with the economic difficulties caused by the energy crisis. At the same time, there is an economic pressure but also a social pressure coming from the need for integration of Ukrainian refugees, which involves a series of aspects related to covering the needs of the refugees (accommodation, food, money, jobs, effective social integration, pressure on the institutions involved etc). At the same time, in the last period we find this war as being among the causes of emigration of Romanians (Ilie, 2020; Pricină, 2021; Grignoli, Serban, 2018), whether we find it identified as a direct cause, or whether we are talking about the economic effects caused by the war.

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on November 2022, in Romania are 80,011 Ukrainian refugees, 83,428 Ukrainian refugees registered for temporary protection, 27,420 people have received cash assistance, 50,451 refugees provided with information and counselling in person or over the phone (UNHCR, 2022: 6; UNHCR Romania, 2022). The refugees in Romania are 50% women, 14% men, and 36% children. In Romania there are 12 Blue Dots set by UNHCR, UNICEF and their partners. The newest ones were inaugurated on 1st of September 2022 in Bucharest and on 31st of October, in Galati near the border with Moldova and Ukraine, to offer legal advice and counselling on integration (UNHCR partner CNRR), child-friendly spaces (UNICEF), and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and referrals (WHO) (UNHCR, 2022: 6).

The Romanian Office for Immigration has six Regional Centers for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers: in Bucharest, Galați, Giurgiu, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare and Timișoara. Also, the Emergency Transit Center operates, destined for temporary stay of the refugees in urgent need of evacuation from the asylum country. Besides the six Regional Centers for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers, at the same time, Romania has 39 mobile camps where up to 7,839 people could be accommodated (Porumbescu, 2019; Ilie, 2019 :155).

In Romania the majority of Ukrainian refugees live in private accommodations, including rented apartments and homes with host families. In Romania, "the government's so-called "50/20 program" partially offsets costs for locals hosting refugees—it provides RON50 (US\$10) per refugee per day for expenses and RON 20 (US\$4) per day for food". In August 2022, a number of "4,500 Ukrainians had registered in the national "Jobs for Ukraine" database and 6,431 Ukrainians had been offered jobs". (Refugees International, 2022).

The consequences of war on children are horrible and multifaceted (Lava, de Luca, Milan, Leroy, Ritz and de Winter, 2022; Niță and Ilie Goga, 2015). Unfortunately, the enrollment of Ukrainian children in schools in Romania is very poor. In September 2022, only "about 4,000 Ukrainian children were enrolled in school in Romania" (Refugees International, 2022).

The UN's inter-agency Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) appealed for refugees in Romania for 239,858,526 \$. According to the UN Refugee Agency the total appeal was 71% funded as of September 23 (Refugees International, 2022).

In August 2022, the Romanian government announced Romania received a first installment of €39.1 million from the EU and said that the Interior Ministry had spent about €3.9 million on the response (Refugees International, 2022).

The report "Globsec Trends 2022. CEE amid the war in Ukraine", issued based on the analysis of a public opinion poll surveys carried out in March 2022 on a representative sample of the population (1000 persons from each country, using stratified multistage random sampling in the form of computer-assisted telephone interviewing) in nine countries: Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, provides an overview of Central and Eastern Europeans' perceptions on key issues pertaining to foreign, defence and security policy (Globsec, 2022). According to this Report, Romanians considers in a proportion of 63% that Russia invaded Ukraine and is responsible for the conflict, 26% think that West provoked Russia and 6 % think that the reason for the war is "Ukraine that oppressed Russian speaking part of population" (Globsec, 2022: 52). Only 43 percent of Romanians agree with the following text: "By fighting against the Russian invasion, Ukraine is also

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fighting for democracy in Europe” (Globsec, 2022: 56). The majority of Romanians (58%) considers Ukraine to be an independent country, 25% considers Ukraine to be “a puppet of the West” and 9% considers Ukraine to be part of Russia. In a percent of 51, Romanians think that Ukraine should be a member of the EU, or NATO, or both and 40% think that Ukraine should be a neutral country.

Prior to the war in Ukraine, Vladimir Putin was one of the favorite leaders (Constantinescu 2016) in some Central and Eastern European countries, including Romania (Globsec, 2021, 2018, 2017). In 2022 only 16% of the Romanians view Vladimir Putin positively, compared to 2021, when 40% of Romanians had a positive opinion on the Russian leader.

58% of Romanians perceive Russia as a threat to our country. Furthermore, 34% believe that Russia will not stop in Ukraine, it will invade other European countries as well (Globsec, 2022: 62-63).

A percent of 73 of the Romanians think that their country should reduce their energy dependence on Russia. Also, 61% of Romanians agree with the statement: “EU countries should impose the strongest possible sanctions on Russia to stop it from waging further conflict even if it means the price of fuel or other products increase in my country” (Globsec, 2022: 64-65). But, even though Romanian society supports the international organizations and their government enforcing economic sanctions, 64% opposes NATO troops engaging in combat against Russia in Ukraine and only 23% of the Romanian respondents agreed with the fact that NATO countries should send own troops to Ukraine to help them fight against Russian invasion.

In this context where propaganda greatly influences society's opinion about the war, a percentage of 66% of Romanians agreed with the statement that “websites and actors spreading disinformation about the war in Ukraine should be banned from social media” (Globsec, 2022: 67).

Being asked about the status that Ukraine should have in the current geopolitical context, a proportion of 13% of Romanians said that “Ukraine should become a member of the EU”, 11% said that “Ukraine should become a member of the NATO”, 27% said that “Ukraine should become a member of the EU and NATO”, 40% said that Ukraine should be a neutral country and 5% said that Ukraine should be in the Russian sphere of influence (Globsec, 2022: 69).

A sociological analysis: Perceptions and fears of Craiova's inhabitants about the economic and social effects of the war in Ukraine

In this section we present the main results of a questionnaire-based sociological survey conducted between 30.06.2022- 05.07.2022 in the municipality of Craiova, Romania.

The number of respondents in the exploratory sample was 272 inhabitants of Craiova municipality. The research subjects were selected in a random, probabilistic way.

The main objective of the present research is to identify the degree of anxiety and the projection of fears of the population regarding the effects of two major events: the pandemic generated by the Covid-19 virus and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

Another objective concerns the identification of respondents' behaviour regarding the management of financial/material resources in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

At the same time, one of the objectives is to identify the perception of the inhabitants of the Municipality of Craiova on how the pandemic and post-pandemic period characterized by the Russian-Ukrainian war produces effects on the social sector.

Q1: How informed are you about the conflict situation between Ukraine and Russia?

Variants	Percent
Not at all informed	3.3%
Little informed	47.4%
Quite well informed	42.3%
DK/ NO	7%

Considering what the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has caused in our country and the upheavals that have taken place, we wanted to find out how informed people are, while at the same time being able to see how they feel about this war and easily see it on their faces. Thus, our respondents had the following answers: 7% said they don't know/don't answer, 42.3% answered that they are quite informed, 47.4% confirmed that they have little information and the remaining 3.3% said they are not informed at all.

Q2: Do you agree with Romania's economic and military support to Ukraine?

Variant	Percent
From	55.2%
No	29%
DK/ NA	15.8%

According to the answers to this question, 55.1% of the respondents gave a positive answer to the question whether our country would support Ukraine economically and militarily, 29% said that they would not support Ukraine for fear of worsening the economic situation and national security, and the remaining 15.8% of the respondents chose not to give a concrete answer on this issue. Although Romania is at a fragile point in many respects, military and economic support for Ukraine was viewed positively by a large proportion of respondents.

Q3: Given the prolonged conflict between Russia and Ukraine, to what extent do you think this will affect you?

Variant	Percent
To a very large extent	34.9%
To a large extent	26.1%
To some extent	32%
In small broom	2.9%
To a very small extent	1.1%
DK/ NA	7%

For Romanians, but also for the rest of the world, the fear of war has become an increasingly pressing issue. With the war in Ukraine unlikely to end soon, Romanians are becoming increasingly worried about the consequences of war and how they will be affected by it. Thus, 34.9% of respondents think they will be affected to a very great

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extent, 26.1% to a great extent, 32% say they will be affected to some extent, while 2.9% and 1.1% say they will be affected to a small or very small extent respectively.

Q4. Are you afraid that living standards in Romania will suffer because of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict?

VARIANT	PERCENT
From	79.8%
No	13.6%
DK/ NA	6.6%

It is true that, given the standard of living in Europe, Romania has not been placed in a very good place, and the crisis of the Russian-Ukrainian war may have consequences that will affect Romania on this level. This is a fear that the majority of respondents have, 79.8% to be precise, while 13.6% of them say they are not afraid that the standard of living in Romania will suffer as a result of the war. The remaining 6.6% of respondents choose to remain indifferent to this question.

Q5. To what extent do you agree with the financial blockades of Russian companies on the territory of Romania or Romanian companies doing business in Russia?

VARIANT	PERCENT
To a very large extent	37.1%
To a large extent	25.7%
To some extent	21%
To a small extent	7.4%
To a very small extent	
DK/ NA	5.9%

With regard to this question, which aims to obtain an assessment of the financial bottlenecks of Russian companies on the territory of Romania, we can point out that they were imposed because of the imbalances that were manifested in several branches of the national economy (trade, manufacturing industry, transport industry, etc.). Therefore, the answers given by the participants in the study were as follows: 37.1% said they agreed with these bottlenecks to a very large extent, to be completed by the percentage of 25.7%, where the respondents said they agreed to a large extent with this approach, also 21% said they agreed to some extent, 7.4% said they agreed to a small extent, 2.9% to a very small extent, and the remaining 5.9% of respondents said they did not know/do not answer.

Q7: Given the two events with major economic impact (the Sars-CoV2 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war), do you have fears about a possible economic crisis in Romania?

VARIANT	PERCENT
From	82.7%
No	10.7%
DK/ NA	6.6%

So far, the pandemic and the way it has been managed, plus the destabilisation

of the energy market and the war, have slowly led to an eventual economic crisis. The biggest problem is inflation, i.e. the devaluation of money in relation to goods and services on the market. Thus, when asked if they are afraid of a possible economic crisis in Romania, the vast majority of respondents answered that they are afraid, while 10.7% of them are not afraid of this situation. The remaining 6.6% of respondents are undecided or do not have enough information about this context.

Q8. Do you fear for the safety of your job or family members?

Variant	Percent
From	41.2%
No	49.6%
DK/ NA	9.2%

Fears of job security among the Roma are quite high amid the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war. At a time when the economy is collapsing and jobs are being restructured, 41.2% of respondents admit to fearing for the job security of themselves and their family members. At the other end of the spectrum, almost half of respondents (49.6%) say they are not afraid of such an event, and 9.2% do not know, or have not thought about it before.

Q9. As a result of current events, accelerated price increases, have you changed your current spending behaviour?

Variant	Percent
Yes, I'm much more careful with my spending, I've started to cut back and save	40.4%
I'm trying to cut down a lot on the expenses I'm used to	11.4%
Yeah, I'm limiting myself to the bare necessities	15.4%
I haven't changed my daily shopping behavior, but I thought I would	16.9%
No, I don't think that's the case now	9.9%
Definitely not	3.3%
DK/ NA	2.6%

Rapidly rising prices were one of the negative effects the war had on the country's economy, so the way people used their resources changed. People had to mobilise quickly and find solutions to use material resources efficiently. Again, the results to the question "As a result of current events, accelerated price increases, have you changed your behaviour with regard to current expenditure?" were not at all unpredictable, thus the least chosen option was "definitely not" representing 3.3% of respondents.

The second least selected option was "No, I don't think that's the case now", which was chosen by about 10% of survey participants. The next possible answer "I try to reduce a lot of the spending I am used to" was chosen by 11.4% of respondents, about 17% of participants claim not to have changed their consumption habits at all, and 15.4% limit their spending of material resources to the bare necessities. The overwhelming majority of respondents chose the option "Yes, I am much more careful with my spending, I have started to reduce spending and save", with a percentage of over 40%.

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Q10: If you are considering cutting back, what categories of expenditure have you considered giving up or cutting back on?

VARIANT	PERCENT
Travel / excursions	22.4%
Real estate purchases/car purchases	21.3%
Outdoor activities	14.7%
Food	10.3%
Training/ education	1.8%
Something else	11%
DK/ NA	2.6%

Of the 84.1% of respondents who answered that they have reduced or are going to reduce spending, the majority chose to reduce spending on "travel/excursions" representing 22.4% of the total. Another area that people cut back on to reduce costs was real estate/car purchases, this option was chosen by 21.3% of participants, and, 14.7% chose "leisure activities". The training/education and food options accounted for approximately 12.1%.

Q10. From a financial point of view, what do you think has affected you more, the pandemic context or the Russian-Ukrainian war?

VARIANT	PERCENT
Pandemic SarsCov2	23.2%
Russian-Ukrainian conflict	12.5%
Both events	54.4%
DK/ NA	9.9%

Romania's situation is becoming more and more delicate, as over the years it has been increasingly affected economically. The beginning of 2020 will mark the start of a year with many material and human losses in Romania. A disastrous year, with many victims either affected by the virus that had taken over us, or affected by the economic crisis that our country had entered (Motoi, 2014). Many people sent into unemployment or technical unemployment, aid offered by the state for small and medium-sized businesses, but nevertheless Romania was under siege of fear and death that continued to increase its number from day to day. Now, the beginning of 2022 has kicked off a mild economic crisis amid the Russian-Ukrainian war. Romanians' daily lives are affected by the inflation rate that seems to have exploded. Romania's ties with Russia having been severely severed, it did not allow time to explore more affordable export opportunities, which led to the price of some food, fuel, gas, electricity and other items becoming more expensive. So, the curiosity was to ask what affected consumers more financially, and the answers were as follows: 54.4% chose Both, 23.2% chose "Pandemic context", 12.5% chose "Russian-Ukrainian conflict", and the remaining 9.9% did not want to answer or did not know.

Q11. What do you think about the way our country has been involved in supporting people who have chosen to leave Ukraine and take refuge in Romania?

Variant	Percent
I fully support the involvement of the Romanian state	26.5%
I support the involvement of the Romanian state, but the situation of needy Romanians must be taken into account	60.3%
I believe that the Romanian state should not have been so involved in supporting refugees	8.5%
DK/ NA	4.8%

Romania, a country that is always sunk in European prices, but whose income is below its standards, is the heroine of several thousand refugees, getting involved from the first signal of help from its neighbour Ukraine, which is always under attack, not being allowed to dress the wounds of its soldiers who are in the front line or to mourn its fallen soldiers and victims under the ruins of buildings bombed by Russian missiles. Romania has opened its arms and accepted Ukrainian refugees to pass through the country to another destination and if they want to stay. The people of the country are in solidarity with Ukraine, and the desire and commitment to help them is great. The civic spirit is at home, but apparently only for those outside our country, because when it comes to helping our own people, the state looks the other way and compares us to countries in the European Union. Thus, people's opinion is divided, 60.3% of them "I support the involvement of the Romanian state, but the situation of needy Romanians should also be taken into account", 26.5% "I fully support the involvement of the Romanian state", 8.5% "I think that the Romanian state should not have been so involved in supporting Ukrainian refugees".

Q12. Do you feel insecure lately, given the Ukrainian refugee crisis?

Variant	Percent
From	25..%
No	64.3%
Don't know/ No answer	10.3%

The Russian-Ukrainian war came when everyone least expected it and turned the lives of millions upside down. First and foremost, the Ukrainian people are the most affected by this crisis because they have been forced to abandon their possessions, family members, memories and all their life savings, trying to save themselves. They have chosen to leave their homeland and seek refuge in other countries. Fortunately, all European countries have mobilized and provided the necessary aid to refugees, but there have been and still are voices that claim that this refugee crisis makes them insecure in many ways.

This insecurity also arises from the association of the refugees of today with those of the past, most of whom came from the Middle East and who did not have clean intentions. But it must be understood that Ukrainians did not leave because of the precarious financial situation in their country, but to save their lives and those of their

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children. Many people said that they met refugees who owned expensive cars and did not look needy, so from their perspective they did not "deserve" a place to sleep or eat. It is understandable that people from host countries panic, because this situation is not comfortable, as if overnight, someone invaded your territory and personal space.

But for the most part, as the survey shows, more than 60% of those surveyed said they felt safe despite the large number of refugees flooding into Europe.

We note that the majority of respondents consider themselves "well" or "fairly well" informed about the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war and more than 50% of Craiovians agree with the economic and military support to Ukraine and the protection offered to Ukrainian refugees. The majority of the population felt a major economic and social impact, both during the pandemic period and in the current context under the shadow of the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict. Many respondents are feeling the economic impact and fear a severe economic crisis, so they have started to reduce spending, or are planning to do so.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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<https://reliefweb.int/report/romania/unhcr-romania-ukraine-refugee-situation-update-update-21-11-november-2022>

Article Info

Received: November 15 2022

Accepted: November 20 2022

How to cite this article:

Ilie, C., Pârvu, M. C., Niță, A. M. (2022). The socio-economic effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Romania. A sociological perspective of the impact of the war on the attitudes and behaviors of Romanians. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 215-227



ORIGINAL PAPER

State and Education Policies in the Context of the Coronavirus Pandemic

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Abstract:

Due to the present context which is marked by the pandemic, the education system was forced to become more adaptable to digital environments. Teachers, students, homework and the various educational resources that were used, along with the way in which communication was done, became essential tools in the educational process. The new social context brought with itself significant changes both in the management of school and classrooms. The same thing can be said about scheduling and the manner in which one can effectively carry out activities, knowing that each child and family has their own peculiarities. The family and the school need pragmatic and dynamic solutions for the new school year, adapted to local realities, with full compliance with the regulations established by the Ministry of Health. Under these conditions, the absence of a real and coherent plan regarding education during the pandemic risks condemning a significant number of students to an uncertain future.

Keywords: *pandemic, online education, public policies, COVID 19, information technology.*

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State and Education Policies in the Context of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Introduction

Starting from March 11, 2020, as a result of the decision of the Ministry of Education and Research to cancel face-to-face courses, the education system had to turn to new ways of communication and cooperation to ensure the continuity of learning. The consequences of this crisis will greatly affect children and adolescents, both now and in the future. The closing of schools have particularly affected vulnerable children, deepening the effects of their unequal socio-economic circumstances. In this context, the actions that governments take to protect their citizens' right to education are crucial to reducing or exacerbating inequality in the long run. Medical research suggests that, strictly speaking, Covid-19 is not a "children's disease" because, so far, there are few confirmed cases of the coronavirus in young people, and even among children who do get the disease, the death rate has been very low. However, when we consider all aspects of young children's development, the profound implications of this global pandemic are evident.

International organisations (UNICEF, UNESCO, EU) and representatives of other people involved in education, in one way or another, play a critical and important role in the development of the legislative framework of the school-family educational partnership. According to UNESCO, the school and the family are becoming increasingly organised and vocal, presenting coherent educational partnerships of collaboration and systematic relations with international agencies, national governments, with international/national/local authorities and institutions. This is very evident at all levels. Planning the legislative framework, the development and implementation of the partnership is necessary and important. Often, the parties opt for informal collaborations rather than investing efforts to develop and agree applicable rules and norms and explicit guidelines for interaction. (Cara, A., 2018: 106-115)

International legal framework

In the United States, France, the United Kingdom and several Nordic countries, a special legal framework has been developed which regulates the creating and implementing partnership activities. The European Union encourages activities carried out in partnership; considers the partnership a fundamental institution in terms of social, regional, economic and cultural cohesion between the member states. (Velea, 2006:59).

In a European context, the educational phenomenon paints the school-family partnership as a necessary and beneficial solution in the child's development. A study carried out by Paola Dusil (2012), highlights the major shortcomings of school-family collaboration recorded in most European countries: limited parental participation, lack of appropriate family-school communication forms, minimal investment in the formation of collaborative skills at the family level and teachers. (Manea, 2019:1).

In the majority of European countries there are formal structures organized for the participation of parents in the educational system. The legislations and educational reform projects of the 90s created in most countries new laws regarding parental participation in educational systems. The autonomy of schools and the participation of parents in their management are at the centre of current debates and legislation. (Agabrian, 2005:7).

The issue of the school-family partnership concerns the governments of the European Union, including the Government of Romania. We owe the overview of the

school-family relationship and the strategy of approaching parents' education to UNESCO, which in the Education for All program three actions are outlined, and designated resources that can be used, the priorities and objectives of this endeavour (educational partnership). UNESCO's message is very clear and decisive: the objectives of the educational partnership can only be achieved with the active participation of the school and the family.

The involvement of this organization (UNESCO), in collaboration with UNICEF and the World Bank, in supporting/implementing global strategies to achieve education for all has materialised in a concern for the school-family relationship, for school attendance and preventing and lowering dropout rates. (Frunză, 2013:32).

UNICEF considers the school-family partnership one of the key elements of a child-friendly school. According to UNICEF, being itself an educational community, the school must promote the idea of strong social cohesion. The school does not exist separately and does not carry out processes by itself. For these reasons, the school-family relationship is imminent.

In the same vein, UNESCO proposes a list of possible options for involving the family and building effective and qualitative partnership relationships (Cara, 2018:16): families as activists; schools and families as partners; families support other families; family involvement in school governance and management. (Andries, 2019:33).

The document issued by the European Union launches a new perspective on the development of the educational partnership. According to it, within the school's collaboration with the family, the focus must be on a clearly established mutual commitment between parents and teachers. This involves setting up a team of teachers and parents in order to combine educational influences. Such a partnership ensures the establishment and operation of a system of mutual obligations and requires the collaboration of parents not only from a financial point of view, but also from an educational-cultural point of view, through concrete actions to achieve the educational goals. (Bezede, 2009:31).

Analysing the recent documents issued within the European Union, a new approach regarding the development of this partnership is noted. According to these documents, within the school's collaboration with the family, the emphasis is on a clear mutual commitment established between parents and teachers, based on an educational contract. (Enache, 2012:38).

In the UK, schools are required by law to have a parent contract. All parents are asked to sign the agreement, showing that they understand and agree to it, and students are often asked to sign it as well. (Godfrey, 2007:37).

National legal framework

The current legislative framework in our country promotes the application of the rights of all children, facilitates the participation of parents in the educational process and encourages the creation of authentic partnerships between school and family based on an agreement. (Pancu, 2018:7).

The school-family agreement is an idea that many schools find effective. School-family agreements can form the basis of effective parent meetings because they establish the starting point between the school, student and parents regarding the obligations of all three parties in an effort to maximize the quality of the student's school experience. They are a healthy basis for effective meetings with parents because they

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provide a point of reference for both parties in the educational partnership. An agreement between the school and the family should state: the goals and values of the school; school and parent responsibilities; what the school expects from its students.

The agreements outline the school's policies regarding: the standard education that students and parents have a right to expect; the ethos of the school; attendance expectations; communication channels between school and parents. (Godfrey, 2007:37).

On the other hand, direct beneficiaries of the educational partnership: students; indirect beneficiaries: parents secondary beneficiaries: the primary education teacher, must fulfill the following duties: the teacher - ensures collaboration and respect with the family, developing partnerships; communicate regularly with family members about the activity and progress of educational subjects; train family members in making the educational process more efficient; facilitates the involvement of students in volunteering; the family – gets involved in the governing bodies of the school; gets involved in decision-making at the school level; the student - participates in the composition of school self-management bodies at the institution, municipality and national level (Andries, 2019:8), whose activity is regulated in MECTS Order no. 4742/10.08.2016, regarding the approval of the Statute of the student.

The main relevant legislative documents regarding the operation of the school-family partnership are the National Education Law n.1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions; MECTS Order no. 5079/31.08.2016, annex from the framework Regulation on the organization and operation of pre-university education units; MECTS order no. 4742/10.08.2016, annex regarding the approval of the student status.

In Romania, according to LEN no. 1/2011, parents are considered the main partners and beneficiaries of the educational process. Article 80 stipulates that all major decisions in pre-university education must be taken by consulting the representative associative structures of the parents. LEN gives parents the right to participate actively in the management of educational units, by the presence of two or three parents' representatives in the school's administrative board, depending on the size of the school (Article 96). (Muscă, 2014:7).

LEN no. 1/2011 took over the provisions regarding parents' obligations to ensure children's schooling during compulsory education, contained in previous versions of the legislation in the field of national education, and highlights the decisive role of high-quality family involvement in children's education. (Pancu,2018:7).

Parents are involved in the elaboration of the educational offer of the educational unit, by participating in the organization (Muscă and his collaborators, 2014:7) of the School after School programs. Therefore, it is mentioned both in the MECTS Order no. 5079/31.08.2016 regarding the Framework Regulation for the organization and operation of educational units and in the MECTS Order no. 4742/10.08.2016 regarding the Student Status relevant aspects in the design and implementation of a school-family partnership, as follows:

The partnership with the school (local public administration authorities) aims to carry out school/extracurricular activities, educational programs in order to achieve the educational objectives set by the school. Extracurricular educational activities within an educational partnership between school and family can adapt and be organized in extracurricular cultural, civic, artistic, sports, tourist and volunteer educational activities; consist of competitions, celebrations, debates, training sessions, study visits, visits, open workshops.

The educational partners that are involved in the educational partnership are: the parents, guardians or legal supporters of the student; they have access to all the information related to the education system regarding children's education; they have the right to be supported by the education system, to educate themselves and improve their skills as partners in the family-school relationship. All the legislative instruments consulted by us set out the rights and responsibilities of parents regarding the care, protection and education of children. (Pancu, 2018:7).

Parents are involved in the design of the educational offer of school, by participating in the organization of the School after School programs (referred to in art. 58, paragraph (1), (3) in the educational partnership with the school: the local public authorities and with the family: the parents' associations, through the School after school program, educational, recreational, free time activities are offered to consolidate acquired skills or to accelerate learning, as well as remedial learning activities; the School programs after school is organized based on a methodology approved by order of MECTS. that induced and a series of dysfunctions, related either to the educational policy that reduced the number of hours allocated to him every year, or to the decision of the school itself, when the consultation process was formally carried out, the optional curriculum hours became safety nets for the norms, and the optional programs repeated the common core. (Florea, et al., 2007:115).

Therefore, it is mentioned both in the MECTS Order no. 5079/31.08.2016 regarding the Framework Regulation for the organization and operation of educational units and in the MECTS Order no. 4742/10.08.2016 regarding the Student Status relevant aspects in the design and implementation of a school-family partnership, as follows:

The quality of students is exercised by attending classes and by participating in the existing activities in the program of each educational unit. Student quality is proven with the student card, endorsed at the beginning of each school year by the educational unit where the student is enrolled.

The partnership with the school (local public administration authorities) aims to carry out school/extracurricular activities, educational programs in order to achieve the educational objectives set by the school. The activities carried out in partnership cannot be contrary to the morals or laws of the state. 5079/31.08.2016, art. 101, par. 1, 2:77).

The representatives of the parents, guardians or legal supporters will be directly involved in the smooth running of the activities (educational extracurricular) within the partnerships that take place in the school.

Extracurricular educational activities within an educational partnership between school and family can adapt and be organized in extracurricular cultural, civic, artistic, sports, tourist and volunteer educational activities; consist of competitions, celebrations, debates, training sessions, study visits, visits, open workshops; extracurricular educational activities are established in accordance with the options of students and parents, as well as with the resources available to the school.

The educational partners of the educational partnership are: the parents, guardians or legal supporters of the student; they have access to all the information related to the education system regarding children's education. They have the right to be supported by the education system, to educate themselves and improve their skills as partners in the family-school relationship; the parent, guardian, legal guardian of the student has the right to be periodically informed about the school situation and the

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behaviour of their own child; has the right to acquire information related only to the situation of his own child. All the legislative instruments consulted by us set out the rights and responsibilities of parents regarding the care, protection and education of children. (Pancu, 2018:7).

Models and theories related to the functioning of the educational partnership school-family

Educational models and theories related to the issue of school-family educational partnerships highlight effective action strategies to optimise the collaboration between parents and teaching staff. These models and theories start from the premise that the joint efforts of the school and the family are necessary for students to register a positive school development. (Pancu, 2018:8).

The theory of spheres of influence

Epstein's theory of intersecting spheres of influence emphasises the importance of the joint action of schools and families to ensure the needs of children. The theory integrates educational, sociological and psychological perspectives on social organizations, as well as research on the effects of the family, school environment on educational outcomes. The recognition that the central principle of this theory of the history of the close ties between the major institutions that socialize and educate children, determines that certain objectives, such as school success, constitute a mutual interest for the people of each institution, objectives that are achieved through their cooperative action and support . (Agabrian, 2005:13). The spheres of influence theory (Epstein, 1987:67) states that students learn more when parents and teachers share goals and responsibilities for student learning and work together, not individually. (Muscă, 2014:25).

The model of overlapping spheres of influence - Epstein

The validity of the model is demonstrated through analyzes at the international level, but a series of challenges and implications for the actions of the school counselor in partnerships and the differences between schools with good performances and those with poor performances or the role of teachers are also presented (Muscă, 2014: 25). The model places the student at the center. Partnership activities must be designed in such a way as to engage, guide, determine and motivate students to become involved in achieving their own success. (Agabrian, 2005:15).

Thematic networks model - Attride-Stirling

According to this model, parental involvement is composed of three elements: interaction with the child, availability and responsibility for the child. The major elements of parental involvement are: the importance of being a positive role model; involvement with children in outdoor activities; education as a means for children's development from a socio-economic point of view. (Muscă, 2014:27, apud Lamb, 1985, apud Ho et al., 2011).

The theory of school commitment

This theory claims that adaptation to the educational environment and school performance depend on the degree to which students are connected to what is happening in the classroom. Many parents do not know what is expected of them in the new

educational space. They face difficulties, extended working hours, lack of child care services or transport, fear or discomfort with the new school environment, sometimes perceived as unwelcoming, threatening or even disrespectful towards them (Suárez-Orozco, 2010). Commitment is approached from a cognitive, relational and behavioural/family perspective. (Muscă, 2014:20).

The theory of pedagogical/school functional links

He claims that the successful interaction between parents and school greatly influences children's development and enriches the daily school routine. (Muscă, 2014:22). There are two types of connections: the dyadic connection teacher-student, teacher-class; the triadic bond-teacher-student/parent class.

The school and the family - partners in education

In the specialised literature, the school-family partnership is given by the collaborative relationships between school staff and families to implement programs and activities that help students succeed. The school-family partnership is a pedagogical formula, a relatively new notion inserted in the field of education. (Bârlădeanu, 2006:16). The school-family partnership is given by the collaborative relationships between school staff and families, to implement programs and activities that help students succeed. (Muscă, 2014:16).

Through the school-family partnership, the aim is to achieve an effective communication between the two factors and the mutual agreement of the value systems and the requirements from the child. (Bârlădeanu et al., 2006:16). The family and the school are the two pillars of resistance of education between which the child - its main actor - oscillates. The family is the first factor and the natural environment that exerts a huge influence in the formation of the personality in a multidirectional perspective, and the school is the most important factor of systematic and continuous education. (Bezede, 2009:31, apud, Cucuş, 2006:48).

If it is true that school is the factor on which the development of the human personality overwhelmingly depends, it is equally true that coherent education cannot ignore the role of the family. School and family are two institutions that need each other. The family and the school can be considered as networks of interdependence structured in specific forms of social relations, school failure and success being understood as the results of a smaller or larger contradiction, a smaller or larger degree of dissonance or consonance of the forms of social relations that characterise the two networks of interdependence. (Bârlădeanu, 2006:7).

As partners, both the school and the family have certain requirements towards each other. Therefore, teachers want parents to: provide their children with optimal conditions for them to develop; to provide them with a safe, quiet and conducive environment to learn; to suggest to children the importance of education for life; to guide children to achieve a balance between school and domestic activities; to communicate often and openly with teachers; to teach children self-discipline and respect for others; to teach children how to resist evil influences; to accept his responsibility as a parent by being a good example; to support the actions of the school. Likewise, parents also have expectations regarding the activity of teaching staff: to be responsive to children's needs, interests and abilities; to communicate often and openly with parents; to establish unbiased school requirements for all students; to show dedication in educating children; treat all students fairly; to intensify the positive

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discipline of children; to provide guidance on how parents can help children. (Bărlădeanu, 2006: 16-17).

The school represents a pillar of the community, one of the basic institutions for the existence and development of a community. The school creates a new community around itself, which includes, first of all, its direct beneficiaries: students, teachers, parents. The school is a public institution and occupies a central place in the community. The mission of the school is to train future citizens, in accordance with the principles and values of democracy.

The school is a connecting element between the student and society, contributing to the development of a conception of the world and a civic identity consistent with the perennial values of humanity. (Velea, L.S., 2006, p.72). In conclusion, the school and the family mutually develop their powers and strengthen each other. The partnership relationship between school and family takes place in the exchange of skills and involvements that ultimately lead to the effects of making the actions of both actors more efficient. (Brachiș, 2010:161).

Perspectives of a practical approach to the school-family relationship

Through the partnership approach, the school can contribute to stimulating the active and responsible participation of students in school and family life, through association and direct participation in identifying and solving school and family problems. (Velea et al., 2006:76). As a relationship, the educational partnership implies: optimal communication between the educational actors participating in the education, the collaboration of the educational actors in various forms and modalities, the orientation towards the formation of the child's personality. (Andries, 2019:70).

From specialized literature, we conclude that in its evolution the school-family relationship goes through three main stages: the self-sufficient school stage; stage of professional uncertainty; the stage of development of mutual trust between teachers and parents. (Bunescu, 1997:21). Studies about the school-family partnership of students typically approach family involvement activities in the following four components: parental academic aspirations and expectations towards children; communication with children about school.

In order to increase the quality of the school-parent relationship and ensure a viable educational partnership, we propose the following recommendations to the teachers and the school in general: to extend the collaboration with the family to all aspects that can contribute to the achievement of the unity of requirements and pedagogical action; to take into account the opinion of the parents in the process of planning the theme of the meetings with the parents; to ensure opportunities for parents' participation and involvement; to organize counseling activities for parents; to involve parents in administrative activities; to involve parents in the didactic process; to create conditions and diversify the forms of communication with parents; to initiate education programs for parents, as a result of identifying their expectations towards the school and their training needs. (Bezede, 2009:33).

An essential element in the approach to education is building a partnership relationship between the school (teachers, teachers) and the family (parents) who come into contact with the child. Together, through a coordinated educational partnership, all partners will aim to obtain the maximum possible independence/autonomy for the child, a normal and active life in society. Everyone must have their role in educating, guiding and supporting the child of class zero. It is important that between partners there is

respect, consistency, coherence and collaboration in decisions. (Chiriacescu, 2015:308). The real collaboration between the school and the family, especially in the case of weak students, can be a favourable factor for the student to overcome his school difficulties. Collaboration between school and family is an essential factor in the process of educating schoolchildren.

Collaboration between school and family requires effective and efficient communication, a unity of requirements and action. (Vrăşmaş,2008:38). The relationships are variously called parental involvement, partnership, school-family relationships, but they all represent the belief that if the adults in the two institutions communicate and collaborate, then the ones who will benefit are the children and only the children.

The relations between the school and the family that the child attends have an important weight in his educational progress. (Chiriacescu, 2015:308). The school-family relationship is justified by the change of content and the focus of education on skills, which requires the analysis of some less studied aspects of modern educational management. The relaxed interpersonal relationships, the calm and relaxed emotional and psycho-social atmosphere of the family and school environment leave their mark on the self-image, on the needs of the Ego, the desire for self-improvement of the student, which undoubtedly influences his school success.

The school-family relationship for individual benefit cannot replace the participation of parents in school management for several reasons: being legally responsible for their children's education, parents must have the opportunity to influence the nature of this education; participatory models can help to coordinate educational efforts and to guide school adaptation to the changes occurring in society; for this, it is necessary to influence at the local level in solving local problems and in making decisions at the lowest possible level; it is necessary to determine the removal of governmental indifference; those affected by a decision must be able to have an influence on it; imbalances in the balance of interest groups must be corrected by authorizing interested persons to be represented according to the importance of their involvement in the school; participation must involve local skills; participation can stimulate initiatives and innovations the school-family partnership takes on new values, going through seven steps: a) the parent learns - informs himself about the way of managing and organizing the instructional-educational process; b) the parent helps - supports the school in carrying out some projects and activities; c) the parent becomes a supporter of the positive image about the school - he understands the importance of the school in the formation of his child and has a positive attitude towards the school; d) the parent becomes a source of complementary information - provides the director or teacher with information about the child's behavior in the family, about his affective and health problems; e) the parent becomes an educational source - contributes to the education of his own child, helps and supports him in the daily activity of accumulating knowledge; f) the parent as an educator - provides frames of reference for the value reporting of his children; the parent - the initiator of the changes in the school - has the right and even the obligation to request the adaptation of the school to the requirements of the current society; g) the parent can propose some changes that contribute to the individual or collective development of the child (Bârlădeanu, 2006:14).

In order to achieve the educational partnership with parents, it is essential to respect certain conditions. These are: parents to be considered as active participants who can make a real and valuable contribution to the education of their children; parents to

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be part of the adoption of decisions regarding the education of their children; the school to recognize and appreciate the information given by parents regarding their children; teachers to complete their professional information, capitalizing on the information provided by parents; responsibility to be shared between school and family. (Brachiș, 2010:162).

An important aspect of the relationship is the involvement of the parents in the development and education of the children and in making decisions at the school level. (Andries,2019:5). Involvement in children's development and education has various positive effects: higher grades in mother tongue and mathematics, improved writing and reading skills, better school attendance rate, fewer behavioral problems. For this reason, the involvement of parents is a way to help children in their transition through adolescence, with significant positive effects.

Conclusions

The category most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is represented by children from families living in poverty, followed by those of Roma ethnicity, children whose parents are away working abroad and children with disabilities. Children from the mentioned categories are most often characterized, simultaneously, by multiple vulnerabilities: they live in multigenerational households or in single-parent families, at risk of poverty, in overcrowded housing. The measures adopted to limit the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic contribute to exacerbating the pre-existing risks in the case of these categories of vulnerable people: reducing access to educational, social, medical services, limiting the lucrative options of adults, increasing the incidence of cases of domestic violence. In the case of children whose parents are away working abroad, the grandparents in their care most likely do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to guide the children and support them in distance learning activities. For those whose parents have recently returned from abroad, this is most likely due to job losses. In the context of limiting travel and closing many businesses during this period, the chances of finding a job are extremely low, which accentuates the risks to which household members are exposed. The closure of schools disproportionately affects different categories of children, those from families living in poverty or children of Roma ethnicity, being to a greater extent unable to attend online courses due to the lack of necessary equipment, the low level of digital skills of the parents, which it allows them to support children in learning at home or to be more involved in household tasks, at the expense of participation in education. Children in these categories are all the more vulnerable as, under normal conditions, they were the target of various measures and the efforts of teachers to prevent school dropout, which in the current context can no longer be carried out.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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Article Info

Received: November 17 2022

Accepted: November 22 2022

How to cite this article:

Tușa, E. Mitran, I.I. (2022). State and Education Policies in the Context of the Coronavirus Pandemic. (2022). *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, no. 76, pp. 228 – 239.



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Best regards,

The Board of Directors of CEPOS 2023 Conferences and Events Series

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- Economics, financial law and policy mechanisms
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<https://zaandam.hosting.ru.nl/oamarket-acc/score?OpenAccess=&InstitutionalDiscounts=&Title=&Issn=1584-224&Publisher=>

Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB (Electronic Journals Library)

http://rzblx1.uni-regensburg.de/ezeit/detail.phtml?bibid=AAAAA&colors=7&lang=de&jour_id=111736

The University of Hong Kong Libraries

https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,1584-224x&search_scope=My%20Institution&vid=HKU&facet=rtype,include,journals&mode=Basic&offset=0

Metropolitan University Prague, Czech Republic

<https://s-knihovna.mup.cz/katalog/eng/l.dil?h~=&DD=1&H1=&V1=o&P1=2&H2=&V2=o&P2=3&H3=&V3=z&P3=4&H4=1584-224x&V4=o&P4=33&H5=&V5=z&P5=25>

University of the West Library

<https://uwest.on.worldcat.org/search?queryString=1584-224x&clusterResults=off&stickyFacetsChecked=on#/oclc/875039367>

Elektronische Zeitschriften der Universität zu Köln

https://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/IPS?SERVICE=METASEARCH&SUBSERVICE=INITSEARCH&VIEW=USB:Simple&LOCATION=USB&SID=IPS3:2d1c5acebc65a3cdc057a9d6c64ce76e&SETCOOKIE=TRUE&COUNT=15&GWTIMEOUT=30&HIGHLIGHTING=on&HISTORY=SESSION&START=1&STREAMING=on&URLENCODING=TRUE&QUERY_alAL=1584-224x&SERVICEGROUP1.SERVICE.SEARCH_EDS=on&SERVICEGROUP1.SERVICE.SEARCH_KUGJSON=on&SERVICEGROUP1.SERVICE.SEARCH_KUGUSBWEB=on&SERVICEGROUP1.SERVICEGROUP.USB:Default=on

EKP Publications

https://ekp-invenio.physik.uni-karlsruhe.de/search?ln=en&sc=1&p=1584-224X&f=&action_search=Search&c=Experiments&c=Authorities

Valley City State University

https://odin-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,1584-224X&tab=tab1&search_scope=ndv_everything&sortby=rank&vid=ndv&lang=en_US&mode=advanced&offset=0displayMode%3Dfull&displayField=all&pcAvailabilityMode=true

Impact Factor Poland

<http://impactfactor.pl/czasopisma/21722-revista-de-stiinte-politice-revue-des-sciences-politiques>

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Universite Laval

http://sfx.bibl.ulaval.ca:9003/sfx_local?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&url_ctx_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:ctx&ctx_enc=info:ofi/enc:UTF-8&ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft_id=info:sid/sfxit.com:azlist&sfx.ignore_date_threshold=1&rft.object_id=100000000726583&rft.object_portfolio_id=&svc.fulltext=yes

Universität Passau

<https://infoguide.ub.uni-passau.de/InfoGuideClient.upasis/start.do?Query=10%3d%22BV035261002%22>

BSB Bayerische Staatsbibliothek

<https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/metaopac/search?View=default&oclcno=502495838>

Deutsches Museum

<https://opac.deutsches-museum.de/TouchPoint/start.do?Query=1035%3d%22BV035261002%22IN%5b2%5d&View=dmm&Language=de>

Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt

[https://opac.ku.de/TouchPoint/start.do?Branch=3&Language=de&View=thi&Query=35=%22502495838%22+IN+\[2\]](https://opac.ku.de/TouchPoint/start.do?Branch=3&Language=de&View=thi&Query=35=%22502495838%22+IN+[2])

Hochschule Augsburg, Bibliothek

<https://infoguide.hs-augsburg.de/InfoGuideClient.fhasis/start.do?Query=10%3d%22BV035261002%22>

Hochschule Weihenstephan-Triesdorf, Zentralbibliothek

Freising, Germany

<https://ffwtp20.bib-bvb.de/TouchPoint/start.do?Query=1035%3d%22BV035261002%22IN%5b2%5d&View=ffw&Language=de>

OTH- Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg, Hochschulbibliothek

OTHBR, Regensburg, Germany

<https://www.regensburger-katalog.de/TouchPoint/start.do?Query=1035%3d%22BV035261002%22IN%5b2%5d&View=ubr&Language=de>

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Neuburg/Donau, Germany

<https://opac.sbnd.de/InfoGuideClient.sndsis/start.do?Query=10%3d%22BV035261002%22>

Universitätsbibliothek Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Eichstätt, Germany

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Berlin, Germany
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Hochschulbibliothek Ansbach, Ansbach, Germany
<https://fanoz3.bib-bvb.de/InfoGuideClient.fansis/start.do?Query=10%3d%22BV035261002%22>

Bibliothek der Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)
Frankfurt/Oder, Germany
<https://opac.europa-uni.de/InfoGuideClient.euvisis/start.do?Query=10%3d%22BV035261002%22>

University of California Library Catalog
<https://catalog.library.ucla.edu/vwebv/search?searchCode1=GKEY&searchType=2&searchArg1=ucoclc469823489>

For more details about the past issues and international abstracting and indexing, please visit the journal website at the following address:

<http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/revistadestiintepolitice/acces.php>

CONFERENCE INTERNATIONAL INDEXING OF THE PAST EDITIONS (2014-2022)

CEPOS Conference 2022

The **Twelfth International Conference** After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 18-19 March 2022) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 6 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

<https://www.conferenceflare.com/events/category/social-sciences-and-humanities/art-history/>

Vinculation Internacional Diciembre 2021 newsletter n 99
https://issuu.com/fundacionargentina5/docs/diciembre_2021_fundaci_n_argentina-ai_ok?fr=sZjg2NjE5NTg3OTY

<https://www.schoolandcollegelistings.com/RO/Craiova/485957361454074/Center-of-Post-Communist-Political-Studies-CEPOS>

<https://10times.com/company/cepos>
<https://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

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<https://conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=238529>

<https://www.sciencedz.net/conference/82995-cepos-international-conference-2022-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

CEPOS Conference 2021

The Eleventh International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 19-20 March 2021) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 5 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

<https://academic.oup.com/jcs/advance-articleabstract/doi/10.1093/jcs/csaa064/5941887?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

<https://conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=229654>

<https://www.sciencedz.net/en/conference/72628-11thinternational-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

<https://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

<https://worlduniversitydirectory.com/edu/event/?slib=11thinternational-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny-2>

CEPOS Conference 2020

The Tenth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (27-28 March 2020) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 7 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

Scichemistry

<http://scichemistry.org/ConferenceInfosByConferenceTopicId?conferenceTopicId=57>

Oxford Journals

<https://academic.oup.com/jcs/advance-articlepdf/doi/10.1093/jcs/csz078/30096829/csz078.pdf>

Conference alerts

<https://conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=215370>

<https://www.sciencedz.net/en/conference/57625-10thinternational-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

Intraders

https://www.intraders.org.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/www.intraders.org/news/romania/10th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/amp/?amp_js_v=a2&_gsa=1&usqp=mq331AQCKAE%3D#ah=15737604302246&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.co

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10 times

<https://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

The conference alerts

<https://theconferencealerts.com/event/46428/10th-internationalconference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

Scirea

<https://www.scirea.org/ConferenceInfosByConferenceCountryId?conferenceCountryId=75>

CEPOS Conference 2019

The Ninth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 29-30 March 2019) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 6 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

Oxford Academic Journal of Church & State <https://academic.oup.com/jcs/article-abstract/60/4/784/5106417?redirectedFrom=PDF>

10 Times

<https://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

Conference Alerts

<https://conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=205682>

Researchgate

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327905733_CEPOS_9TH_INTERNATIONAL_CONFERENCE_AFTER_COMMUNISM_EAST_AND_WEST_UNDER_SCRUTINY_2019?_iepl%5BviewId%5D=sjcOJrVCO8PTLapcfVciZQsb&_iepl%5Bcontexts%5D%5B0%5D=publicationCreationEOT&_iepl%5BtargetEntityId%5D=PB%3A327905733&_iepl%5BinteractionType%5D=publicationCTA

The Free Library

<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/9th+INTERNATIONAL+CONFERENCE+AFTER+COMMUNISM.+EAST+AND+WEST+UNDER...-a0542803701>

Science Dz.net

<https://www.sciencedz.net/conference/42812-9th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

CEPOS Conference 2018

The Eighth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 23-24 March 2018) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 15 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

Conference Alerts, <https://conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=186626>

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Sciencesdz, <http://www.sciencedz.net/conference/29484-8th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

ManuscriptLink,
<https://manuscriptlink.com/cfp/detail?cfpId=AYAXKVAR46277063&type=event>

Maspolitiques,<http://www.maspolitiques.com/ar/index.php/en/1154-8th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

Aconf, https://www.aconf.org/conf_112399.html

Call4paper,<https://call4paper.com/listByCity?type=event&city=3025&count=count>
Eventegg, <https://eventegg.com/cepos/>

10 times, <https://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>
Biblioteca de Sociologie, <http://bibliotecadesociologie.ro/cfp-cepos-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny-craiova-2018/>

Science Research Association <http://www.scirea.org/topiclisting?conferenceTopicId=5>
ResearcherBook <http://researcherbook.com/country/Romania>

Conference Search Net, <http://conferencesearch.net/en/29484-8th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

SchoolandCollegeListings,
<https://www.schoolandcollegelisting.com/RO/Craiova/485957361454074/Center-of-Post-Communist-Political-Studies-CEPOS>

Vepub conference, <http://www.vepub.com/conferences-view/8th-International-Conference-After-Communism.-East-and-West-under-Scrutiny/bC9aUE5rcHN0ZmpkYU9nTHJzUkRmdz09/>

Geopolitika Hungary, <http://www.geopolitika.hu/event/8th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/>

CEPOS Conference 2017

The Seventh International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 24-25March 2017) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 10 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases: Ethic & International Affairs (Carnegie Council), Cambridge University Press-<https://www.ethicsandinternationalaffairs.org/2016/upcoming-conferences-interest-2016-2017/>

ELSEVIER GLOBAL EVENTS
LIST <http://www.globaleventslist.elsevier.com/events/2017/03/7th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

CONFERENCE ALERTS-<http://www.conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=171792>

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10TIMES.COM-<http://10times.com/after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

Hiway Conference Discovery System-<http://www.hicds.cn/meeting/detail/45826124>
Geopolitika (Hungary)-<http://www.geopolitika.hu/event/7th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/>

Academic.net-<http://www.academic.net/show-24-4103-1.html>

World University Directory-
<http://www.worlduniversitydirectory.com/conferencedetail.php?AgentID=2001769>

Science Research Association-
<http://www.scirea.org/conferenceinfo?conferenceId=35290>

Science Social Community-<https://www.science-community.org/ru/node/174892>

CEPOS Conference 2016

The Sixth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 8-9 April 2016) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in the following international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

ELSEVIER GLOBAL EVENTS-
<http://www.globaleventslist.elsevier.com/events/2016/04/6th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/>

Oxford Journals – Oxford Journal of Church & State-
<http://jcs.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/02/06/jcs.csv121.extract>

Conference Alerts-<http://www.conferencealerts.com/country-listing?country=Romania>
Conferences-In - <http://conferences-in.com/conference/romania/2016/economics/6th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/>

Socmag.net - <http://www.socmag.net/?p=1562>

African Journal of Political Sciences-
http://www.maspolitiques.com/mas/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=450:-securiteee-&catid=2:2010-12-09-22-47-00&Itemid=4#.VjUI5PnhCUk

Researchgate-
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283151988_Call_for_Papers_6TH_International_Conference_After_Communism._East_and_West_under_Scrutiny_8-9_April_2016_Craiova_Romania

World Conference Alerts-
<http://www.worldconferencealerts.com/ConferenceDetail.php?EVENT=WLD1442>

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Edu events-<http://eduevents.eu/listings/6th-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny/>

Esocsci.org-<http://www.esocsci.org.nz/events/list/>

Sciencedz.net-<http://www.sciencedz.net/index.php?topic=events&page=53>

Science-community.org-<http://www.science-community.org/ru/node/164404/?did=070216>

CEPOS Conference 2015

The Fifth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny (Craiova, House of the University, 24-25 April 2015) was evaluated and accepted for indexing in 15 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases:

THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF CANADA, CANADA-
<http://natocouncil.ca/events/international-conferences/>

ELSEVIER GLOBAL EVENTS LIST-
<http://www.globaleventslist.elsevier.com/events/2015/04/fifth-international-conf>

GCONFERENCE.NET-
http://www.gconference.net/eng/conference_view.html?no=47485&catalog=1&cata=018&co_kind=&co_type=&pageno=1&conf_cata=01

CONFERENCE BIOXBIO-<http://conference.bioxbio.com/location/Romania>

10 TIMES-<http://10times.com/Romania>

CONFERENCE ALERTS-<http://www.conferencealerts.com/country-listing?country=Romania>

<http://www.iem.ro/orizont2020/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/lista-3-conferinte-internationale.pdf>

<http://sdil.ac.ir/index.aspx?pid=99&articleid=62893>

NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM-<http://www.nationalsymposium.com/communism.php>
SCIENCE DZ-<http://www.sciencedz.net/conference/6443-fifth-international-conference-after-communism-east-and-west-under-scrutiny>

ARCHIVE COM-http://archive-com.com/com/c/conferencealerts.com/2014-12-01_5014609_70/Rome_15th_International_Academic_Conference_The_IISES/

CONFERENCE WORLD-<http://conferencesworld.com/higher-education/>
KNOW A CONFERENCE KNOW A CONFERENCE-
<http://knowaconference.com/social-work/>

International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications (IJONTE)

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Turkey <http://www.ijonte.org/?pnum=15&>

Journal of Research in Education and Teaching Turkey-
<http://www.jret.org/?pnum=13&pt=Kongre+ve+Sempozyum>

CEPOS CONFERENCE 2015 is part of a "consolidated list of all international and Canadian conferences taking place pertaining to international relations, politics, trade, energy and sustainable development". For more details see <http://natocouncil.ca/events/international-conferences/>

CEPOS Conference 2014

The Fourth International Conference After Communism. East and West under Scrutiny, Craiova, 4-5 April 2014 was very well received by the national media and successfully indexed in more than 9 international databases, catalogues and NGO's databases such as:

American Political Science Association, USA-<http://www.apsanet.org/conferences.cfm>

Journal of Church and State, Oxford-
<http://jcs.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/01/23/jcs.cst141.full.pdf+html>;

NATO Council of Canada (section events/ international conferences), Canada,
<http://atlantic-council.ca/events/international-conferences/>

International Society of Political Psychology, Columbus, USA-
http://www.ispp.org/uploads/attachments/April_2014.pdf

Academic Biographical Sketch, <http://academicprofile.org/SeminarConference.aspx>;
Conference alerts, <http://www.conferencealerts.com/show-event?id=121380>
Gesis Sowiport, Koln, Germany, <http://sowiport.gesis.org/>; Osteuropa-Netzwerk,
Universität Kassel, Germany, http://its-vm508.its.uni-kassel.de/mediawiki/index.php/After_communism:_East_and_West_under_scrutiny:_Fourth_International_Conference

Ilustre Colegio Nacional de Doctores y Licenciados en Ciencias Politicas y Sociologia, futuro Consejo Nacional de Colegios Profesionales, Madrid,
<http://colpolsocmadrid.org/agenda/>.



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** Lecturer, PhD, University of Craiova, Faculty of Social Sciences, Phone: 00407*****, Email: cata.georgescu@yahoo.com. (Use Times New Roman 9, Justified)

*** Lecturer, PhD, University of Craiova, Faculty of Social Sciences, Phone: 00407*****, Email: avcosmingherghe@yahoo.com. (Use Times New Roman 9, Justified)

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The abstract must provide the aims, objectives, methodology, results and main conclusions of the paper (please submit the papers by providing all these information in the abstract). It must be submitted in English and the length must not exceed 300 words. Use Times New Roman 10,5, Justify.

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Text Font: Times New Roman: 10,5

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To cite one Article by the same author(s) in the same year use the letters a, b, c, etc., after the year. E.g.: (Olimid, 2009a:14) (Olimid, 2009b: 25-26).

References:

The references cited in the Article are listed at the end of the paper in alphabetical order of authors' names.

References of the same author are listed chronologically.

For books

Olimid, A. P. (2009a). *Viața politică și spirituală în România modernă. Un model românesc al relațiilor dintre Stat și Biserică*, Craiova: Aius Publishing.

Olimid, A. P. (2009b). *Politica românească după 1989*, Craiova: Aius Publishing.

For chapters in edited books

Goodin, R. E. (2011). The State of the Discipline, the Discipline of the State. In Goodin, R. E. (editor), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 19-39.

For journal Articles

Georgescu, C. M. (2013a). Qualitative Analysis on the Institutionalisation of the Ethics and Integrity Standard within the Romanian Public Administration. *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques*, 37, 320-326.

Georgescu, C. M. (2013b). Patterns of Local Self-Government and Governance: A Comparative Analysis Regarding the Democratic Organization of Thirteen Central and Eastern European Administrations (I). *Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Științe Politice*, 39, 49-58.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures are introduced in the text. The title appears above each table.

E.g.: Table 1. The results of the parliamentary elections (May 2014)

Proposed papers: Text of the Article should be between 3000-5000 words, single spaced, Font: Times New Roman 10,5, written in English, submitted as a single file that includes all tables and figures in Word2003 or Word2007 for Windows.

All submissions will be double-blind reviewed by at least two reviewers.