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Surveillance in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Purpose: As technology advances, electronic devices have become ubiquitous among individuals of all backgrounds. From mobile phones to computing devices, people rely on these tools on a daily basis for both personal and professional purposes. The presented research seeks to investigate the extent to which individuals are being monitored in the digital realm and identify solutions to safeguard citizens from the threat of mass surveillance.

Findings: In the modern era, it is common for people to utilize various devices for a multitude of purposes, such as search engines and social networks. However, many are unaware that the information they share online is not always erased from cyberspace. This study aims to shed light on how this data is obtained and utilized and the potential risks humanity faces if privacy is not safeguarded in the digital age.

Research limitations/implications: The objective of this research is to thoroughly examine the current scientific literature, studies, and articles regarding the perils of surveillance in the digital era. The paper aims to highlight the challenges associated with combating surveillance. In the concluding section of the analysis, a concise set of recommendations will be provided, which are crucial to uphold in order to safeguard individuals' constitutional rights in the face of the potential ramifications of streamlined surveillance.

Originality/value: In today's digital age, it has become almost universal for people to communicate through electronic devices in cyberspace, whether for work or personal purposes. Unfortunately, this environment is often not secure, and automated surveillance models can be used to acquire people's data without their knowledge or consent. This raises serious concerns about privacy

and the protection of fundamental human rights. That is why it is essential to conduct research that sheds light on the means of surveillance and explores ways to fight against it.

Keywords: Surveillance; Digital Age; Cybersecurity; Privacy; Civil liberties

I.   Introduction

The fast-paced technological advancements in today's world have led to the widespread use of electronic gadgets such as mobile phones and personal computers. These devices have become an integral part of people's daily lives, and it is hard to imagine a routine without them. The versatility of electronic gadgets has made them indispensable for both personal and professional purposes, such as communication, learning, managing businesses, troubleshooting software issues remotely, transferring funds, and much more. With just a single mobile phone, one can accomplish a plethora of tasks, such as browsing the internet, accessing social media platforms, sending and receiving emails, managing their finances, and staying connected with loved ones. The remarkable advancements in modern technology have enabled people to do much more than they ever thought possible. It is worth noting that all these activities are a part of the digital world, which has revolutionized the way people live, work, and interact with the world around them.

It is crucial to understand that every action performed on a digital device generates a trace that can be used to determine for what purpose the device was used (Weiss, 2009). These traces, like other digital activities, are not immediately removed and are stored on servers by large corporations. Although these corporations assure users that their data is secure, the occurrence of data breaches has demonstrated that their claims are often misleading. Major companies such as Yahoo (Thielman, 2016), LinkedIn (Gibson et al., 2021), and Facebook (Cadwalladr & Graham-Harrison, 2018) have failed to protect the privacy of their users. This leads to the question: Is personal data safeguarded in the digital world? Currently, there is no definite or convincing response to this inquiry.

Throughout the twentieth century, numerous local and international scandals have unfolded (Brennan & Gilbert, 1983), marked by instances of surveillance on entire populations rather than specific individuals or groups (Dennis & Laporte, 2014). These operations were often conducted by state agencies acting together or on their own. Unfortunately, in such cases, it becomes clear that the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms was not a priority. Intelligence and counterintelligence services often justified such actions by citing the need to prevent crimes against the interests of the state and its people, such as espionage by hostile countries or other nefarious

activities (Taylor & Snow, 1997). Protecting the interests of the state and its people is undoubtedly crucial, especially in the face of threats from dangerous organizations like hostile intelligence services. However, if state agencies themselves violate the fundamental human rights of their citizens in the process of combating these threats and the frequency of such violations increases, society cannot remain healthy. When the fundamental rights of the population are disregarded, democracy ceases to exist, and all that remains to protect is an empty shell.

This research aims to explore the concept of surveillance, its various applications by government agencies, and the systems that existed in the 20th century to monitor individuals or groups. The study will delve into the definition of surveillance, its purpose, and the different ways it has been implemented by government entities. Additionally, the investigation will shed light on the technologies that were used to track people, whether individually or en masse. The findings of this research will provide insights into the evolution of surveillance systems and their impact on society.

As humankind entered the new millennium, the digital world emerged as a new frontier in technological advancement. With each individual finding their own place in this digital landscape, progress continued to push the boundaries of comfort and convenience, from the concept of smart cities, where everything is connected to the digital world (Eremia et al., 2017), to the development of artificial intelligence aiding people in countless fields (Berman & Hafner, 1989), also many other cyber technologies that will accompany the progress. As a result, monitoring the population becomes more accessible, and the temptation for state agencies to monitor individuals' activities increases. To prevent such temptations, it is crucial to establish legal bases, frameworks, and other acts for the active protection of citizens against not only cybercriminals but also state agencies.

The central objective of this research is to demonstrate the evolution of surveillance methods and mechanisms in response to technological advancements, as well as to examine the tools utilized by various state agencies in conducting surveillance on individuals or entire populations. The study will focus on modern surveillance systems dedicated solely to monitoring. By delving into these systems, readers will gain valuable insight into the extent of the state's capacity to scrutinize digital activity.

The study's concluding segment will provide an overview of prevailing perspectives on digital surveillance. Drawing on the analyzed literature, the study will offer crucial recommendations intended to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals in the digital realm. Neglecting the protection of human rights in both the physical and digital worlds and dismissing their significance would be a regressive move away from democratic ideals and towards an ominous, dystopian future.

II.   Surveillance in the Twentieth Century and its Meaning

The use of surveillance has been recognized as an essential tool in maintaining the safety and security of the state. Over the centuries, various technological advancements have been made in the field of surveillance to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. Throughout the course of human history, the practice of surveillance has been an essential means to prevent criminal activities, expose conspiracies, and safeguard the interests of the state (Laidler, 2008). This practice of keeping an eye on individuals and groups can be traced back to ancient times when officials used to read the letters of certain individuals to gain insight into their objectives. In addition, foreign visitors were closely monitored to ensure that they did not engage in activities that could harm the state's interests (Foucault, 2023). This practice of surveillance was so widespread that methods were developed to counter it. For instance, Julius Caesar famously used a cypher to protect the contents of his letters (Luciano & Prichett, 1987).

Over the course of history, surveillance has been an integral aspect of statecraft, with various techniques, systems, and approaches being developed to conduct effective tracking activities. Due to the universally accepted definition of surveillance (Surveillance, n.d.), it is possible to categorize surveillance into two distinct types:

1. Covert surveillance - Covert surveillance is a type of surveillance that involves monitoring an individual or a group without their knowledge or consent. The objective of covert surveillance is to observe and gather information about the target's activities, conversations, and movements without alerting them. This type of surveillance is usually conducted in secrecy, making it difficult for the target to detect that they are being monitored. Covert surveillance techniques can include searching for information, opening private correspondence, listening to conversations, and other methods that allow the observer to gather information while remaining undetected.

2. Active Surveillance - Active surveillance is a type of surveillance in which the object or person being monitored is fully aware of the surveillance activity. This means that the tracker is in direct communication with the object and informs them that they are being monitored. The main aim of active surveillance is to gather information or evidence in a legal and ethical manner. Active surveillance techniques could include openly monitoring the object's location, meeting the object directly with hidden recording equipment, or any other method of surveillance that involves direct communication between the tracker and the object.

Of course, this is a general overview of how surveillance is conducted (Lyon, 2007). It is essential to keep in mind that surveillance is a complex and

multifaceted concept that encompasses a wide range of practices and technologies.

In the introductory section of this research chapter, it was observed that surveillance has been a longstanding practice. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the advancement of surveillance technology reached its pinnacle in the twentieth century, particularly during the Cold War era (Holden, 1999). During this time, surveillance methods in real-life situations were elevated to unprecedented levels, as it was imperative to conduct twenty-four-hour surveillance of rival state citizens within the country's borders in order to prevent them from engaging in harmful intelligence activities (Taylor & Snow, 1997). It is important to note, however, that surveillance was not solely employed for intelligence control purposes, as tracking mechanisms have also inflicted irreparable damage on organized criminal groups (Martin, 2014).

Conducting thorough research is a critical aspect of gaining a comprehensive understanding of a topic. One such example is the Ministry of State Security of the German Democratic Republic, also known as the Stasi - this organization implemented a vast and covert surveillance system that monitored not just individuals but the entire population (Dennis & Laporte, 2014). After the Berlin Wall fell and Germany was reunited, the public was allowed access to the Stasi archives. These archives revealed that the agents had been keeping a close eye on almost every aspect of citizens' lives, including their communication, reading material, meetings, written content, and even their listening habits. The scope of the Stasi's mass surveillance system was one of the most extensive of the 20th century (Lichter et al., 2015). However, it was not legally authorized, and its purpose was not to protect human rights. The type of surveillance used by the Stasi was active, meaning that nearly every citizen of East Germany was aware of being monitored, which had a significant impact on their daily lives (Bruce, 2010). The Stasi's actions serve as a stark reminder of the dangers of such mass surveillance systems and the importance of protecting human rights and privacy.

During the Cold War, the U.S. National Security Agency's Project SHAMROCK was implemented in the 1960s as a covert surveillance program aimed at monitoring all telegrams sent and received from abroad (Theoharis, 1984). The project remained unknown to the general public until the 1970s, when it was revealed that the National Security Agency was analyzing the contents of around 150,000 letters every month (Owen, 2012). However, the project was immediately shut down after it became public knowledge. The existence of Project SHAMROCK was considered crucial during the Cold War, as there were numerous intelligence officers or agents of opposing countries operating within the U.S. territory. The project was designed to provide a timely response if necessary and to ensure the safety of the United

States of America. Despite the project's significance, the United States of America is a country that upholds fundamental human rights and freedoms protected by the Constitution and amendments. The Constitution and its amendments ensure that the U.S. government respects its citizens' right to privacy and that any surveillance must be carried out in compliance with the law (Ponder, 2006). In contrast to the overt activities of the East German Stasi, the SHAMROCK project was a classic example of covert surveillance, which was not known to the public (Brennan & Gilbert, 1983). The SHAMROCK project was designed to provide a timely response to any threats to the United States of America's security, but the fundamental human rights and freedoms protected by the country's Constitution and amendments were and still are of utmost importance.

The Watergate scandal of 1972 brought to light the illegal activities of the intelligence and counterintelligence services of the United States of America within the country's borders (Ritchie, 1998). In response to this, Senator Frank Church proposed the formation of a committee known as the "United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities." This committee, commonly referred to as the Church Committee, was tasked with investigating abuses of power by various government agencies, including the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency (Johnson, 2004). The Church Committee's primary objective was to identify cases where the activities of these services were not in compliance with the American Constitution and legislation. The commission sought to uncover instances where these agencies had used their unlimited power and resources to violate fundamental human rights while attempting to protect the state and its citizens (Schwarz Jr., 2007). Through their investigations, the committee discovered various violations of privacy and civil liberties by these agencies. Ultimately, the commission concluded that it was necessary to establish a legal framework to regulate the extensive powers of these agencies. The report of the Church Committee recommended the implementation of measures to limit the unlimited possibilities of these services so that they could perform their duties without violating the rights of the American people (Johnson, 2008). The findings of the Church Committee were instrumental in shaping the policies and regulations of intelligence agencies in the United States, ensuring that their activities remain within the bounds of the law and the Constitution.

The twentieth century was a time when surveillance was taken to unprecedented levels. While the activities of the Stasi and Project SHAMROCK are often cited as examples of surveillance programs, there were many others that were implemented during this time. These programs were designed to keep a close eye on citizens and gather information about

their activities. By presenting these cases, it becomes easier to understand how surveillance worked in the real world, as well as the immense power that the relevant services had to carry out these operations. However, as humankind moved into the twenty-first century, the situation changed dramatically. With the advent of the digital world, a whole new area of surveillance became available to many people. This has had a profound impact on people's lives as they have become increasingly reliant on digital technologies for communication, work, and leisure.

III.   Surveillance in the Digital World

In today's digital age, people are exposed to an extensive range of technological tools and opportunities that have revolutionized the way they live. The convenience of staying connected with people across the globe and sending letters from the comfort of our homes is now a reality. The advent of innovative technologies has simplified their lives, making it possible to access endless opportunities that once seemed beyond our reach. With this progress, the boundaries of what one can achieve have been pushed further, enabling them to explore and achieve what was once thought impossible.

With the rapid advancement of technology and the increasing reliance on digital platforms, the world has witnessed a surge in cybercrime. The emergence of cybercriminals has posed a significant threat to the security of the digital world. These criminals leverage their technical expertise and sophisticated computer equipment to exploit vulnerabilities in the digital infrastructure and carry out their nefarious activities. From stealing personal information to launching devastating cyber attacks, the impact of these cybercriminals can be far-reaching and damaging (Gordon & Ford, 2006). It should be noted here that the vast majority of cybercriminals aim to obtain some financial gain (Nicholls et al., 2021). They use various methods and mechanisms - cyber extortion (Minnaar, 2019), cyber fraud (Howard, 2009) and others.

Based on the research goals, it is essential to talk about other groups of cybercriminals. In particular:

1. Cyber Terrorists. In recent times, there has been a growing concern over certain groups of terrorists who have realized the enormous potential that the digital world holds and have consequently shifted their operations to cyberspace. These individuals, who are known as cyber terrorists, leverage various digital tools and technologies to inflict substantial and irreversible harm from the digital realm to the physical world. Through their nefarious actions, cyber terrorists can impede the functioning of governmental agencies, disrupt critical services, and cause extensive damage to crucial infrastructure facilities in the real world. This poses a significant threat to national security as it becomes increasingly difficult to protect against such cyber threats. Cyber

terrorists often use sophisticated techniques such as hacking, phishing, and social engineering to access sensitive data and exploit vulnerabilities in computer systems. They can also use malware and other forms of malicious software to disrupt operations and cause chaos. For example: Causing interruption of electric power supply (Liang et al., 2016), Damage to a metallurgical facility (Lee, 2014) and other criminal acts (Lewis, 2002).

2. Cyberespionage. In the past, espionage activities were often carried out through physical means, such as breaking into an object or facility to intercept or steal specific information. These methods were often complicated and time-consuming, requiring a lot of effort and resources. However, with the rapid advancement of digital technology and the increasing digitization of data, a new form of espionage has emerged - cyber espionage. Unlike traditional espionage, cyber espionage activities do not require direct contact or physical access to the target. Instead, cyber spies use their knowledge of computer equipment and access to the digital world to carry out their activities. They leverage various tools and techniques to gain access to sensitive information, monitor communication channels, and steal confidential data. Cyber espionage has become a significant threat to national security and the private sector, as it allows spies to operate in a completely different way compared to traditional spies. The use of sophisticated hacking tools and techniques makes it easier for cyberspies to conduct espionage activities, and the risk of being caught is relatively low. Consequently, governments and organizations need to be more vigilant and proactive in protecting their information and infrastructure from cyber espionage attacks (Deibert et al., 2009).

3. Cybercriminals Under the Control of State Agencies. The digital world has become a hub for cybercriminals that operate under the control of state agencies. This phenomenon is considered one of the most dangerous, as these cybercriminals carry out any activity desired by their respective states. Their actions range from conducting elementary propaganda on a massive scale to hacking websites of foreign agencies and posting desired information. Despite being classified as cybercriminals, they operate in a unique manner, as their every move in cyberspace is dictated by orders from state agencies. This makes them a formidable force that poses a severe threat to the digital security landscape (Weissbrodt, 2013).

Therefore, it can be said that with the development of the digital world, the dangers arising from it have also increased (Brenner, 2010). Accordingly, there is an opinion that tracking the activities in the digital world is especially important so that the relevant structures of the state can respond in time and prevent the criminal activities of cyber criminals (Reveron, 2012). However, a fair question arises: to what extent will fundamental human rights and freedoms be protected while fighting cybercriminals (Bronitt, 1997)?

In order to gain a better understanding of the capabilities of surveillance systems in the digital realm and to address concerns around the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, it is imperative to conduct a thorough analysis of the programs used to carry out such surveillance. By delving into the technical details of these systems, it becomes possible to gain insight into their inner workings and assess their potential impact on individual privacy and civil liberties.

IV.   Surveillance Programs in the Digital World

1. PRISM (United States). In June 2013, whistleblower Edward Snowden came forward with classified files that revealed details about one of the most prominent surveillance programs in history - PRISM (Sports, 2013). This revelation sparked a significant debate in society about the extent to which personal privacy can be safeguarded in the digital world. Many people were concerned that the program's existence posed a threat to their privacy and civil liberties. Despite the public outcry, no further information about the program's operations was released after 2013. It is unclear whether the program was suspended, altered, or repurposed for other uses.

According to Edward Snowden's files, PRISM was a program created by the National Security Agency that was designed to collect and analyze online activity data, including emails, chat messages, and communications data (Bauman et al., 2014). However, the most significant aspect of the program was its ability to access and retrieve data stored on the servers of large companies such as Google, Facebook, and Apple (Greenwald & MacAskill, 2013).

PRISM program was a highly controversial and secretive government surveillance initiative with the capability to collect and analyze vast amounts of personal data. The public disclosure of the program raised serious concerns about privacy and personal liberties in the digital age, and its current status remains unknown.

2. Tempora (United Kingdom): Tempora is a U.K. Government Communications Headquarters program (Shubber, 2013). In 2013, former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed that the US government had been operating a secret program called PRISM. The program's primary objective was to gather extensive Internet traffic data from various sources, including emails, phone calls, browsing history, and other online activities of individuals. The program was reportedly designed to allow government intelligence agencies to monitor and track potential threats to national security, both domestically and abroad (Bump, 2013).

It must be noted that the creation of a program that is capable of collecting and analyzing personal data has sparked a great deal of debate within society. The discussion centers on whether or not it is acceptable to

have such a program in place, and if the benefits of its use outweigh the potential drawbacks. This debate has continued to this day and has raised important questions about the extent to which such a program is necessary, as well as the ethical implications of its implementation. While some argue that such a program is necessary for the safety and security of individuals, others contend that it is a violation of privacy and a threat to personal freedom. The debate remains ongoing and requires careful consideration of all viewpoints in order to reach a consensus (Lanchester, 2013).

The Temporia program was deemed by the European Court of Human Rights to be a violation of essential human rights and freedoms. This ruling serves as a reminder of the importance of protecting individuals' privacy and personal data in today's digital age (European Court of Human Rights, 2021).

3. Echelon (Multinational): Echelon is a highly secretive intelligence-gathering program that has been in operation since the Cold War era. It is managed by the cooperation of several countries, namely the United States of America, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and its primary purpose is to monitor and control the network in those countries (Wright, 2005). The program's primary function is to intercept and collect any electronic information, including emails, phone calls, faxes, and other forms of communication, both domestic and international. The program has the ability to process vast amounts of data at high speed, using sophisticated algorithms and analytics to identify patterns and signals of interest. The program's primary purpose is to control the traffic of public communications and obtain relevant information for their common purposes, which can include intelligence gathering, counterterrorism, and national security operations (Mombelli & Piodi, 2014).

The existence of a specific program was kept confidential for a considerable number of years, with those involved in its development going to great lengths to ensure that the information pertaining to it remained undisclosed. Despite their efforts, various investigative journalists and whistleblowers eventually succeeded in uncovering the truth about the program's existence, leading to widespread awareness of its secretive operations. The program's inner workings and purpose were gradually brought to light, with many people expressing concern over its implications and the potential consequences of its continued operation (Bowden, 2013).

4. MUSCULAR (United States): MUSCULAR was a highly controversial joint surveillance program that was jointly managed by the National Security Agency (NSA) of the United States and the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) of the United Kingdom. The program was specifically designed to extract vast amounts of data from companies such as Google and Yahoo, using various methods such as tapping into the communication links between their data centers. This allowed the program to

gain access to any user data stored on the servers of these companies, including emails, documents, photos, videos, and any other information the user had stored in their account (Gellman et al., 2013). It must be mentioned that the software was able to retrieve the required data without the involvement of Yahoo or Google, thus ensuring data privacy and security. Following this incident, both companies have taken measures to enhance their safety protocols and prevent similar occurrences. This includes implementing more robust security algorithms, improving data encryption techniques, and enhancing their overall safety standards to protect their users' information from any unauthorized access or breaches (Miller, 2013).

The MUSCULAR program was highly secretive and was not known to the public until it was exposed by Edward Snowden in 2013. The revelations sparked widespread outrage and criticism from privacy advocates and civil liberties groups, who argued that the program's activities violated users' privacy rights and constituted a severe breach of trust. The fact that the program was jointly managed by two of the world's most powerful intelligence agencies only added to the controversy and fueled concerns about the scope and reach of government surveillance programs around the world (Gellman & Soltani, 2013).

5. SORM (System for Operative Investigative Activities): SORM is a comprehensive program consisting of various technical tools and measures that allow for the lawful interception and monitoring of various communication channels in the Russian Federation. SORM enables the authorities to monitor telephone conversations, internet traffic, and any other communication activities in order to ensure public safety and combat criminal activities. This program is used by law enforcement agencies and other authorized government bodies (Polyakova & Meserole, 2019).

SORM has developed in three stages over the years.

The first stage, SORM 1, was introduced in the 1990s and was primarily created to intercept and record phone conversations. This system enabled authorities to monitor phone calls made by individuals suspected of criminal activity.

The second stage, SORM 2, replaced SORM 1 in the early 2000s. It expanded the capabilities of the system to include the monitoring and analysis of internet traffic in addition to phone conversations. With SORM 2, authorities could track and monitor emails, instant messaging, social media activity, and other online communications.

The latest stage of SORM development is the third phase, known as SORM 3. This iteration of the system is the most advanced and comprehensive version yet. With SORM 3, authorities can effectively intercept, analyse, process, and store any information transmitted through communication channels. This includes not only phone calls and internet traffic but also all

other forms of digital communication, such as text messages and video calls. Additionally, SORM 3 enables authorities to store this information for an extended period, allowing them to access it at any time for investigative purposes (Soldatov & Borogan, 2013).

It must be mentioned here that the European Court of Human Rights made a significant ruling in 2015 regarding the SORM program. In its unanimous decision, the court declared that the protection of human rights is not ensured under the current conditions of the SORM program's operation, leaving individuals vulnerable and unprotected. The court further concluded that the SORM program violates Article 8 of the Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to privacy (European Court of Human Rights, 2015).

6. Central Monitoring System (CMS): The CMS program is a surveillance system implemented in India (Reddy, 2014) and is capable of intercepting and analyzing telephonic conversations, as well as monitoring email and social media correspondence on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. It is worth noting that the program is designed to work within the framework of Google's system and can even monitor the activities of users on the search engine, such as analyzing their search history (In India, prism-like surveillance slips under the radar, 2013). There are some experts and individuals who hold the view that the system in question possesses an array of capabilities that are far more extensive than what is currently known to the public. In fact, comparisons have been drawn between this system and the infamous PRISM program that was run by the National Security Agency of the United States of America. Moreover, a report by Human Rights Watch has expressed concern that the system may pose a threat to fundamental human rights and freedoms. The report highlights the potential for abuse of the system and its implications on privacy and freedom of expression. The report also calls for greater transparency and oversight to ensure that the system is being used in a manner that is consistent with universal human rights standards (India: New monitoring system threatens rights, 2013).

7. Unit 8200: Unit 8200 is a highly specialized intelligence unit of the Israeli Army, which is also known as the Central Collection Unit of the Intelligence Corps. This unit operates under the Directorate of Military Intelligence (AMAN) of Israel (Fiegenbaum, 2007).

One of their primary functions is surveillance (Tawil-Souri, 2016). The surveillance carried out by Unit 8200 is not limited to any particular medium. They monitor and track all forms of communication, including phone calls, emails, and digital communication channels, among others. Their sophisticated surveillance technology allows them to monitor these channels

in real time, ensuring that they can quickly identify and respond to any potential security threats (Reed, 2015).

Due to their expertise and successful operations, Unit 8200 is widely regarded as one of the world's most robust intelligence units in the field. Their operations have been considered exemplary and have served as a model for other intelligence agencies around the world (Cordey, 2019).

8. The Great Firewall: The Great Firewall, also known as the Golden Shield Project, is a vast system that operates in China with the dual purpose of censorship and surveillance. The system is one of the largest of its kind in the world and is designed to maintain strict control over the internet within the People's Republic of China (Chandel, 2019). Its primary objective is to block several foreign websites and applications that the Chinese authorities consider sensitive and inappropriate, such as democratic information websites, human rights websites, and other sources of information that may be deemed subversive (Ensafi et al., 2015a). In addition to its role in censorship, the Great Firewall also blocks search words, which enables the system to control the information that the Chinese people can access. It is a powerful tool that the authorities use to limit the spread of ideas that they deem unacceptable.

As part of the surveillance function, the Great Firewall monitors all internet activity within China, which allows the authorities to identify and eliminate any potential threats to the security of the People's Republic of China. The system is a powerful tool that enables the government to maintain control over the internet and prevent the dissemination of information that may be considered harmful to the state (Akduman, 2023).

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are all blocked in China. Instead, the government offers the Chinese people alternatives in the form of WeChat and Weibo, which are subject to censorship and surveillance. The use of these platforms is strictly controlled, and any content that is deemed unacceptable is quickly removed (Kalathil, 2017).

Despite the efforts of the authorities, there are still many people in China who seek to circumvent the censorship and surveillance of the Great Firewall (Clayton et al., 2006). However, the government's work on the system continues, and it remains a significant obstacle to the Chinese people's access to the global internet and its content (Ensafi et al.,2015b).

The eight surveillance programs or systems listed earlier are just a few examples of the many projects that currently exist. It is essential to keep in mind that there are likely many more systems in operation that are not publicly known and whose existence is kept under strict confidentiality until they are revealed through investigative journalism or whistleblowers. As technology advances and surveillance capabilities become more sophisticated, it is

possible that new systems are being developed all the time, which may be even more covert and difficult to detect.

As stated in the previous section of the research, the existence of surveillance systems serves a crucial purpose in the modern digital world. The increasing prevalence of criminal syndicates whose primary objective is to cause harm to individuals or institutions through their illegal activities necessitates such surveillance. However, it is noteworthy that the European Court of Human Rights (European Court of Human Rights, 2021) has deemed two of these surveillance systems to be in violation of the Convention on Human Rights (European Court of Human Rights, 2015). This ruling has sparked an ongoing debate on the legitimacy of other existing surveillance systems, with many questioning their justification and possible infringement on individual privacy rights. The need for surveillance must be balanced against the fundamental human right to privacy, and it is necessary to ensure that any surveillance system is implemented in compliance with the law and human rights conventions.

In the present-day digital world, surveillance has become an integral part of our lives. To fully comprehend its significance and implications, it is essential to delve into the legal and ethical considerations surrounding it. These considerations have been the subject of active debates in various scientific fields, including computer science, sociology, and philosophy. Researchers are keen on understanding the impact of surveillance on privacy, security, and freedom of expression, among other fundamental rights. This understanding can help us develop better policies and practices that strike a balance between protecting individual rights and ensuring the safety and security of society at large.

V.   Ethical and Legal Aspects of Surveillance

This research repeated many times that in today's world, the vast majority of people use electronic devices such as mobile phones, personal computers, smart TVs, and other similar gadgets. These devices are often used to share intimate details between individuals, whether in a romantic or sexual context (Miguel, 2018). However, many people are unaware that even if they delete their chats or conversations, the information is still stored on servers for a certain period. This means that, if required, government agencies can access and recover deleted messages for lawful purposes. For instance, if there are signs of criminal activity in Facebook conversations and the alleged perpetrator has deleted messages, it does not mean that the chat cannot be recovered (Chandel et al., 2018).

While it is understandable that such measures are necessary for maintaining public safety, ethical concerns arise regarding the storage of such sensitive and personal information. Citizens may feel uncomfortable knowing

that their private lives are accessible by surveillance systems. This realization may ultimately lead to a loss of trust in the authorities and the government, which, in turn, could have significant implications for public order (Moran, 2015). It is crucial to note that the ethical concerns highlighted in studies are only a small part of the more significant ethical and moral dilemmas surrounding surveillance systems (Friedewald, 2017).

In the modern world, democratic states uphold the right of individuals to have a private life. This right is enshrined in the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America (Constitution of the United States: Fourth Amendment, 1791). Also, Fundamental Human rights and freedoms are protected by the international declaration (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948) and several other international acts (European Convention on Human Rights, 1950). However, with the increasing prevalence of surveillance programs and systems, the extent to which the right to privacy is safeguarded has become a pressing issue. It is crucial that the law be upheld and enforced for all individuals, including ordinary citizens, government agencies, and intelligence officers. The protection of individual privacy is a critical matter and must be taken seriously in our fast-paced and ever-changing technological landscape.

The issue of surveillance systems and their impact on the right to privacy is a complex and sensitive topic (Lyon, 2001). Many argue that surveillance is necessary to ensure public safety and prevent potential threats, both real and hypothetical. However, others argue that excessive surveillance can infringe upon an individual's fundamental human rights and freedoms, such as the right to privacy. If surveillance continues at an alarming pace, it could lead to a situation where even the constitutions and international agreements that are in place to protect these rights become meaningless. A law that cannot protect individuals from the state or guarantee their fundamental rights and freedoms is essentially just a collection of words on paper.

The concept of rule of law is central to the functioning of a democracy. When the rule of law is not upheld, it can lead to a society moving away from democratic principles and towards a totalitarian regime. In such a regime, the protection of human rights and individual freedoms is often nonexistent. This was evident in post-World War II East Germany, where citizens were constantly monitored by the Ministry of State Security, also known as Stasi. They knew that their private lives were not protected and that they were being watched at every moment. The Stasi was infamous for its surveillance and its ability to infiltrate every aspect of citizens' lives. This is a stark reminder of the dangers of a society without the rule of law and the importance of upholding democratic values. The fate of East Germany and the end of the Stasi serve as historical lessons for the world to learn from (Dennis & Laporte, 2014).

As our society becomes increasingly reliant on surveillance systems to monitor and protect our physical and digital spaces, it is crucial to consider the security of the information obtained by these systems. Cybercriminals pose a significant threat to the confidentiality of sensitive data, as evidenced by the annual exposure of tens of millions of accounts due to their activities (Gibson et al., 2021). Even powerful banking systems like the Caymanian banking system are not immune to the danger of data breaches (Cayman National suffers Manx bank' data hack, 2019). In fact, cybercriminals have even managed to infiltrate the Washington, D.C., Police Department and acquire officers' personal information (D.C. Police Personnel Files Obtained by Hackers, 2021).

In light of the widespread use of surveillance systems, a logical question arises regarding the protection of personal and intimate data obtained through these systems. While it is true that relevant surveillance services often claim to provide the world's most vital protection, it is worth considering the possibility of security breaches. As history has shown, the action of a single individual can be enough to call into question the effectiveness of the security systems employed by these services.

A prime example of such an occurrence is the case of Edward Snowden, who famously revealed classified information that many states do not have similar top-level secrets. This raises concerns about the extent to which these surveillance systems are actually capable of protecting sensitive information and whether their current security measures are sufficient (Verble, 2014). The scenario of Edward Snowden not being a whistleblower but rather an evil criminal with the intention of making private and confidential data public raises several questions about cybersecurity.

Despite the advancements in technology, cyber threats continue to pose a significant challenge in guaranteeing the safety of digital information. As already mentioned, every year, millions of personal data records are exposed on the internet, highlighting the need for robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard sensitive information.

In today's digital world, the protection of personal data is a crucial issue that several international acts (The Data Protection Directive, 1995) aim to address (The General Data Protection Regulation, 2016). However, the constantly evolving technological landscape presents a significant challenge to lawmakers. The pace of innovation is so rapid that it is difficult to predict what new tools and capabilities will emerge in the near future. Even a year from now, people may see significant changes that they cannot anticipate today. While legal frameworks have been established to protect fundamental human rights and freedoms in the digital world, they were created with an understanding of the challenges and problems of the past.

As technology continues to advance at an unprecedented pace, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ensure that these protections remain relevant and effective. Artificial intelligence (AI) is one area of technology that has advanced rapidly in recent years. With the help of AI, it is now possible to carry out censorship, propaganda, and surveillance on a scale never before seen. This presents a significant threat to individual rights and freedoms, and it is a challenge that lawmakers and society as a whole must address. Despite the efforts of international organizations to protect individuals' rights in the digital world, the issue surrounding the encroachment of new technologies on human rights and freedoms has not been thoroughly resolved.

The world is becoming increasingly digital, and technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace. As a result, criminals are exploiting the progress to achieve their malicious intentions. This poses a significant challenge to the relevant structures and agencies of the state, which must respond swiftly to both cyber criminals and real-world criminals. However, this issue is not without consequences. The ethical, legal, and security issues involved in this matter are vast and complex. If these issues are not addressed adequately, the consequences could be far more damaging to our society than the criminal activities of digital or real-world criminals. It is crucial for any democratic state to ensure that its surveillance systems are designed to protect fundamental human rights and freedoms rather than being used to infringe upon them. This is the only way to ensure a healthy and prosperous society for all.

Conclusion

It is rightly noted that the twenty-first century is a century of unprecedented technological progress, where technologies are developing at such a tempo that it is difficult to control the progress. The twenty-first century has offered humanity many innovations, and many mean to simplify its daily life and existence. However, as noted in the research, along with positive moments, there were also moments when the gifts of technological progress were used for harmful, criminal purposes (Gordon & Ford, 2006).

States and international communities have developed strategies and mechanisms to fight crime successfully in the digital world. One such mechanism is a surveillance system. States or international communities use it to control human activity in the digital world. Around surveillance systems, many questions have arisen that have led to many debates and raised questions for which there are no answers to this day. One of the main unanswered questions is whether fundamental human rights and freedoms are protected in the digital world.

Everyone agrees that similar surveillance programs and systems must exist with technological progress to protect statehood, state structures, and citizens. However, it is also a fact, as the European Court of Human Rights found, that in certain cases (in the cases of Great Britain and the Russian Federation), surveillance programs are used in such a way that human rights are violated that is, instead of protecting people from cyber criminals, the state directly violates their fundamental rights and freedoms.

Based on the literature, scientific opinions and other ideas introduced in the process of developing the research, the following recommendations are presented so that surveillance programs serve people and protect their rights and freedom, not the other way around. Namely, the following recommendations:

1. Legal Basis. The importance of updating legal bases in response to technological advancements cannot be overstated. As new technologies emerge and impact fundamental human rights and freedoms, it is critical for legislators at both the local and international levels to create specialised working groups to analyse these developments. Laws crafted before the existence of these specific technologies are no longer adequate to address the risks that come with progress. To safeguard against cyber criminals and international or state surveillance programs, it is essential to frequently revise legal bases to guarantee and protect fundamental human rights and freedoms. By doing so, humankind can ensure that their society's values remain intact while keeping pace with rapid technological advances.

2. Transparency. The study highlighted an important fact that the general public is often uninformed about the existence of surveillance programs until they are brought to light by journalists and whistleblowers. These programs allow the state to access the communications and information of its citizens, which can be a cause of concern for many individuals as they may feel that their privacy and rights are being violated. Therefore, it is crucial for the state to provide a comprehensive and transparent explanation of these surveillance programs, including their purpose, necessity, and rationale for their existence. When citizens understand the need for such programs, they can have confidence that the state is protecting their rights and freedoms both in the physical and digital world. Programs such as PRISM or ECHELON, when understood to be necessary for maintaining a free society, can help alleviate citizens' apprehensions and foster trust that their rights are being safeguarded. Additionally, it is essential for the state to ensure that these programs are being conducted in a manner that is ethical, lawful, and proportionates to the threats they are designed to address. This can be achieved through regular oversight, accountability measures, and transparency in reporting. By doing so, the state can strike a balance between protecting

national security and preserving individual liberties, thereby promoting a just and democratic society.

3. Encouraging Digital Education. Governments must place a high priority on equipping their citizens with the necessary knowledge of the digital world and its associated risks. To achieve this, it is crucial to establish specialised courses and training programs that cater to the specific needs of individuals. Moreover, it is essential to focus on promoting cybersecurity education at a fundamental level, which includes teaching the basic principles and minimum security standards required to ensure online safety. Such measures will go a long way in ensuring that individuals are equipped to navigate the digital world securely and protect themselves against potential threats.

4. Protection of Digital Rights. In today's world, where almost every aspect of our lives is governed by digital technology, protecting human rights in the digital realm has become an absolute necessity. Governments must ensure that organisations dedicated to safeguarding these rights are provided with adequate support and resources, enabling them to carry out their duties effectively. Individuals with specialised education and a deep understanding of digital technology and fundamental human rights are essential to lead these organisations. By providing the proper backing, more individuals can be protected from harm online, and their right to privacy and freedom of speech can be upheld.

5. Development of the Ethical Artificial Intelligence Systems. In the last few years, humankind has witnessed unparalleled progress in the field of artificial intelligence. Today, AI systems are being extensively used by various companies and surveillance systems to gather and analyse a vast amount of data. However, the uncontrolled collection and storage of personal data by AI systems pose a significant threat to fundamental human rights and individual freedoms. Hence, it has become crucial for governments and the global community to prioritise the development of ethical AI systems that ensure the protection of personal data and safeguard the rights and freedoms of citizens in the digital realm.

The conclusion of the presented research provides a set of essential guidelines that states and international communities should follow to ensure the safety and protection of citizens in the digital world. The recommendations aim to establish a strong link between digital security and safeguarding fundamental human rights and freedoms. By implementing these guidelines, citizens can enjoy a secure and protected online experience while exercising their fundamental rights and freedoms without fear of infringement or violation.

As technological advancements unfold, humankind can expect to witness remarkable inventions that will undoubtedly enhance their daily lives.

However, if the infringement of human rights accompanies these advancements, be it by cybercriminals or state agencies, people's future will be far from the simplified and secure utopia they envision. Instead, humankind may wake up to a bleak, totalitarian, and dystopian world.

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Modern Analyses of Macroeconomic Indices for Medium and Long Term Plans in Georgia

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Abstract
This paper analyzes the economic growth of Georgia through the lens of two key indicators: income/GDP per worker (representing productivity) and income/GDP per capita (representing prosperity). It emphasizes the importance of using Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) adjusted data to avoid misleading comparisons between countries with different price levels. The paper highlights three key stylized facts about Georgia's economy: Transformational Shock: Georgia's GDP per capita fell dramatically by 468% in less than ten years due to the collapse of the Soviet economic system. This is a unique event in modern economic history, with no other country experiencing such a sharp decline; Unstable Growth Rates: Unlike the U.S. which shows a relatively stable 2% annual growth rate over 150 years, Georgia's economic growth rates lack a clear trend and fluctuate significantly; Negative Correlation Between Cyclical Unemployment and GDP Gap: The cyclical unemployment rate and the GDP gap in Georgia are inversely correlated. As the unemployment rate falls below the natural rate of unemployment, the GDP gap widens, indicating potential overheating in the economy. The paper argues that existing models of economic growth, often based on developed economies with different macroeconomic realities, may not be suitable for analyzing Georgia's situation. It calls for the development of models that explicitly consider the unique features of Georgia's economy, including the transformational shock, unstable growth rates, and the relationship between unemployment and GDP. Overall, the paper raises

important questions about the nature of economic growth in Georgia and the need for tailored models to understand its specific dynamics.

Keywords: Macroeconomic facts, economic growth, macroeconomic policy, growth forecasts

Introduction

The fundamental facts of economic growth and their analysis can be found in detail in the book by *Blanchard O.J., Fisher St. (1993),* which is extremely interesting from the point of view of analytical research methods and assessments. See also *Daron Acemoglu (2009)* macroeconomic facts analysis and *Charles E. Jones (2016),* which compile and specify the main macroeconomic facts (data) that are the basis for modern growth theories.

The article considers and focuses on two indicators of the well-being of the average citizen: (1) income and GDP per worker, i.e. an index of productivity, and (2) income and GDP per capita, which represents the Prosperity Index. These indicators are correlated with many other important well-being indicators, such as consumption, life expectancy, infant mortality rates, etc. The available data can be generalized in the form of some basic facts. Penn World Tables represents the primary source of real income data for counties. These data and some of the main problems associated with international comparisons are described in the work by *Summers R., Heston (1991).* The most recent version of these data is available on the website of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER): (http://www.nber.org).

1.   Measurement problem

Converting national GDP to dollars at market exchange rates is misleading. The fact is that prices in poor or less developed countries, as a rule, are usually lower. Therefore, for example, in Georgia, costs in dollars are much more expensive than dollars in the USA. Suppose, at the beginning of some *t* year, the exchange rate of the Georgian Lari to the US dollar [(GEL/$)] was equal to 2.45, but during the year it fluctuated, which is a normal phenomenon in Georgia (Anguridze et al., 2015). In Georgia, per capita GDP indicator measured in US dollars (or measured from the viewpoint of the dollar) would be higher if the GEL/$ exchange rate was, for example, 2.38. But this change does not take into account the mentioned difference in prices. When comparing economic indicators in different economies, in particular, when comparing GDP and income in the same monetary unit (common currency), a conversion is necessary, which is achieved by converting all national currencies into a common currency (Dilanchiev, Taktakishvili, 2021; Tsutskiridze, Charaia, 2023). After performing this operation, a comparison of individual countries (firms, natural persons, etc.)

with each other in terms of International Purchasing Power. Switching to adjusted exchange rates, which will be amended according to Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) represents a better method. As it is said, an amended PPP, ensures consideration of differences in relative prices of various goods between countries. According to this theory, in the long-term perspective, exchange rates will be transformed into rates that equalize the prices of goods and consumers (in an identical basket) between any two countries, which makes it possible to compare monetary units (currencies) of two or more countries in relation to a certain set of production and consumption (Gamsakhurdia et al., 2017). Thus, for the same amount of money, converted into national currencies at the current exchange rate in different countries (in the absence of transport costs and restrictions on supply), purchasing the same amount of goods and consumers is possible. Thus, the use of Purchasing Power Parity provides a more reasonable way to measure the difference in living standards between countries. It is clear that without an amendment to the PPP, the difference in income between countries would be greater and moreover inflation indicator itself could mislead the reader when comparing one from poor and second from the rich country (Charaia, Papava, 2017; 2022). When converting the GDP of poor countries into US dollars at market rates, one of the important consequences of falling prices is a significant reduction in the size of the economy and the level of population.

2. International comparisons

Figures 1 and 2 show some of the most key stylized facts: (a) Dynamics of change in real GDP per capita in the US economy from 1870 to 2015 according to *Charles I. Jones (2016)).* For nearly 150 years, this index has grown at a notably remarkable average steady growth rate: GDP per capita, which was $3,000 in 1870, exceeded $50,000 in 2014, an increase of almost 17 times (!), and the annual growth is close to a linear trend model with a slope of 2% per year, i.e. It can be said that per capita income in the US is on a sustainable growth trajectory. As shown in fig.1, the presence of short-term fluctuations in relation to the trend indicates to business cycles, and the study of long-term growth trends belongs to the field of economic growth theory. Deviations from the trend (non-trend real output) - the cyclical part of real output - are quite pronounced and relatively easy to study in the economies of the United States and other highly developed countries. All modern theories of economic growth, starting with Robert Solow (1956), continuing with Robert Lucas (1988), Paul Romer (1990) and Aghion and Howitt (1992) *(for the theories mentioned, see Demur Giorkhelidze (2021), chapter 5, Parts A and B)* have been processed by considering this fact.Tremendous changes in the Georgian economy over the past 23 years, a huge recession and other extremely negative events caused by the transformational shock, trends that

are still not recovered (see Fig. 2 and macroeconomic facts of the Georgian economy), unformed and indefinite cycles, when studying the economy of Georgia require special attention, - automatically, the use of classical growth theories and business cycle models that were created for economies with a completely different reality and well describe the conditions there requires serious caution when used in the conditions of Georgia: specify the models that will be used to study it. The models that will be used to study it should be determined taking into account existing macroeconomic facts (or the current situation).
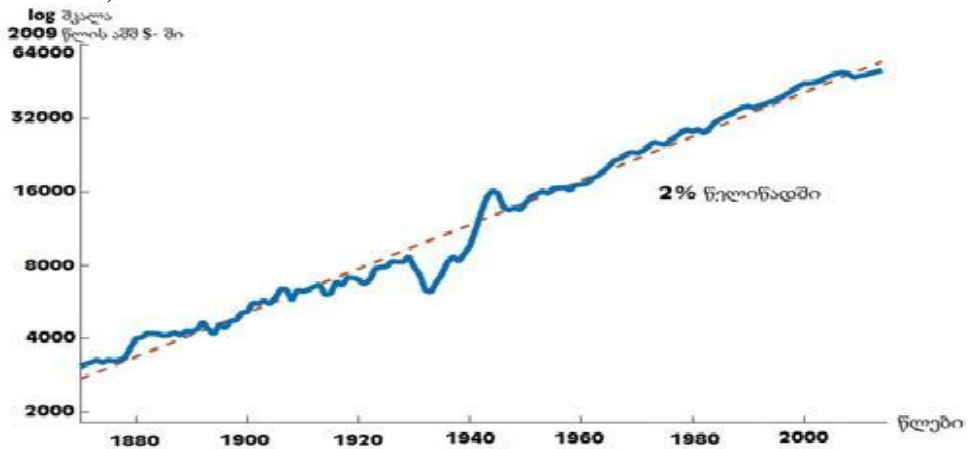
Fig. 1. USA. Real GDP per capita) (logarithmic values,$. 2009)
Source: . Charles I. Jones. The Facts of Economic Growth. Handbook of Macroeconomics
Paper. 2016, Vol. 2A. pp.3. - 69. (see pg. 37)
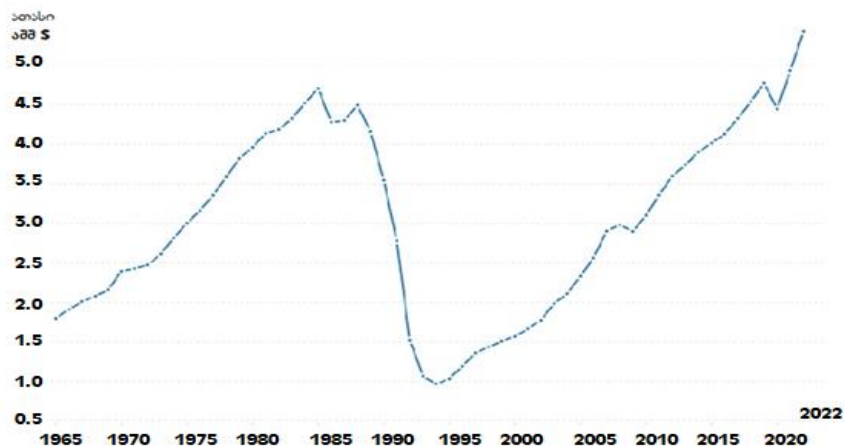
Fig. 2. Real GDP per capita. Georgia.
At constant prices in 2015. in thousands of US dollars
(1965-2022)
Source: *World Bank national accounts data. GDP per capita (constant 2010 US $).*
Georgia (1965-2022):

As shown in Fig. 1, even the Great Depression in the US was not a continuous deviation/fall. During this period, GDP per capita fell by only 20%, in only just four years, peaking in 1939, and a decade later, macroeconomic history is once again a history of steady, almost "inexorable economic growth" (according to Jones's words). Based on these data, Jones makes an interesting conclusion that for the US: *"... a good admission for future economic growth will be 2% per year."* It is noteworthy that over the past 150 years, sustainable long-term exponential growth has been a key feature of frontier growth. Economic growth is defined as a situation where a country's economy (in this case, the US economy) is at an appropriate point on the production possibilities frontier diagram and, in terms of efficiency, is best at producing goods and services and therefore making the best use of its own resources. *It is difficult to imagine and understand marginal growth in the future, and setting marginal growth stability (Figure 1) as a benchmark for future growth can be very confusing and misleading. Signs of this have already emerged as a result of the shock of the Covid pandemic and the soaring international tensions that have disrupted decades of supply chains and put many developed countries in economic trouble (Lashkhi et al., 2022; Papava, Charaia, 2022; Charaia et al., 2021).*

Another important thing to be taken into account when analyzing the Georgian economy is the so-called "Stratification Phenomenon" – A phenomenon in which some rich countries experience an increase in wealth and population density, while many countries remain poor. *In Georgia as well, the problem of poverty has not been overcome and is quite acute,* therefore this event must be taken into account. It is noteworthy that "Economic Stratification" in its content and essence differs from "Economic inequality". The phenomenon of stratification takes into account the range of wealth and not the existence of individual levels.

Obviously, economic Inequality and Economic Stratification can coincide with each other. When considering this issue, attention is drawn to the phenomenon of how this or that economy changes and improves its performance, and how all this affects the well-being of the population. In particular, by 1960, from the viewpoint of income, a number of middle-income countries moved into the ranks of high-income countries, while others retained the status of middle-income countries or received the status of countries on the path to relative impoverishment. Georgia was attributed to the latter. The point is that the most surprising examples of the biggest changes in relative incomes are "growth miracles and growth disasters." As far as it is known, a growth miracle is a fairly long period during which the growth rate in the country significantly exceeds the world average growth rates, resulting in a rapid movement to the top of the world income distribution.

The best-known examples of economic growth miracles are Japan and the recently industrialized *East Asian nations of South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong*. For example, from 1960 to 1990, average incomes in the newly industrialized countries grew at rates in excess of 5% per year, resulting in approximately three times the income of those in the United States. Growth did not stop after 1990, despite certain problems associated with some slowdown in economic growth. Figure 3 clearly shows the dynamics and stability of these countries in 2011 (in Figure 3, the corresponding data for Georgia were calculated by the author of the presented article). What conclusion can be drawn?

If we take into account that according to the new classification, countries with a per capita income of $3,956.0 to $12,235.0 belong to upper-middle income countries, then Georgia, according to 2022 data ($5,424.6 per capita), satisfies this level, however, it is in the lower range of the level, ranked 123rd in the world according to the World Bank (2021) ranking. This indicator is this-like only because we are dealing with a sharp decline in the population. If it were not for the decline in population, the peak of 1985 in both GDP and per capita GDP ($4,704.1 per capita (with 4,734,000 people)) would not have been reached: and with the same population, we would have only $4,254.3 per person).

ნახ. **3.** მ**შპ** ერთი სულო მოსახლეზე **1960** წელს და **2011** წელს.

წყარო: *Charles I. Jones.* **The Facts of Economic Growth.** *Handbook of Macroeconomics Paper. 2016. Vol. 2A. pp. 3. - 69.* (იხ. გვ. **35.**)

Thus, over the past three decades, the state of the Georgian economy (in terms of integral assessment) has not undergone significant changes: Georgia has not been able to move beyond the low levels of the Average Global Income distribution and has not undergone any noticeable improvement. We may not be in a growth tragedy ("growth disaster"). Maybe we are not in a state of growth disaster; or we do not have economic growth rates that are much lower than the average global, but the growth rate of the Georgian economy does not show any clear trend (see "Fact 2" below), nor does a superficial perception of growth data give us a real idea of the real causes of growth (when we do have it) and the influence of random external facts on this growth.

Throughout their history, there have been poor countries, and even today they remain poor and unable to achieve any sustainable growth in average incomes. As a result, they remain at the subsistence level when world incomes are steadily rising (Giorkhelidze, 2021). It can be said that throughout the modern era, the income gap between countries (on average) has increased. The fact that average incomes in the richest countries at the turn of the Industrial Revolution were slightly above the subsistence level suggests that the dispersion of average incomes between different parts of the world must be lower than today's differences (Pritchett, 1997), but there has not been a strong trend towards divergence or convergence over the past two decades.

Even the small comparative analysis presented shows that it is necessary and required to have a clear understanding of what is the driving force of economic growth, and for this, it is necessary to identify the key stylized facts of economic growth throughout history. The attempt to analyze the data of Georgia and study the channels through which technical progress (innovations) or other facts affect long-term growth stimulation in this direction, was implemented in the authors's book *(Giorkhelidze, 2021; Lashkhi, 2022).* Understanding how growth-enhancing innovations are generated and how they spread within and between countries leads to a discussion of how these building blocks are influenced by the implications of knowledge transfer. Below, in relation to Georgia, the consequences of deep political or economic crises are discussed, which are considered necessary facts for the future development of growth prospects.

3. Georgia. Macroeconomic facts

What is the situation in Georgia in this regard and what are the main macroeconomic facts that need to be taken into account when developing a model for Georgia's economic growth and economic policy in general, so that it (the model) shall fully take into account the current situation, and not just copy the models that are based on completely different macroeconomic facts, that based on totally other macroeconomic facts, quite well reflect economic

growth of developed economics ecosystems of the developed economies of the West over a long period of time.

Finding out the real facts in their essence is of fundamental importance in order to clearly present the existing situation and outline the best ways out of this situation. In order to be able to draw parallels, I will analyze Georgia precisely within the framework of the considerations that were used in the previous paragraph.

Fact 1.

The share of GDP per capita, as well as GDP, fell 4.68 times (i.e., by 468%) as a result of the transformational shock in less than 10 years, which is equivalent to the complete collapse of one type of economy and a jump-like transformation into a new economy (see Figure 2).

Table 1. Shows numeric data at constant prices in 2015 expressing values of GDP per capita in 1965-2022, in thousand US dollars, and Table N 2 shows GDP values calculated under the same terms. In this case, it is not necessary to represent the GDP diagram apart, as it practically repeats the GDP diagram per capita.

Table 1. Georgia. GDP per capita (1965-2022.)
(at constant prices in 2015, in thousands of US dollars)

1965	**1796,1**	1980	**3965,3**	1995	**1033,0**	2010	**3100,7**
1966	**1909,1**	1981	**4137,0**	1996	**1191,2**	2011	**3356,9**
1967	**2009,1**	1982	**4184,2**	1997	**1359,4**	2012	**3597,1**
1968	**2079,7**	1983	**4326,0**	1998	**1436,7**	2013	**3738,6**
1969	**2158,7**	1984	**4522,0**	1999	**1508,6**	2014	**3902,5**
1970	**2395,6**	1985	**4704,1**	2000	**1566,5**	2015	**4014,1**
1971	**2429,4**	1986	**4181,3**	2001	**1667,5**	2016	**4128,3**
1972	**2473,2**	1987	**4300,5**	2002	**1774,6**	2017	**4327.6**
1973	**2610,5**	1988	**4494,7**	2003	**1984,2**	2018	**4539,0**
1974	**2815,8**	1989	**4160,4**	2004	**2112,2**	2019	**4773,3**
1975	**3001,4**	1990	**3546,1**	2005	**2329,5**	2020	**4447,6**
1976	**3161,6**	1991	**2778,3**	2006	**2563,5**	2021	**4931,7**
1977	**3356,7**	1992	**1519,0**	2007	**2901,1**	2022	**5424,6**
1978	**3585,0**	1993	**1065,7**	2008	**2980,3**		_
1979	**3821,0**	1994	**969,7**	2009	**2837,1**		_

Source: World Bank national accounts data. GDP per capita (constant 2015 US $).
Georgia. (1965-2022).

Relevant numerical data of GDP in Georgia in 1965-2022 are shown in Table №2, reflected at constant prices in 2015:

Table 2. Georgia. GDP (at constant prices in 2015, million US dollars) (**1965-2022**)

1965	**7,044**	1980	**17,70**	1995	**4,812**	2010	**11,741**
1966	**7,575**	1981	**18,635**	1996	**5,350**	2011	**12,61**
1967	**8,,808**	1982	**19,01**	1997	**5,913**	2012	**13,414**
1968	**8,407**	1983	**19,83**	1998	**6,097**	2013	**13,899**
1969	**8,808**	1984	**20,90**	1999	**6,272**	2014	**14,515**
1970	**9,870**	1985	**21,935**	2000	**6,387**	2015	**14,954**
1971	**10,11**	1986	**20,14**	2001	**6,694**	2016	**15,389**
1972	**10,40**	1987	**20,40**	2002	**7,060**	2017	**16,134**
1973	**11,075**	1988	**21,533**	2003	**7,841**	2018	**16,915**
1974	**12,05**	1989	**19,984**	2004	**8,296**	2019	**17,758**
1975	**12,94**	1990	**17,029**	2005	**9,091**	2020	**16,557**
1976	**13,73**	1991	**13,44**	2006	**9,947**	2021	**18,290**
1977	**14,68**	1992	**7,403**	2007	**11,20**	2022	**20,140**
1978	**15,77**	1993	**5,234**	2008	**11,47**		_
1979	**16,93**	1994	**4,690**	2009	**11,051**		_

Source: World Bank national accounts data. GDP per capita (constant 2015 US $).
Georgia (1965-2022):
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD?locations=GE

Fact 2. Economic growth rates are not characterized by any pronounced trends. (table 4)

Table 3. Shows numerical data corresponding to the diagram presented in fig. 4: in 1966-2022 annual growth rate of GDP per capita in Georgia, was expressed as a percentage.
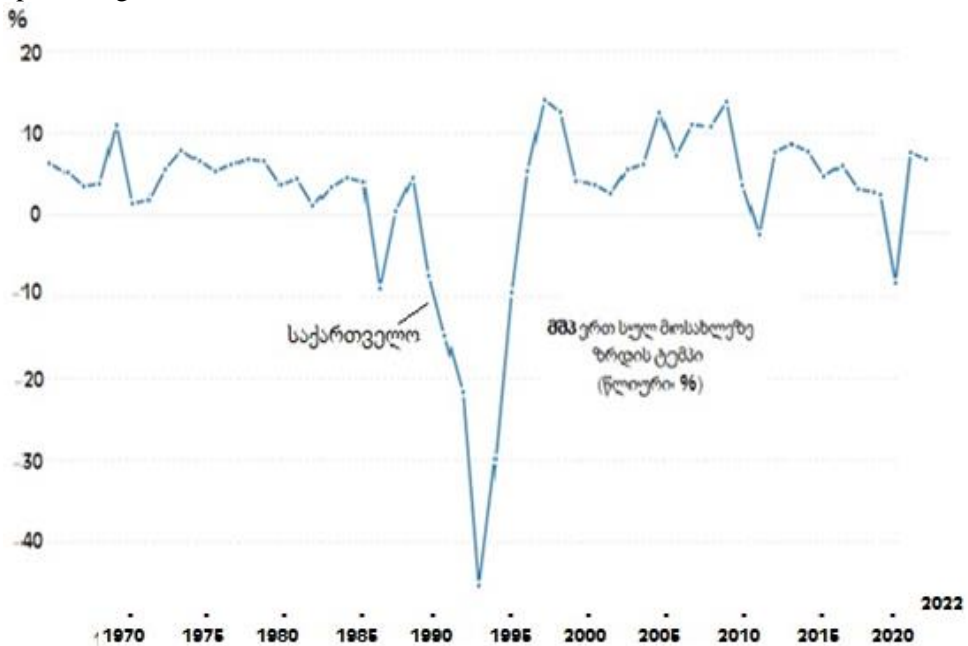

Table. 4. GDP per capita _ growth rate (*annual %*). (1965-2022)

Starting from 1989, the decline in growth rates from (_7.439%) reached its peak in 1992, when the decline was (_45.325%). The negative decline continued for another two years, and since 1995 this indicator began to gradually increase (see Table No. 3). In general, in the world, the amplitude of fluctuations of this indicator (annual growth rate of GDP per capita) from a maximum of +4.476% in 1973, in 2009, i.e. at the moment of the world's biggest economic crisis (beginning with the financial crisis of 2008) has clearly fallen to only (_2.932%), and it was only for short period, while in 2020, under the conditions of the Covid pandemic, the global economy decreased by _4, 3%, which is 2.5 times the rate of decline in the global economy during the global economic crisis (2009).

Table 3. Georgia Growth rate of GDP per capita (annual **%**) (1966-2015)

1965	_	1980	**3,698**	1995	**5,365**	2010	**7,657**
1966	**6,313**	1981	**4,407**	1996	**14,040**	2011	**8,633**
1967	**5,213**	1982	**1,142**	1997	**12,580**	2012	**7,741**
1968	**3,513**	1983	**3,389**	1998	**4,123**	2013	**4,729**
1969	**3,802**	1984	**4,531**	1999	**3,673**	2014	**5,999**
1970	**10,975**	1985	**4,026**	2000	**2,627**	2015	**3,154**
1971	**1,410**	1986	**_8,987**	2001	**5,568**	2016	**2,788**
1972	**1,802**	1987	**0,449**	2002	**6,186**	2017	**4,800**
1973	**5,549**	1988	**4,516**	2003	**12,504**	2018	**4,900**
1974	**7,868**	1989	**_7,439**	2004	**7,254**	2019	**5,200**
1975	**6,591**	1990	**_14,765**	2005	**11,038**	2020	**_6,200**
1976	**5,335**	1991	**_21,653**	2006	**10,811**	2021	**10,900**
1977	**6,170**	1992	**_45,325**	2007	**13,830**	2022	**10,000**
1978	**6,804**	1993	**_29,841**	2008	**3,634**		_
1979	**6,583**	1994	**_ 9,488**	2009	**_ 2,391**		_

source: World Bank national accounts data. GDP per capita growth (annual %). Georgia (1966-2022):
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD.ZG?end=2022&locations=GE&most_recent_year_desc=false&start=1966&view=chart

Fact 3. The Cyclical Unemployment Calculator and the GDP gap change in different directions

As shown in fig. Figure 5, the difference between the actual unemployment rate (u) and the NAIRU (or cyclic coefficient of the actual unemployment rate) u_{cycle} and the GDP gap is negatively correlated with each other. The correlation coefficient is (_0.89342), that is, close to (_1), which means that the correlation between these two values is inverse but very tight, and the slope is (_1.33077) (that is, the amount of increase (change)), _ is negative and fast enough (steep).

Table 4. Cyclical Unemployment Calculator and GDP gap

observation	u	NAIRU	mSp seas.ammend.	mSp pot.	u cycle	mSp gap
1949-01-01	4.7	5.26	2007.5	2011.1	-0.56	-0.18
1952-01-01	3.1	5.36	2423.5	2355.5	-2.26	2.89
1955-01-01	4.7	5.37	2683.8	2638.8	-0.67	1.71
1958-01-01	6.3	5.40	2772.7	2876.5	0.90	-3.61
1961-01-01	6.8	5.51	3102.3	3219.8	1.29	-3.65
1964-01-01	5.5	5.57	3672.7	3648.4	-0.07	0.67
1967-01-01	3.8	5.78	4324.9	4162.8	-1.98	3.89
1970-01-01	4.2	5.88	4707.1	4734.2	-1.68	-0.57
1973-01-01	4.9	6.10	5380.5	5177.2	-1.20	3.93
1976-01-01	7.7	6.19	5618.5	5735.7	1.51	-2.04
1979-01-01	5.9	6.26	6433.0	6327.7	-0.36	1.66
1982-01-01	8.8	6.13	6475.0	6838.4	2.67	-5.31
1985-01-01	7.2	6.03	7469.5	7568.6	1.17	-1.31
1988-01-01	5.7	5.95	8339.3	8415.8	-0.25	-0.91
1991-01-01	6.6	5.82	8865.6	9193.0	0.78	-3.56
1994-04-01	7.1	5.54	9480.1	9717.6	1.56	-2.44
1997-01-01	5.2	5.15	10820.9	10855.7	0.05	-0.32
2000-01-01	4.0	5.01	12359.1	12231.1	-1.01	1.05
2003-01-01	5.9	5.00	13031.2	13459.6	0.90	-3.18
2006-01-01	4.7	4.97	14546.1	14473.7	-0.27	0.50
2009-01-01	8.3	4.92	14375.0	15244.8	3.38	-5.71
2012-01-01	8.3	5.13	15291.0	15734.5	3.17	-2.82
2015-01-01	5.5	4.83	16350.0	16473.1	0.67	-0.75
2016-01-01	4.9	4.75	16571.6	16738.0	0.15	-0.99
2017-01-01	4.7	4.74	16903.2	16992.2	-0.04	-0.52

Source: Ministry of Finance of Georgia

The data needed to calculate the graphs are shown in Figure 5, and the correlation and slope data are given in Table 3.6. I would like to note that the table is abbreviated and the data only corresponds to the observation dates indicated in the picture. The complete table includes annual data with a quarterly breakdown.
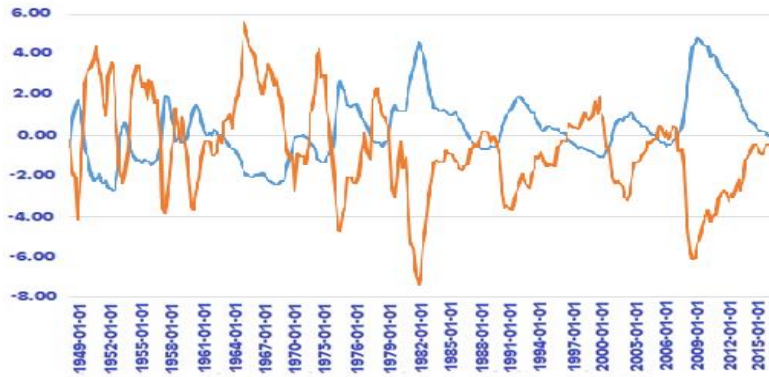
Fig.5. Cyclical Unemployment Calculator and GDP gap

Obviously, this situation is pushing macroeconomic policymakers and researchers to a clearer presentation of the problems and a deeper understanding of the causes of unemployment. In these studies, the fact that a significant part of the Georgian economy operates in the "shadow economy" mode requires caution, and the study of the mentioned issue is based only on official statistics.

Fact 4.

The growth rate of real GDP is determined mainly by the growth of physical capital and total factor productivity (productivity, or birth rate). The contribution of an increase in the number of people employed (that is, the labor force) to real GDP growth is mostly negative, but the trend is not clear.

Fig.6 shows the contribution of individual facts of production to economic growth (i.e. in real GDP), which is built on the basis of the data given in Table 4. The following designations are used here: g -is the growth rate of real GDP (total); $g\_K = g\_Kp + g\_KG$ is the contribution of the growth rate of physical capital, which is presented as the sum of the growth rates of private capital and public (public) capital.

Table 5. Contribution of production factors to economic growth (real GDP growth)

	g	g_K	g_Kp	g_Kg	g_L	g_TFP	g_pot
1997 QTR. **1**	**8.3%**	**1.6%**	**1.4%**	**0.2%**	**-0.2%**	**7.0%**	**3.8%**
1997 QTR. **4**	**6.5%**	**1.8%**	**1.6%**	**0.1%**	**-0.1%**	**4.9%**	**3.8%**
1998 QTR. **3**	**5.3%**	**3.4%**	**3.2%**	**0.3%**	**3.7%**	**-1.9%**	**5.0%**
1999 QTR. **2**	**3.5%**	**3.5%**	**3.4%**	**0.1%**	**1.1%**	**-1.1%**	**4.8%**
2000 QTR. **1**	**7.1%**	**3.2%**	**3.2%**	**-0.1%**	**4.9%**	**-1.0%**	**4.5%**
2000 QTR. **4**	**7.7%**	**2.7%**	**2.7%**	**0.0%**	**7.8%**	**-2.8%**	**4.4%**
2001 QTR. **3**	**1.5%**	**3.0%**	**3.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.9%**	**-2.4%**	**5,4%**
2002 QTR. **2**	**0.2%**	**2.5%**	**2.5%**	**0.0%**	**-2.0%**	**-0.3%**	**5.7%**
2003 QTR. **1**	**6.2%**	**2.6%**	**2.5%**	**0.1%**	**-3.6%**	**7.2%**	**6,6%**
2003 QTR. **4**	**15.2%**	**3.4%**	**3.1%**	**0.3%**	**1.4%**	**10.4%**	**8.1%**
2004 QTR. **3**	**8.1%**	**3.7%**	**3.2%**	**0.5%**	**-2.3%**	**6.6%**	**8.7%**

2005 QTR. **2**	**10.0%**	**4.2%**	**3.2%**	**1.1%**	**-1.4%**	**7.2%**	**9.1%**
2006 QTR. **1**	**9.8%**	**4.9%**	**3.6%**	**1.2%**	**0.3%**	**4.6%**	**9.4%**
2006 QTR. **4**	**11.0%**	**4.5%**	**2.8%**	**1.7%**	**-1.3%**	**7.9%**	**8.4%**
2007 QTR. **3**	**13.7%**	**4.9%**	**3.4%**	**1.4%**	**-1.6%**	**10.4%**	**7.9%**
2008 QTR. **2**	**8.0%**	**4.2%**	**2.7%**	**1.5%**	**-2.6%**	**6.4%**	**6.4%**
2009 QTR. **1**	**-4.7%**	**2.5%**	**1.2%**	**1.4%**	**2.6%**	**-9.9%**	**4.1%**
2009 QTR. **4**	**-0.4%**	**1.1%**	**-0.1%**	**1.2%**	**2.8%**	**-4.3%**	**2,6%**
2010 QTR. **3**	**7.0%**	**1.7%**	**0.5%**	**1.1%**	**-1.3%**	**6.6%**	**3.3%**
2011 QTR. **2**	**5.8%**	**2.6%**	**1.4%**	**1.3%**	**1.0%**	**2.1%**	**4.5%**
2012 QTR. **1**	**6.7%**	**3.1%**	**2.1%**	**1.0%**	**2.8%**	**0.8%**	**5.1%**
2012 QTR. **4**	**3.6%**	**3.3%**	**2.3%**	**1.0%**	**-0.4%**	**0.7%**	**5.2%**
2013 QTR. **3**	**1.3%**	**1.9%**	**1.6%**	**0.3%**	**-1.6%**	**1.0%**	**3.6%**
2014 QTR. **2**	**5.1%**	**2.3%**	**1.9%**	**0.4%**	**1.5%**	**1.3%**	**3.7%**
2015 QTR. **1**	**3.0%**	**3.0%**	**2.6%**	**0.5%**	**1.6%**	**-1.6%**	**4.0%**
2015 QTR. **4**	**3.0%**	**3.2%**	**2.7%**	**0.5%**	**0.6%**	**-0.8%**	**3.8%**
2016 QTR. **1**	**3.1%**	**3.1%**	**2.7%**	**0.5%**	**-0.3%**	**0.2%**	**3.7%**
2016 QTR. **4**	**2.7%**	**3.1%**	**2.8%**	**0.4%**	**-0.9%**	**0.5%**	**3.5%**

There has been a sharp decline in population over the past 30 years (in 1993, the population amounted to 4,911,100 (the maximum population for Georgia, See United Nations Population Division. World Population Prospects: 2022 Revision. Population, total, Georgia) decreased to 3,718,668 people at the end of 2013 (the lowest population in the last 30 years), the decrease was 1,192,432 people), it remains close to this level with slight excess. By 2022, the population of Georgia amounted to 3,712,502. Over the next 20 years, *the trend of population decline will continue*. The main reason for this, along with the demographic factor, is the rather high migration of the population, which, of course, is caused by the stagnation that has developed in the economy. Thus, the opinion that the higher the quality of life of the population, the more people will be employed in the economy and in the field of research and development (R&D), will not work and cannot work in Georgia due to a decrease in human resources. The importance of human capital in Georgia as an important factor capable of ensuring long-term economic growth and development, was recognized quite early (see Demur Giorkhelidze (2003), (see p. 136)):

"For the development of a modern economy, it is necessary not to increase the means of production, but long-term investments in science, education, and human health."

Conclusion

The macroeconomic facts of economic growth in Georgia over the past few decades have been dynamic. The Georgian economy has experienced tremendous changes, including a huge recession and other negative events. They also note that the trends in the Georgian economy have not yet recovered.

The use of classical growth theories and business cycle models in Georgia requires caution. They argue that the models should be determined taking into account the existing macroeconomic facts.

The importance of the "stratification phenomenon" in Georgia is significant. This phenomenon refers to the fact that some countries experience an increase in wealth and population density, while many countries remain poor. The phenomenon must be taken into account when analyzing the Georgian economy.

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Behavioral Public Administration (BPA):
The Need for a New Field (Literature Review)

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Abstract

Modern scientific literature agrees on the issue that it is impossible to perceive public administration as a separate field. Public administration as a field, by general definition, includes the implementation of public policy and the structure and work of various actors (state or non-state) involved in the implementation process. Due to the voluminous nature of the mentioned field, it is not appropriate to consider them separately, because the organizations involved in the process of public policy implementation are not self-generated structures but each organization relies on human resources. Therefore, in the agenda of the scientific space, together with the research in the field of public administration, there was a need to use the results of the research of behavioral science.

The paper specifically deals with the issue of analyzing the necessity of behavioral public administration as a field, which is analyzed through a literature review. The sources used to analyze the mentioned issue include relevant scientific articles and books.

The purpose of the study is to determine and analyze the connection between behavioral science and the field of public administration, and the effectiveness of their combination, which leads to the broader goal of the study, which should answer the question of the necessity and effectiveness of the existence of behavioral public administration as a field.

The relevance of the research stems from the broad nature of the field of public administration, which puts on the agenda the need to combine the achievements of various adjacent fields.

Keywords: Public Administration, Behavioral Sciences, Public Policy

Introduction

Public administration as a scientific field is wide and voluminous, which determines its complex nature. Based on the mentioned circumstances, it is difficult to perceive it as a separate field. The field of public administration is related to many other fields, but the modern scientific literature has actively begun to discuss its connection with the behavioral sciences.

In the form of a literature review, this paper will try to present such issues as the definition of behavioral public administration (specifically what is meant by the field), how a similar approach is implemented in the state structures of different countries, and according to the scientific literature, in what way the field of behavioral public administration should be developed.

The first chapter of the paper deals with the definition of behavioral public administration. How do different scientific literature see this field, and what do they focus on (due to the fact that the field of public administration itself is voluminous)?

The second chapter of the paper addresses the issue of integrating behavioral public administration into the structures of different countries. The examples of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Japan, and Thailand are given, as well as the example of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as an intergovernmental organization.

The third chapter of the work addresses the current state of the development of the field of behavioral public administration and what will be done in the future, which will contribute to the development of the mentioned direction into a stronger field (taking into account the side effects).

Through the analysis of the issues listed above, it is possible to answer the broad goal of the paper, which involves determining the need and effectiveness of behavioral public administration to make the process of public policy planning and implementation more productive.

Definition of Behavioral Public Administration

Stephan Grimmelikhuijsen, Sebastian Jilke, Asmus Leth Olsen and Lars Tummers define behavioral public administration as "the interdisciplinary analysis of public administration from the micro-level perspective of individual behavior and attitudes by drawing on recent advances in our understanding of the underlying psychology and behavior of

individuals and groups". They distinguish three main components from the mentioned definition: "(1) individuals and groups of citizens, employees, and managers within the public sector are the unit of analysis; (2) it emphasizes the behavior and attitudes of these people; and, most importantly, (3) it does so by integrating insights from psychology and the behavioral sciences into the study of public administration" (Grimmelikhuijsen, Jilke, Olsen, & Tummers, 2016).

Three levels of analysis of the main component of network governance, networks, are distinguished: community, network and organization/participants (Provan & Milward, 2001). Psychological theories can be applied to participant level issues of cooperation and competition, as well as how and why people cooperate in networks, accountability, or why cooperation fails. In the mentioned paper, the authors cite the example of Canadian-American psychologist Philip Tetlock (1983), who carried out experiments and showed how individuals engage in more complex information processing and elaborate justifying behavior if there is a hostile audience. Consequently, these theories can also be applied to public organizations that often operate in a hostile media environment (Grimmelikhuijsen, Jilke, Olsen, & Tummers, 2016).

American political scientist Herbert Simon (1916-2001) is associated with the analysis of the relationship between behavioral and administrative sciences. His 1947 book "Administrative Behavior: a Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organizations" discusses the complex nature of decision-making and how administrative science should be closely related to the logic and psychology of human choice (Simon, 1947).

In his conceptual work, Sebastian Jilke discusses the issue of addressing the so-called "big questions". According to him, public administration is not a move towards studying narrow issues with greater precision, but a unique opportunity to assess broader institutional changes at the individual level, where, on the one hand, changes in institutional design unfold their effects and, on the other hand, assumptions about human behavior are made. Studying these microfoundations will allow public administration scholars to clearly assess the "Big Questions" at the individual level by building a cumulative evidence base through research programs that embedded in the "Big Questions". Consequently, Herbert Simon's vision of public administration as a design science would be compatible with Dwight Waldo's ambition to understand the big questions about normative values and larger social change (Jilke, 2016).

As can be seen from the definitions in the scientific literature, due to the fact that the field of public administration itself is voluminous, it is impossible to focus on a specific issue of administration when defining behavioral public administration, because public administration includes the

issue of both organizational culture and organizations (actors) or individuals involved in the planning and implementation of public policy. One thing that unites any definition is the issue that requires the application of the findings of the behavioral sciences to the field of public administration, a combination of these two fields, because any process of public administration is created by individuals and the whole process is based on their internal or external behavioral aspects.

Implementation of the field in practice

In 2010, the Behavioral Insights Team (BIT) ("Nudge Unit") - social purpose corporation (SPC) was founded in United Kingdom. Initially, it was formed as part of the Prime Minister's Office, and from 2021 it was transferred to the ownership of the innovation charity Nesta (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts). BIT has conducted hundreds behaviorally informed field experiments with government partners, both in the UK and globally (Bhanot & Linos, 2019).

Insights were drawn from heuristics (or mental shortcuts) and automatic responses that affect people's decision making. The team conducted various research methods such as experiments, surveys and more to support their theories and assumptions within their jurisdiction (Antolino & Salonga, 2022).

As mentioned above, the corporation is also known as the Nudge Unit, which is based on the nudge theory. In 2008, this theory was introduced into the scientific literature by Richard Thaler (book Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness) to explain how to "nudge" society to make beneficial decisions with a long-term perspective.

In 2014, in the United States, President Barack Obama established a White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team (It was canceled by the Trump administration). In September 2015, SBST published its first annual report detailing the results of initial projects that drew on behavioral insights. These projects have helped promote retirement security, expand college affordability, connect workers and small businesses to economic opportunities, improve health outcomes, and increase program integrity and government efficiency (Congdon & Shankar, 2015).

The Innovation Lab (The Human Experience Lab – this name was never officially sanctioned) started as a small design thinking unit of the Public Services Division (PSD) of the Prime Minister's Office in Singapore in 2012. Their main task was to create a public service that puts citizens at the center of all policy-making processes (Lau, 2019).

The Behavioral Sciences Team (BEST) was established in 2017 under the Ministry of Environment of Japan to apply insights and knowledge from behavioral science to government policies and strategies. The organization

collaborates with academia, industry, central and local government agencies and other stakeholders. Local authorities participated in seminars, lectures, trainings and other programs conducted by BEST. Among the local governments in Japan, the City of Yokohama was the first to establish in 2019 the Yokohama Behavioral Insights and Design Team, the first local government to be recognized by BEST and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Human Behavior (HuB) council, which is a public-private partnership, was also established to address social issues through human behavior perspective (Antolino & Salonga, 2022).

The government of Thailand established the Behavioral Science Research Institute (BSRI) (Srinakharinwirot University) in 1975 to address social issues by creating models and insights that are relevant to Thais. In 1984, the institute started offering the Master's Degree Program in Applied Behavioral Science Research. Later, this program was extended to a Doctoral Degree in the same discipline. The program began accepting students in 1994 (Behavioral Science Research Institute , 2007).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Bank both now have in-house behavioral science units, while New South Wales, Washington, DC, and Philadelphia are among the local governments with dedicated teams. The authors note that less centralized collaborations between academics and policy makers in the behavioral sciences are on the rise, and that more academics are seeking government partners and vice versa (Bhanot & Linos, 2019).

As can be seen from the given examples, both European countries and the United States of America, as well as Asian countries, are working on integrating behavioral public administration into the public policy process. The approach that unites each state's organization is their aim to improve the process of public policy planning and implementation, to be more adapted to the local social context, which ultimately creates an opportunity to implement productive public policy. Given that the field creates opportunities to take into account local contexts, such a situation emphasizes the possibility of extending the practicality of the field of behavioral public administration to all cultures and countries.

The direction of development of the BPA field

Stephan Grimmelikhuijsen, Sebastian Jilke, Asmus Leth Olsen and Lars Tummers distinguish 4 principles in the direction of combining public administration and psychology: (1) extending behavioral public administration to more public administration topics, (2) methodological advancement (development of other research methods, such as functional magnetic reasoning imaging, scale development, diary studies, field experiments, laboratory experiments), (3) strengthening behavioral public

administration as a mature subfield, and (4) increasing value for public administration practice (The question of performance of public institutions - A behavioral approach can provide evidence of what should or should not be done to improve perceived performance. For example, citizens' negative attitude towards the government is not only the result of bad performance, but may also be due to unconscious negative bias) (Grimmelikhuijsen, Jilke, Olsen, & Tummers, 2016).

According to the authors, it is important to develop interdisciplinary approaches, which includes collaboration between academics, the PhD program in public administration and the department of psychology. Two-Way Street - Active contribution of public administration to psychology by emphasizing psychological processes between citizens and political actors (Grimmelikhuijsen, Jilke, Olsen, & Tummers, 2016).

In this direction, it is important to use a behavioral approach to structure performance systems in government agencies, to understand how information is shared between government units, or to build trust in resident-state interactions (Bhanot & Linos, 2019).

Non-experimental behavioral science can be used to examine how political appointees negotiate with internal and external stakeholders, how they introduce new legislation that may have a cost today but will bring benefits tomorrow, or at least how public sector employees understand their roles (Bhanot & Linos, 2019).

One of the strengths of the field is its ability to identify new topic areas for research by drawing academic researchers out of their traditional comfort zones (eg, on-campus behavioral research labs or theorizing in their office) and into the real world. By doing so, the field has the potential to foster methodological innovation, encourage academics to explore new and richer data sets, link qualitative and ethnographic research with administrative findings, and identify new thematic areas for scholarly inquiry (Bhanot & Linos, 2019).

With increased realism seeing individual behavior will improve the ability to predict behavior and devise policies (IWASA & DE ALMEIDA, 2020).

Anthony M. Bertelli and Norma M. Riccucci focus on research methods that should be used in the field of behavioral public administration and on the major drawbacks of the field. In their opinion, Considering BPA as a subfield of public administration is perhaps questionable and certainly premature. The subfield cannot be determined using experimental or other methods. BPA experiments are usually not focused on theory, they provide less useful information on politics and management and they fail to capture the significance of politics and institutions and, thus, are only weakly integrated into the scholarly literature of public administration. The

experiment has limitations that need to be re-evaluated for public administration and it must coexist with non-experimental methods (Bertelli & Riccucci, 2022).

Paul Nyray A. Antolino and Ma. Regina M. Salonga's research framework includes five important components of a behavioral approach to Public Administration. The first component of this framework is behavioral science that studies how individuals make decisions and behave in a complex environment. The second component is public administration. The third component is Behavioral Public Administration and Governance Indicators, the measuring indicators of which are: (a) political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, (b) voice and accountability, (c) government effectiveness, (d) the rule of law, (e) regulatory quality and (f) control of corruption. The fourth component is Application of Behavioral Science in the Subfields of Public Administration and the fifth component is Future of Behavioral Approach to Public Administration (Antolino & Salonga, 2022).

Conclusion

Scientific literature agrees on the issue that it is impossible to perceive any field separately, therefore, the mentioned approach also applies to the field of public administration. Public administration and in general, any process is based on individuals, their interaction and internal and external perceptions, therefore the issue of combining behavioral sciences and public administration has been actively placed on the agenda of scientific literature. The paper, through three chapters, tried to answer a number of important issues, which include, first of all, the question of the definition of behavioral public administration as a field.

The definition of behavioral public administration is different in the form of formulation, but the common line that unites them is that it refers to the need to integrate behavioral science, that is, to consider the psychological characteristics of individuals, to analyze them in the process of public administration.

The second chapter is devoted to the issue of implementing behavioral public administration in practice, which can be said that the example of each country fits the national context (which emphasizes the practicality of behavioral public administration in all contexts), but the common background shows that the United States of America and Europe, as well as Asian countries, see the need for the development of this field.

Finally, an important issue is how the scientific literature sees the development of behavioral public administration as a field. Both fields (behavioral sciences and public administration) are so voluminous that in the process of combining there is a need to consider many issues, such as research methods (limits of experimentation), the issue of studying psychological

conditions at the level of individuals and guiding the process of public administration based on this information.

In conclusion, it can be said that, as can be seen from the analysis of the scientific literature, the policy process is complex and due to the fact that its driving force is individuals, the mentioned situation reflects the necessity of the existence of behavioral public administration as a field. To this day, the mentioned issue has controversial topics, how to combine the two fields, which the scientific space is actively working on.

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The Influence of Online Platforms on Decision-Making Process and Behavioural Traits of International Travelers

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Abstract

Marketing communications in the international travel and hospitality industry greatly depend on online platforms. Various goals can be achieved by using digital technologies: advertising, PR, sales, branding, customer relationship management (CRM), data analytics, and online reputation management (ORM). At the same time, international travelers actively use online channels on various stages of behaviour and decision-making process, for different purposes: pre-departure information search, evaluation of alternatives, booking and purchasing services, and post-travel actions. Besides, the peculiarities of Web 2.0 give customers wide opportunities to disseminate their reviews concerning a service. It may significantly impact potential travelers' decisions as opinions of other customers are regarded as more reliable. Hence, digital platforms must be considered one of the central issues in tourism marketing. The importance of the issue has increased in the post-pandemic conditions when competition in the international tourism industry worldwide has moved to a new level. The paper, employing a combination of literature review, observation, and analysis of primary and secondary data, provides a discussion and comprehensive analysis of various aspects of using online platforms for marketing purposes: opportunities, decision-making process under the influence of online platforms, behaviour peculiarities of international travelers, and strategies for using online channels to increase influence efficiency. Recommendations and solutions are presented for managing various online platforms. The conclusion briefly summarizes the issues discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Tourism marketing, Online platforms, Consumer behaviour

Introduction

The internet constantly transforms the tourism industry globally. To a great extent, marketing communications and business transactions depend on online platforms. On the one hand, international travelers use online platforms for making decisions regarding their travel plans, and, on the other hand, tourism business entities use internet technologies to manage marketing communications and other types of business processes. Therefore, the demand for online platforms in global tourism is increasingly high. According to World Travel and Tourism Council data, in 2022, the travel and tourism sector contributed 7.6% to global GDP, an increase of 22% from 2021; international visitor spending rose by 81.9% in 2022 (WTTC, 2022).

While discussing the international tourism industry, it is necessary to mention the global pandemic that emerged in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a global economic crisis which is also referred as the coronomic crisis (Papava and Charaia, 2021). Therefore, needless to say, the pandemic caused the biggest fall for the international tourism industry ever, alongside other industries. It has experienced sharply falling revenues and is an economic sector among those most severely affected by the pandemic. The shock affects both the demand side and the supply side (Uğur and Akbıyık, 2020). The influx of tourists contributes to various sectors of the economy, including accommodation, transportation, food and beverage services, entertainment, and retail (Gamsakhurdia and Fetelava, 2023). The absence of these contributions created severe conditions not only for the industry but for the entire global economy. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the imposed mobility restrictions have been unprecedented on a local, regional and global scale (Ioannides and Gyimóthy, 2020). According to the World Tourism Organization data, international tourism recorded its worst year ever on record; international tourism declined by 74% (UNWTO, 2021). With the onset of the recovery of the industry, the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide bounced back after dropping sharply in 2020. Despite the significant annual increase, international tourism arrivals remained below pre-pandemic levels, totaling approximately 963 million in 2022 (Statista, 2023).

Post-pandemic era prompts the global tourism industry to rethink strategies and policies. Countries and particular companies in international tourism are engaged in a new stage of competition where marketing communications and online platforms, in particular, play one of the main roles in attracting international travelers. Companies need to enhance online communications management methodology for increasing their competitiveness. Especially when it comes to Web 2.0 environment and

platforms supporting UGC (user-generated content). In its turn, increased competition is a prerequisite for higher quality of service.

Whilst making decisions to improve online presence, it is necessary to take into account the cultural distinctions of various target audiences in the international tourism market. However, it is also noteworthy that online platforms, to some degree, facilitate the creation of similar patterns of behaviour for different types of target audiences. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to conduct thorough research on the decision-making process and behavioural traits of international travelers. Understanding consumer behaviour will allow a more effective marketing planning process (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2021).

Online platforms provide travelers with various opportunities while planning a trip. They are equipped with detailed information and can get optimal decisions. This is, simultaneously, an opportunity and a challenge for international tourism companies. Online communication has opened an opportunity for brands to talk directly with their users and to know them better (Kaur, 2017). On the other hand, travelers have great diversity in making choices. Thus, online communication platforms management is one of the most important issues in the international tourism industry. It can serve several marketing purposes: sales, advertising, PR and branding. Besides, this type of communication is an opportunity to create expectations for travelers which is an extremely important premise for successful implementation of marketing campaigns and the overall performance of a company.

Consumer journey and behaviour traits in general and in the tourism industry, in particular, is a complex, evolving phenomenon that requires comprehensive theoretical research and practical studies. This is necessary for enhancing approaches in tourism marketing communications on an international scale.

Methods. The primary method employed in this study is a literature review, emphasizing the examination of influential authors' research, international organizations' reports, and other sources. Observation is also utilized as a method, providing insights into tourists' behaviour. The integration of both primary and secondary data, with a focus on qualitative analysis, enriches the study's depth. This way, the study gets a good base as the literature review helps put together what we already know and shows where more research is needed. Combining observational data with diverse literature, the paper aims to contribute nuanced insights into tourists' behaviour while maintaining a robust scholarly framework.

Results. Various aspects of the influence of online platforms on the decision-making process and behavioural traits of international travelers are analyzed; Online platforms are categorized in terms of utilizing them as marketing communication tools; Comprehensive analysis of the following

issues is provided: opportunities of online platforms in international tourism, aspects of customer journey and factors affecting decision-making process, peculiarities of behaviour under the conditions of Web 2.0 environment. The issues discussed below combine unified research that can help practitioners and researchers make insightful inferences.

Opportunities of online platforms in tourism marketing

Online communication platforms are the main medium between customers and companies in today's international tourism transactions. These platforms can serve multiple marketing purposes, including branding. According to introductory features of new technologies and digital marketing, we need to pay special attention to obvious advantages of technologies in branding a destination as a tourism product (Parlov et al., 2016). Furthermore, nowadays, tourists mainly plan their trips online which is changing consumption and production processes in tourism (Castro et al., 2017). Therefore, companies operating in the industry need to base their business models on various online platforms: online booking websites, social media networks, mobile applications, video portals, blogs etc. These platforms may serve their direct purposes, as well as can bring indirect benefits to a company. For example, proper management of an online booking website can also boost a company's reputation and grow a loyal customer base.

While discussing the issue of opportunities of online platforms, it is necessary to focus both on tourism industry companies and customers. For international travelers, digital technologies provide the opportunity to choose from multiple options, diverse offers of service and products, and a convenient process of making decisions. As for companies, online platforms allow them to reach vast audiences internationally and take advantage of the diversity of marketing solutions. Besides, the analytical capabilities of online platforms must be stressed. Customer interactions and processes online are a valuable source of analytical data that is used for optimizing marketing decisions. Last but not least, online platforms can be integrated into in-house software and systems that increase the automation and efficiency of business processes.

Online platforms for booking are one of the central issues in planning international trips for various purposes. One of the main peculiarities of these platforms is that they are owned by third-party entities, which makes it an outsourcing process. Nevertheless, companies still have leverage and wide opportunities to promote their property and increase sales. Online booking platforms get high-traffic users and are a convenient way to attract a specific target audience. To achieve this goal, a listing must correspond to high standards and meet appropriate criteria. In addition, online booking websites should also be interactive by allowing two-way communication (Emir et al., 2016). This is extremely important as consumer decisions and behaviour

largely depend on impressions from interactions with potential service providers (hotels, airline companies, tourism agencies etc).

Various marketing objectives can be achieved by using social media platforms. For example, raising brand awareness, advertising, branding, CRM (customer relationship management), PR, content marketing strategies, data analytics, audience segmentation and even sales. Social media is a quick and effective way to increase public opinion, awareness, loyalty and confidence (Meladze and Olkishvili, 2018). The multifunctionality of social media in marketing objectives makes this platform one of the most powerful tools for reaching the right audience by spreading the right message, at the right time and place. In addition, by collecting consumer information and observing their online behaviour, it is possible to process valuable data and use it for planning future marketing campaigns. Another advantage of social media in terms of marketing communications is that it has no time and geographic boundaries which is one of the best ways to establish long-lasting communication with customers globally.

Mobile application is another powerful tool in modern marketing communications. Similar to social media, it can serve multiple purposes. The opportunity for companies and customers to maintain constant communication regardless of location is one of the main advantages of mobile applications. This feature is one of the most important opportunities when it comes to travel and leisure. Mobile applications, alongside other functions, can serve as a mobile version of transport ticket sales websites, flight booking websites and other travel-related services. In this case, similar to hotel booking platforms, the process is often outsourced. This is both an opportunity and a challenge for tourism industry companies. They often engage in tough competition on these platforms. However, this is also an opportunity to become visible to vast audiences of potential customers. Nonetheless, tourism companies can use their own mobile applications and manage them for various purposes: CRM, sales, loyalty programs etc.

Websites and blogs can be considered to be one of the main online platforms for international tourism companies. They can serve a high number of purposes: sales, PR, branding, CRM, PR, data analytics etc. The biggest advantage of these platforms is that they are owned media and companies have full control over them, unlike booking platforms. However, additional efforts and resources are necessary to attract traffic on these platforms. This may turn out to be a challenging task, especially for small companies and in conditions of high competition.

One of the characteristic features of international travelers' behaviour is to visit video portals and watch content related to intended destinations. This may have an immense impact on the decision-making process and various stages of their behaviour. In conditions of Web 2.0 environment, often

travelers are independent content creators who produce quality content that may attract millions of viewers as potential travelers. In the context of travel YouTubers, it is essential to develop a positive attitude. This positive attitude that users can develop towards travel YouTubers over time can become a behaviour, better to say, a feeling of loyalty towards them. (Sarmiento Guede et al., 2021). Companies often have no control over this type of content. However, they can create and manage owned video channels and use content marketing strategies for reaching various marketing goals. This type of communication requires significant investments and long-lasting periods for reaching the intended marketing results.

Digital maps and services like Google My Business or Bing Places For Business are other important online platforms in international tourism marketing. They combine various services and opportunities: direct communication, visual content sharing, business information, customer reviews and location information. Travelers searching for information about various tourism services often get results from these platforms on the highest positions of SERPs (search engine results pages). Hence, it is extremely important to manage this medium properly as it has the potential to attract vast audiences of valuable potential customers.

By using the above-mentioned online platforms, various tourism products and services can be promoted: accommodation, transportation, thematic tours, gastronomy, attraction destinations etc. Each of these services and products require specific marketing approaches. Therefore, tourism industry companies need to select appropriate platforms for each of them. This is one of the necessary conditions to influence customers' decision-making process effectively.

Decision-making process through online platforms

Since products related to travel and leisure are categorized mostly as specialty products, customers may go through every stage of purchase behaviour: need recognition, information search, alternatives evaluation, purchase and post-purchase behaviour. All of these stages can be carried out online. For example, advertising on social media may prompt a potential customer to decide on spending their holiday in a particular foreign country, search engines help them find the necessary information on various aspects of a trip, video content can help choose a desired destination from several options, online booking websites and other types of platforms can be used for buying necessary products and services (accommodation, airline tickets, tours etc.) and finally, mobile applications can be used to write reviews on different platforms after the completion of a trip. Hence, it is obvious that as tourism has become a global industry, employing sophisticated marketing and consumer research, tourists are ever more experienced and empowered. It is

reasonable to assume that tourist decision-making processes have also evolved (McCabe et al., 2015).

Many factors affect tourists' travel decisions, which include motivation and purpose, psychological expectations, the type of destination and the characteristics of different tourism activities is the main factor affecting the travel decisions (Liu et al., 2015). Since travel and leisure are mostly emotional experiences, it is expedient to infer that the decision-making process at every stage is affected predominantly by emotional factors. However, rational factors play an important role as well. Especially when it comes to prices, accommodation amenities, service packages, catering etc. Therefore, the decision-making process through online platforms is a complex phenomenon in the tourism industry. Besides, various external factors may significantly influence the process. For example, stereotypes, general reputation and image of a destination, environmental conditions and political situation in a country or region. As a result, the final decision on almost every aspect of a trip is a result of thorough consideration and detailed evaluation.

The decision-making process online may have specific characteristics depending on the purpose and type of a trip. There are diverse trip purposes with their own unique features: leisure, cultural, business, eco-tourism, educational, medical, wellness, sports, camping, wildlife, enotourism etc. One of the most obvious differences between these types of trips is the duration of stay in a destination country. Respectively, the peculiarities of the usage of online platforms in decision-making stages may drastically differ. In some cases, rational motivations and factors may have a bigger influence on decisions, rather than emotional factors. However, it would be incorrect if we attribute influencing factors solely to emotional or rational determinants. Decision-making process is a combination of numerous psychological aspects: internal and external factors, emotional and rational motivations.

The consideration stage of the decision-making process online is greatly influenced by the opinions of people who have already experienced service in reality. Online reviews have an immense impact on decisions and behaviour of potential travelers. 95% of travelers read seven reviews before making a booking, leisure travelers spend an average of 30 minutes reading reviews before making a booking (Pridham, 2023). This feature of the Web 2.0 environment is a factor that significantly determines decisions concerning almost all types of trips. It is noteworthy that there are two main types of reviews on the Internet: reviews by consumers and reviews by professional editors. Consumer reviews may include critical information that hotels are reluctant to reveal to the public (Zhao et al., 2015). Therefore, customer satisfaction is the most important prerequisite for maintaining efficient marketing communications in the international tourism industry.

Many websites allow travelers to rate a travel service by giving scores. This is a way for customers to express their satisfaction level. As a result, the average score for service becomes the indicator of service quality. Thus, internet platforms prompt the tourism industry to focus foremostly on quality of service. Each customer may turn out to be an extremely influential factor in other potential travelers' decisions. In the conditions of the global network, it has no boundaries and each review or score given is transparent and public for everyone. Positive experience and impressions are the foundation for a loyal customer base and high CLV (customer lifetime value).

Hotels, airline companies and other players in the tourism industry can leverage loyalty programs. A loyalty program aims to bind customers to a company and retain them for the long term (Fäs and Zumstein, 2019). Websites and mobile applications integrated into loyalty programs can be a good incentive for potential customers while making decisions. This approach may result in both direct and indirect marketing results; Customers attracted by a loyalty program may turn into recommenders for other potential customers. This type of word-of-mouth can be a strong marketing result. Additionally, it generates positive reputation for a company, which is an extremely important factor for branding and other marketing objectives in the long run.

Loyalty programs and other types of online platforms influence customer decisions mostly in the pre-departure stage. Although, they can be an important factor in planning repeated trips and expressing behaviour after the completion of a trip. Web 2.0 platforms give customers diverse opportunities to express their impressions publicly, which is one of the most frequent post-trip behaviours.

The impact of Web 2.0 on behaviour of international travelers

As mentioned above, various types of behaviour can be demonstrated online. It means that the reputation of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) is formed mostly online. Web 2.0 platforms play a central role in this process. They possess features that encourage a two-way interaction between DMOs and destination stakeholders (i.e., tourists, residents, the public and private sector) and allow for fast, one-to-many, many-to-many communication (Mariani, 2020). Therefore, Web 2.0 platforms are extremely important for both sides: tourists and companies.

Tourism bloggers are one of the main examples of how Web 2.0 can impact the international tourism industry. In most cases, they are individuals who visit various destinations and create blog posts based on their own impressions and experiences. They often have a large number of followers on various online platforms. As a result, their opinions get high publicity and strongly influence behaviour and decisions of potential travelers. Special

attention should be drawn to video content and vloggers. Video portals, as one of the most influential Web 2.0 platforms, are an extremely important sources of information for vast audiences and potential travelers. Travel vloggers with a high number of subscribers can be considered to be strong influencers. They often have financial intentions and monetize their content. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of the issue of vloggers is that their content is mostly unbiased and has a high degree of trust among potential travelers. However, in some cases tourism industry entities may collaborate with them for promoting various services and destinations. Organizations that use Web 2.0 are more focused on users and try to do everything they can to satisfy them (Noti, 2013).

Activity within social media platforms is another prevalent form of online behaviour. It contributes to forming attitudes and expectations among potential travelers. Besides, social media is the primary platform for most travelers for expressing their impressions during and after the completion of their trips. This is primarily an emotional type of behaviour that serves as a way of individual self-expression. Social media helps people satisfy several important human needs: a sense of connection, respect, self-esteem, status and recognition. Posts about a trip abroad can be regarded as a good way to satisfy these needs. Such individuals, in most cases, are active users of social media platforms. Their posts can trigger discussions that may transform into eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) campaigns in their circle of acquaintances. However, the online environment can enable this type of eWOM much larger publicity. eWOM communication provides numerous opportunities for tourism companies by making it possible to objectively present tourism products and services with minimum expenses, and often with greater impact on sales (Lončarić et al., 2016).

Needless to say, there may be huge differences between individuals while expressing their behaviour online. Behaviour is formed as a result of a combination of multiple factors: personal psychological factors and external environment. Therefore, the degree of intensity of customer behaviour online is extremely diverse. Some individuals prefer to express even small satisfaction or dissatisfaction online. For example, as a review on a booking platform. By contrast, some travelers are reluctant in expressing their attitudes towards a tourism product. Nevertheless, even passive forms of expression of behaviour can have a significant influence on the intentions of potential travelers. The more they travel, the more comfortable they are asking and comparing experiences (Piranashvili et al., 2018). Thus, online platforms allow travelers of various degrees of activeness to disseminate influential information since each review has unlimited reach among potential travelers in an online environment.

The diversity of customer behaviour on online platforms may be caused by the type of target audience. There are a number of criteria for categorizing audiences: income, age groups, interests, travel intentions, travel frequency, cultural groups, and travel planning habits. The latter is important in the context of using online platforms on various stages of traveling: planning, duration and post-trip evaluation online. Some travelers prefer to plan every detail of their trip, while others are more spontaneous. However, in both cases, online platforms play an important role. Even spontaneos travelers actively use digital tools. For example, they use digital maps for orientation where customer reviews and other types of information for various tourist objects are available. Accordingly, it is necessary to elaborate marketing strategies to increase the efficiency of influence on potential travelers by using online platforms.

Marketing strategies for increasing influence efficiency

Strategies to increase the efficiency of influence on international travelers' behaviour comprise multiple aspects. Data analytics is one of the most important prerequisites for making the right marketing decisions: service and product development, segmentation, positioning, promotion, branding, and sales. Since online platforms are a rich source of analytical data, marketers can collect, process, interpret and use it in optimizing marketing campaigns. Various types of online platforms can be used as a source of data: search engines, websites, social media, mobile applications, and video portals. These platforms generate both qualitative and quantitative information.

Online reputation management (ORM) strategy is one of the key elements in data analytics and general strategy for increasing influence efficiency. It allows companies to monitor customer reviews and opinions, which contributes to formation of a company reputation. Accordingly, data generated as a result of ORM is mostly qualitative, which requires comprehensive analysis. Data analytics capable information systems positively influence the development of niche tourism destinations' ORM strategies and online reputation. In turn, online reputation improves competitiveness in the tourism sector (Ardito et al., 2019). Therefore, companies need to implement and manage ORM systems to ensure protection of the reputation, prevent possible complications in PR and even a full-scale crisis.

Data analytics is important but this is just one element in the strategy. A holistic approach must be used where brand values and positioning elements must be incorporated in every stage of the communication process. Considering cross-cultural peculiarities in managing international tourism marketing is crucial. Tourism promotion leads inevitably to challenges related to cultural differences, including the preference for certain product themes

over others, as well as communication styles (Mele et al., 2021). Prior marketing research and market analysis are necessary for avoiding complications concerning cultural differences, including behaviour patterns on online platforms.

When it comes to using online platforms by customers, marketers should consider this process from multilateral perspectives. Besides its primary purposes, media owned by a company can be used as a tool to form customer opinions, impressions and attitudes. Therefore, all the platforms must correspond to user-friendly criteria, including compatibility with mobile devices. Customer relationship management (CRM) system is one of the most important mediums in this process. CRM can also be used as a source of analytical data. In its turn, CRM and other online touchpoints can positively influence brand-building process and PR strategy of a company. Having a strong brand image allows a company to reach various marketing objectives easier. Another role of a brand is that it can simplify decision-making and reduce the risk perceived by consumers (Almeyda-Ibáñez and George, 2017).

The diversity of platforms contributes to multipurpose communication with target audiences. Hence, it is necessary to use unified marketing standards. Each online touchpoint is an integral part of a brand. Every detail of a platform must correspond to the principles of integrated marketing communications (IMC). Even a minor discrepancy between the platforms may cause confusion among potential customers. The tone of voice in personal communication, design, offers, products, service conditions and general values of a brand are key elements for ensuring unified marketing standards. Each online touchpoint may create an expectation for a customer that must be justified in case they use another communication channel for any purpose.

The issue of managing reviews is of utmost importance. This medium has great potential to influence customer decisions and behaviour. One of the most important principles in this process is how reviews are answered as they are public to any potential customer. Personalized replies on every review is necessary to demonstrate responsibility. Furthermore, both negative and positive reviews require equal attention. Demonstrating gratitude and respect toward customers facilitates establishing positive communication. This aspect may determine the reputation and image of a company. Especially, in the conditions of Web 2.0.

Trust plays a key role in maintaining competitiveness in the tourism industry. Tourism marketers may need to place a high priority on improving the level of customers' trust in online environments (Kim et al., 2011). The sense of security at all stages of behaviour is extremely important: booking, online payments, transportation and accommodation. Besides, the degree of compliance between expectations and impressions greatly determines

customer actions. Accordingly, security must be one of the most prioritized positioning elements in the international tourism and hospitality industry.

Proper operation of online platforms is also important in increasing influence efficiency. Both technical aspects and content quality must be taken into careful consideration. Unimpeded usage of websites, mobile applications, social media platforms on the one hand and constant updates of quality content, on the other hand, can ensure a positive user experience. As a result, combination of factors creates a basis for successful branding and positioning policy. To be successfully promoted in the targeted markets, a destination must be favourably differentiated from its competitors, or positively positioned, in the minds of the consumers and potential visitors (Oliveira and Panyik, 2015). Online platforms can be used as one of the main tools in this process.

Conclusion

Competition level in the international travel and hospitality industry has increased in the post-pandemic world. New challenges prompt companies to rethink approaches and strategies, including ways to use online communication channels. In particular, brands need to elaborate marketing strategies designated specifically for online platforms as consumers' online activities have increased significantly after the pandemic. Constant monitoring and adoption of emerging novelties is one of the most important criteria for attaining high standards of service and customer satisfaction. Hence, it is necessary to create business models that incorporate cross-platform management of online channels in a unified strategy. Customer opinions and reviews are one of the central issues that must be dealt with high responsibility. Otherwise, it will be impossible to maintain a high level of influence on customer decision-making process and behavior.

Studying customer behaviour is a complex but crucial issue in making right marketing decisions. As online platforms generate high amounts of customer data, companies can utilize it for multiple marketing purposes. Digital platforms are involved in every stage of the data analytics process: collection, processing, and interpretation. Proper management of data analytics process can provide a company with valuable information about customers. Therefore, travel and hospitality companies need to invest in information technologies and human resources with respective qualification and experience.

The issue of influencing customer decision-making process and their behaviour is dynamic and complex since they are influenced by numerous factors, including factors that emerge on a regular basis. For example, technological novelties and new developments in online platforms. Since modern customers are extremely informed and tech-savvy, they easily get

used to modern digital technologies. Companies need to meet their requirements and expectations by including online channels in various stages of customer behaviour. At the same time, despite platform diversity, execution of marketing strategies through online channels must strictly incorporate several aspects: standardized approaches for every platform, integrated marketing communications (IMC) principles, brand values, and positioning. Otherwise, various risks increase that may threaten a brand reputation, image and even development prospects.

Generally, the issue of consumer behaviour is an extremely complex phenomenon in marketing communications. Therefore, constant observation of online customer behaviour and theoretical study is necessary. In this case, it will be possible to elaborate efficient marketing plans for influencing customer behaviour and decisions.

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Digital Referendum - Effective Modeling of Public Administration in Georgia

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Abstract
State management in its content is a complex and at the same time dynamic process. The second half of the 20th century can be considered the initial period of management transformation and establishment of governance structures.

Governance based on democratic principles is based on a number of fundamental principles, the correct implementation of which is the most important prerequisite for the establishment of democratic institutions. One such important democratic process is the referendum.

In Europe, the practice of referendum is most established in Switzerland, which is governed by a system of direct democracy. Accordingly, in order to solve problematic issues, citizens in Switzerland take part in both regional and national referendums, which are undoubtedly democratic in content and respond to the fundamental principles of modern public administration.

In Georgia, where there is little experience in holding a referendum, the implementation of a digital referendum is the latest challenge, which will be an important step in the way of the country's European integration. The involvement of citizens in the solution of important issues for the state allows the so-called possibility of communication between society and government. It eliminates "black holes" and ensures the reduction of conflicts between them. Of course, all the positive results of the referendum depend on how fairly and objectively it will be conducted.

Thus, one of the important challenges of the digitalization of the public administration of Georgia is the digital referendum, the implementation and development of which is an effective step on the way of the state development of Georgia and as a result ensures the acceleration of the country's institutional and European integration processes.

In the era of digital governance, it is necessary to develop new approaches to state intervention in all spheres of public life and public service delivery systems in order to optimally respond to the needs of citizens. Analysis and comparison methods are mainly used in the work, proposals are given in the direction of improving the provision of public services in connection with the electronic referendum.

Keywords: Public management, Digital Transformation of Management, Referendum, Digital Referendum

Introduction

The institution of direct democracy has recently attracted more attention from around the globe. The most popular form of direct democracy is a referendum, which entails a nationwide vote of the populace to pass legislation or settle problems of public concern. It is evident that the active integration of Internet technologies into the voting system is intended to increase electoral activity and draw citizens into politics given the high hopes placed on immediate (i.e., direct) democracy in the areas of local self-government and the growth of civil society. In the age of information technology, the emergence and implementation of electronic voting seems to be a rather natural thing. Elections are not the only time that electronic voting is employed; this technology has not bypassed the institution of referendums. The lower organization expenses and quicker outcomes are the key benefits of electronic referendums. (Alekseev, R.A., 2015). In today's world, electronic referendum systems are rapidly developing. For the first time, the issue of organizing referendums in electronic form was raised in the USA as early as 1974 by Peter Parkinson.

Before we discuss the digital referendum, it is necessary to consider the main directions for using innovative technologies in public administration.

Since there is a growing trend to replace traditional public-legal instruments used in the administration process with artificial intelligence, which is still not legally regulated, the implementation of public administration using continuously updated innovative technologies essentially changes the future of a crucial state function—public administration. As a result, it's important to inform current leaders about potential futures for public administration design in addition to making full use of the tools of e-government available now (Alekseev, R.A., 2020).

The development of e-government is characterized by two types of effects, in particular, modernization is always related to progress, and in this sense, it has a positive impact on the public to ensure the implementation of the principles of accessibility, economy, and efficiency of public services. However, the innovative modernization of governance may even have a negative effect, due to questions surrounding the dubiousness of protecting the public interest in the said process, or even the ambiguities in the context of the protection of human dignity, equal treatment, and the inviolability of private life when governing through artificial intelligence (TaganaSvili, N., 2022).

The need to protect the public interest as well as the rights of each member of society derives from the fundamental principles of the legal state. It is these requirements that must be respected in the process of implementing public administration through innovative technologies, and accordingly, the ideological and functional compliance of the "public administration of the future" with the classical understanding of the legal state should be established.

Before the creation of a unified approach to electronic services in Georgia, state agencies provided more or less information to citizens and business entities about the services they offered. In most cases, receiving services required a site visit, often from one agency to another, so it was difficult for citizens to choose the relevant agency and service. (Toni, G.L.A. van der Meer., 2014).

A digital state, the main goal of which is definitely a subject of discussion: implementation of direct power of the people in the country; creation of a mechanism for interaction between citizens and the legislative branch; ensuring control over the actions of the executive branch, ensuring public control over the adoption of all national decisions, improving the electoral system.

The main components of the digital state are: Petitions; Discussions; Referendums; Elections and Testing.
Referendum:
- Any citizen has the right to vote in nationwide electronic referendums using the functionality provided by the system;
- All bills that have passed 3 readings in parliament and signed by the head of state are submitted to nationwide electronic referendums;
- Issues prepared by local authorities are submitted to regional or local referendums;
- To eliminate possible falsification of votes, technologies such as blockchain can be used - after voting, each citizen receives a hash of his vote, a hash of a block of votes, and a hash of the entire vote, which makes it possible to verify the correctness of the recording of each vote and the reliability of the results of the entire vote;

- The number of referendums is not limited, they can be held daily, with several referendums per day (Kopanev, G., 2019).

When pursuing an open access policy, an important condition for the introduction of new institutional forms is the publicity of decision-making and the open nature of expressing one's attitude to urban policy issues. The majority barrier serves as a key element in the publicity of proposed new practices; the approval of the majority is decisive in the process of institutionalization.

Literature review

When pursuing an open access policy, an important condition for the introduction of new institutional forms is the publicity of decision-making and the open nature of expressing one's attitudes towards urban policy issues.

"The E-Governance and Leadership Handbook" discusses in depth the issues surrounding e-Governance in Georgia and highlights the challenges that must be addressed in the future through the introduction of both effective legal instruments and strong enforcement approaches.

E-government is the will of the state to use modern information and communication tools to make the government itself and the services provided by it more efficient, flexible, and easily accessible. E-governance includes:

- Easy access to government information;
- Involvement of citizens through direct communication with civil servants;
- Openness of the government by presenting its activities as transparently as possible;
- Interactivity, opens borders for different urban and rural residents and gives them equal opportunity to access government services online, saving them time and money (Gabisonia, Z., 2021).

John McCarthy noted that the issue was our redefining of procedures as early as 1956 when he introduced the idea of "artificial intelligence," developed by Prof. Which computing techniques could be deemed clever was a mystery to us. Only a portion of the mechanisms underlying intelligence are understood by us. As a result, from the perspective of computer science, the term "intelligence" should only be used to refer to computational abilities that may be applied to achieving global objectives. However, this description is only appropriate for the 1950s of the 20th century. In science, there are three stages of artificial intelligence growth (generation) because of how much its scope has grown in recent years. Three categories of artificial intelligence can be distinguished based on their phases of development: narrow artificial

intelligence, general artificial intelligence, and super artificial intelligence (McCarthy, John., 2007).

Ilsu Cho's article "Digital Democracy and Citizenship as a Form of Democratic Political System in the Information Age," presented at the 52nd ISSS Annual Meeting in 2008, also raises the issue of electronic referendums. In the opinion of the author of the article, mass computerization of the population implies the opportunity for every citizen to use more political information, as well as to have more communication channels that will allow him to convey his ideas to representatives of various socio-political organizations or to his fellow citizens (Cho, Ilsoo., 2019).

A fairly large-scale study was conducted by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) in 2012. The scientific article by Jordy Barrett I. Estif, Ben Goldsmith, and John Turner is devoted to the prospects for the development and conduct of referendums - "International experience of electronic voting. Norwegian Electronic Voting Project", in which much attention is paid to the experience of electronic voting in different countries, as well as the Norwegian approach to such a voting system. Jordi Barrett I. Estif, a professor of constitutional law in Catalonia, has been involved in a wide range of research projects on electronic voting in many countries around the world that actively use online referendum technology in their electoral practices (Sanoff, H., 2000).

The purpose of our article is to determine what means the public sector offers to citizens to get involved in the decision-making process and initiation, what other alternatives the population has to express their opinion online, and to what extent the community itself uses this opportunity to communicate with government agencies and civil servants, to share their ideas.

The European Union has greatly contributed to Georgia's accomplishments, which are the result of a lot of hard work. According to the United Nations University, Georgia is a country at the nexus of the West and the East that, based on the Soviet experience, is a country on the verge of government collapse. In light of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals for innovative, equitable, and sustainable growth (SDG 9), smart cities and communities (SDG 11), and strong and resilient institutions (SDG 16), UNU-EGOV continues to support these initiatives as part of the partnership with Georgia's Data Exchange Agency (DEA) (United Nations University. 2019).

Conclusion

The dynamic penetration of information technologies into everyday life is a challenge for building a specific communication infrastructure that ensures the interaction of city authorities with citizens through information technology and the Internet. Electronic referendums are one of the tools for implementing the publicity of city politics.

Public administration is becoming a sphere where everyone finds their own civic identity. The concept of participation in the implementation of deliberative policies implies not only the formal right to be heard but also guarantees that the interests of citizens will be taken into account when making decisions and implemented through democratic institutions.

The use of electronic, multifunctional digital governance is essential to achieve simple, ethical, accountable, responsible, and transparent governance.

Georgia should start actively and rationally advocating e-government initiatives, working tirelessly for flexible, sustainable, innovative, and democratic public administration, which is necessary for effective and result-oriented governance based on participation.

The conclusion is based on the propositions revealed as a result of the analysis and comparison methods regarding the electronic referendum and the improvement of public services. The mentioned recommendations come from the conclusions obtained as a result of the forum conducted by us - Digital Referendum - effective modeling of public administration in Georgia.

Main findings:

- The problem is that civil servants (especially at the municipal level) do not have a vision of how the public management process can be made better thanks to digital technologies.
- Many people in Georgia still do not have information about the services that can be obtained without leaving home, without spending extra money and time;
- The current version of the General Administrative Code of Georgia (GAC) does not recognize the definition of service (including e-service);
- The new strategy of Digital Georgia has not been updated, in this part it is important for agencies to develop relevant action plans independently;
- In terms of ensuring cyber security and personal data protection, it is necessary to continue to find appropriate funds and train citizens in this direction;
- We face many other challenges in terms of digitalization of services, low public awareness of digital services, especially for older people who may not have the necessary skills (low e-literacy) to work with technologies.
- Insufficient access to internet infrastructure is also a problem. Researches prove that among the neighboring and Eastern Partnership countries, citizens of Georgia (63%) and Ukraine have the lowest access to the Internet.

Recommendations:
- The government of Georgia should take into account all the recommendations given to it by the European Council in the e-mail. in the direction of justice;
- Administrative bodies should show more initiative to place all electronic services on the citizens' portal;
- The "Digital Georgia 2014-2018" strategy should be updated, which includes a number of issues of e-referendum and e-elections;
- It should become mandatory for all agencies to independently develop a long-term "digitalization" action plan.

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Data Availability: All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

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Breaking Barriers: The Role of 'Professional English and Communication' Courses in Medical Education

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Abstract

The present paper explores the significant role of effective English communication in enhancing the physician-patient relationship in multicultural healthcare settings. The primary objective is to evaluate the impact of a specialized "Professional English and Communication" course on the communication skills of medical students at East-West Teaching University in Tbilisi, Georgia. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study included a quantitative survey and qualitative feedback from a cohort of 11 students, both native and non-native speakers, enrolled in the Medical Doctor One-Cycle Educational Program. During the 13-week course, students engaged in role-plays and discussions based on structured scenarios. Findings indicated the high effectiveness of the course, with students rating it as significantly impactful in improving their professional English and communication skills. Notably, students reported increased engagement and comfort in participating in class activities following the implementation of structured guidelines for role-plays. The study concludes by affirming the value of targeted communication skills training in medical education, particularly through practical activities such as role-plays. Feedback also highlighted the importance of a supportive and inclusive learning environment in promoting engagement and overcoming challenges. These findings have implications for designing similar courses to cater to diverse student populations in the medical field. Further research should explore the long-term impact of such courses on students' professional practices and patient

outcomes.

I.   Introduction:

Communication is a critical aspect of healthcare, influencing all areas of practice and playing a pivotal role in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of health conditions. Effective communication between healthcare providers and patients can lead to improved patient satisfaction, better adherence to treatment plans, and ultimately, improved health outcomes. In contrast, poor communication can result in misunderstood health information, increased patient anxiety, and decreased compliance with treatment regimens.

Studies have demonstrated the vital role of communication in healthcare settings. For instance, Stewart et al. (2000) found that patient-centered care, which heavily emphasizes effective communication, significantly improves health outcomes. Similarly, Zolnierek and Dimatteo (2009) conducted a meta-analysis and discovered a direct correlation between physician communication and patient adherence to treatment plans.

Moreover, communication issues have been implicated in a substantial number of medical malpractice claims. Greenberg et al. (2007) reported that a significant number of surgical patients experienced injuries due to communication breakdowns.

Furthermore, effective communication is crucial for shared decision-making, a process where physicians and patients collaborate on healthcare decisions. Charles, Gafni, and Whelan (1997) argued that shared decision-making, a cornerstone of patient-centered care, is fundamentally a communicative process. Elwyn et al. (2012) expanded upon this idea, offering a model for shared decision-making in clinical practice that is heavily reliant on clear and effective communication.

Language barriers in healthcare can pose significant challenges, leading to compromised quality of care and patient safety. Patients who cannot communicate effectively with their healthcare providers are more likely to have misunderstandings about their diagnoses and treatment plans. This can lead to reduced adherence to medication regimens, decreased use of preventive services, increased risk of adverse events, and overall lower patient satisfaction.

Furthermore, language barriers can also influence the therapeutic relationship between patients and physicians, creating a sense of isolation and mistrust. They can prevent patients from fully participating in their care and

inhibit their ability to provide a complete medical history or to understand their diagnoses and treatment options.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of "Professional English and Communication" courses in improving the communication skills of medical students, and consequently, enhancing their future relationships with patients of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Given the significance of effective communication in healthcare and the detrimental impact of language barriers, such courses are a potentially powerful tool in medical education.

They aim to equip medical students with the necessary skills to navigate linguistic barriers and understand the nuances of communication in a multicultural context. By analyzing their efficacy, we hope to contribute valuable insights to the current discourse on improving patient-physician relationships, enhancing patient care, and training future physicians for a multicultural healthcare environment.

In doing so, the study also seeks to provide actionable recommendations for further development and integration of such courses in medical education, with the goal of fostering a healthcare landscape that is sensitive to the diverse needs of patients from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

II.   Literature Review

Effective communication is the cornerstone of good healthcare, but the quality of communication in healthcare varies considerably. Many factors influence this, including time constraints, increasing reliance on technology, and the nature of the patient-doctor relationship itself. Physicians often struggle to balance their responsibility to provide information while also offering empathy and support (Epstein & Street, 2007). Moreover, some studies suggest that the doctor-patient relationship is increasingly shifting from a paternalistic model to a more collaborative one, but this is still not universal and depends on many factors (Emanuel & Emanuel, 1992).

Language and cultural barriers can significantly impact healthcare outcomes. For instance, patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) often report lower satisfaction, receive less preventive care, have worse chronic disease control, and are at a higher risk of experiencing medical errors (Karliner, Jacobs, Chen, & Mutha, 2007).

Culture, which influences patients' health beliefs, medical decision-making processes, and their understanding and interpretation of medical information, can also significantly impact the effectiveness of healthcare communication (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, & Ananeh-Firempong, 2003).

For example, cultural differences may impact patients' willingness to disclose personal information, seek care, adhere to treatment recommendations, or participate in shared decision-making.

Communication skills training is a fundamental part of medical education. It usually involves teaching students how to effectively gather information from patients, provide medical information, make shared decisions, and build therapeutic relationships (Makoul, 2001).

Despite the importance of communication skills, the effectiveness of current training methods is mixed. Some studies suggest that communication skills training improves medical students' knowledge and communication skills in the short term, but the long-term retention of these skills is less clear (de Haes & Bensing, 2009). This might be due to a variety of factors, including the timing of the training, the use of pedagogical strategies that may not promote long-term skill retention, or the lack of opportunities to practice and receive feedback on these skills.

III.   Methodology:

This research employed a mixed-method approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Professional English and Communication" course offered remotely at East-West Teaching University in Tbilisi, Georgia. The course was integrated into the standard curriculum for a cohort of 11 freshman medical students from various cultural and professional backgrounds. The study utilized both quantitative surveys and qualitative feedback to gain a comprehensive understanding of the course's impact.

Participants

The sample group consisted of 11 freshman medical students hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds including the UK, Africa, Ireland, India, Australia, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. Some of the students had prior medical experience or were working as nurses, while others had no or solid backgrounds in other fields, such as psychology.

Course Structure

The course ran for 13 weeks, with four practical academic hours per week. A key feature of the course was its use of role-plays and discussions to facilitate experiential learning. Students were provided with structured role-play scenarios and guidelines to help them navigate various medical communication situations, such as giving a consultation, explaining a case to a patient's relative, collaborating with colleagues to review a patient's case, referring a patient to specialists, discussing end-of-life health care with patients and/or their relatives, breaking bad news to patients and/or their relatives, different context handovers for healthcare professionals, etc.

Data Collection
1. Survey: Following the course, students completed a survey with ten questions that assessed their perception of the course's effectiveness, the quality of its content, the level of engagement, and the clarity and fairness of assignments and assessments. It also solicited their comfort level in participating in class discussions and activities, and their perception of the instructor's flexibility in adjusting the course to meet their needs.
2. Qualitative Feedback: Students were asked to comment on what they liked most about the course, suggest potential improvements, and provide any additional comments or suggestions for future course iterations.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by calculating the percentage of responses for each answer choice in the survey questions. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to identify common trends, experiences, and suggestions for course improvement.

This mixed-method approach allowed for a detailed evaluation of the course's effectiveness, providing valuable insights into students' experiences and perceived improvements in their professional English and communication skills. This feedback can inform future course iterations to ensure continued success and improvement.

IV. Results:
The Survey Questions
1. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the course in improving your professional English and communication skills?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Neutral
- Somewhat ineffective
- Very ineffective

2. How would you rate the quality of the course content?
- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

3. How engaging are the activities and discussions in class?

- Very engaging
- Engaging
- Neutral
- Boring
- Very Boring

4. How often did/or do you feel challenged in the course?
- Very often
- Somewhat often
- Neutral
- Not very often
- Never

5. What do you like most about the course?

6. What aspects of the course do you think could be improved?

7. Are the assignments and assessments clear and fair?

- Yes, very clear and fair
- Somewhat clear and fair
- Neutral
- Not very clear and fair
- No, not clear and fair at all

8. Do you feel comfortable participating in the discussions and activities in class?

- Yes, very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Neutral
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- No, not comfortable at all

9. Is the instructor flexible in terms of adjusting the course content or activities based on your needs or expectations?

- Yes, very flexible
- Somewhat flexible
- Neutral

- Not very flexible
- No, no flexible at all

10. Any additional comments or suggestions on how the course can be improved or what you would like to see in it?

Data Interpretation Clarification

The key findings of this study, derived from the collected survey data (see the list of questions above) and qualitative feedback from the participants, highlight the overall effectiveness of the "Professional English and Communication" course. These findings cover students' perceptions of the course content, their engagement levels, and the challenges they encountered during the course.

Our statistical analysis of the survey data, which includes the percentages of responses for each question, elucidates the students' perspectives on the effectiveness of the course, the quality of its content, their engagement, and their comfort level in participating in class discussions and activities.

Out of the initial 11 members of the target group, only 8 students participated in the survey, leading to varying response rates for different questions. The reasons for this discrepancy may include factors such as participant availability, willingness to engage, or other unforeseen circumstances.

Impact of Additional Guidelines

After the initial survey, guidelines were introduced to aid students in navigating various medical communication scenarios during role-plays (See the appendix). These additional guidelines and structure significantly bolstered students' confidence, particularly those who initially found the course challenging. This marked improvement was echoed in the students' feedback and subsequent evaluations.

In specific examples drawn from the qualitative feedback, students underscored the positive impact of their enhanced communication skills. These examples underscore how the course enabled students to overcome challenges, foster confidence, and effectively communicate in diverse medical scenarios.

V.   Findings

1. The majority of students (75%) rated the "Physician English and Communication" course as "Very effective" in improving their professional English and communication skills (See Pie Chart 1). The

remaining 25% found it "Somewhat effective," indicating an overall positive perception of the course's impact.

Pie Chart 1.

1. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the course in improving your professional English and communication skills?
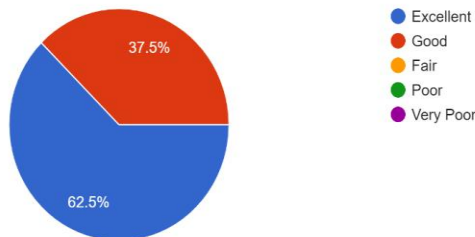8 responses
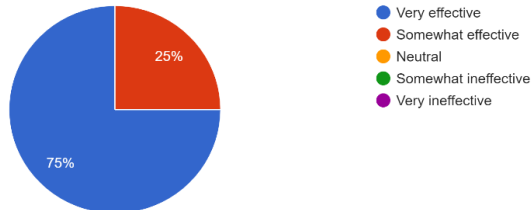
2. Regarding the quality of the course content, 62.5% of students rated it as "Excellent," while 37.5% rated it as "Good." This suggests that the majority of students found the course material relevant and valuable (See Pie Chart 2).
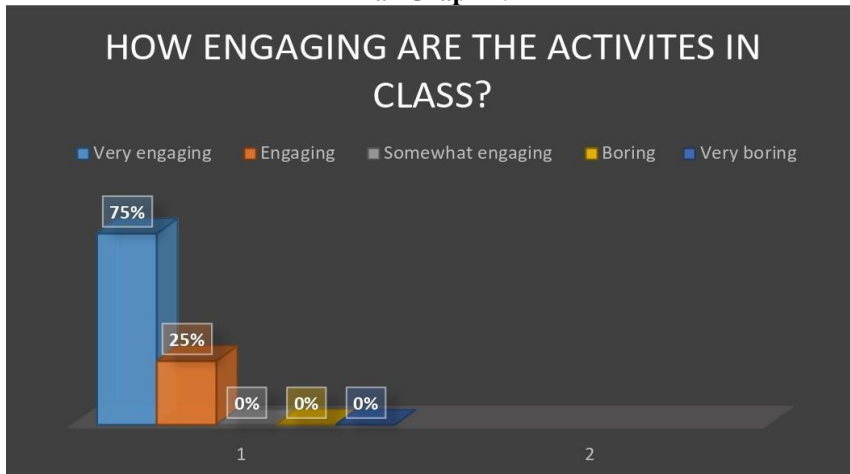
Pie Chart 2.

2. How would you rate the quality of the course content?
8 responses

3. The engagement level in the course was high (See Bar Graph 1), with 75% of students finding the activities and discussions "Very engaging," while the remaining 25% found them "Engaging." This indicates that the interactive nature of the course was well-received.
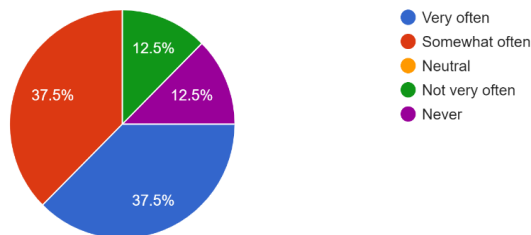
Bar Graph 1.

4. The majority of the students (75%) reported feeling challenged "Very often" or "Somewhat often" during the course (See Pie Chart 3), suggesting that the course effectively pushed students out of their comfort zones and stimulated their learning.

Pie Chart 3.

4. How often did/or do you feel challenged in the course?
8 responses

5. In terms of comfort level in participating in class discussions and activities, 62.5% of students felt "Very comfortable," 25% felt "Somewhat comfortable," and 12.5% felt "Somewhat uncomfortable." This data (See Bar graph 2) indicates that most students were at ease in participating, while a minority may have faced some barriers to engagement.

Bar Graph 2.
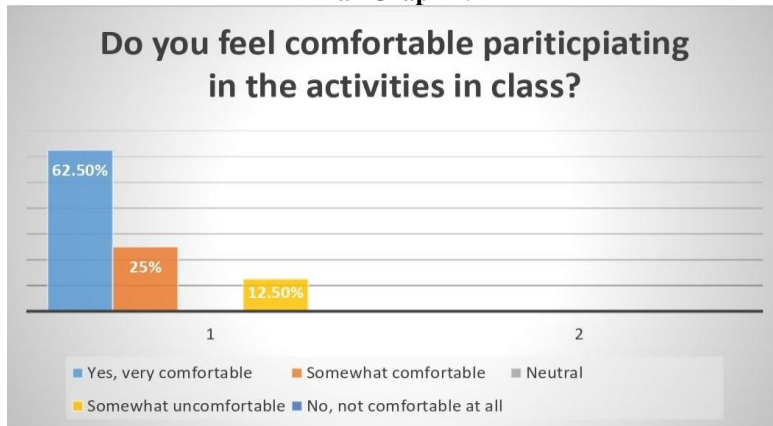
VI. Discussion

The findings suggest that the 'Professional English and Communication' course had a positive impact on students' professional English and communication skills. The course was well-received by the majority of students, with high ratings for its effectiveness and engagement. Notably, the introduction of structured guidelines for role-plays and discussions appeared to significantly improve students' confidence and ability to participate, especially for those who initially found these activities challenging. The case examples demonstrate the practical benefits of improved communication skills in real medical scenarios. Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of the diverse background roles and the factors contributing to discomfort during discussions could provide valuable insights into the potential influence of these factors on the results.

VII. Future Research

The current study lays a robust foundation for future investigations into professional English and communication skills training for medical students. Potential research avenues include:

1. **Long-Term Retention:** Conducting follow-up surveys or interviews to assess the long-term retention of communication skills acquired during the course.
2. **Barriers to Participation:** Exploring the discomfort expressed during class discussions to understand the specific barriers and develop strategies for overcoming them. This could lead to interventions promoting a more inclusive learning environment.
3. **Cultural Impact:** Examining the impact of students' cultural backgrounds on their experiences and perceptions of the course. This could inform adjustments to meet the needs of diverse student populations and enhance cross-cultural communication in healthcare.

By focusing on these specific research areas, future studies can contribute to a deeper understanding of effective communication skills training.

Conclusion

This study underscores the efficacy of targeted communication skills training in medical education, specifically in fostering competence in English language and cross-cultural communication. The implementation and evaluation of the "Professional English and Communication" course at the East-West Teaching University revealed substantial positive impacts on students' professional English and communication skills, as well as an increased level of engagement and bolstered confidence, notably following the integration of structured guidelines for role-plays.

These immediate findings highlight the effectiveness of active, scenario-based learning strategies in enhancing critical communication skills for multicultural healthcare environments. The research has also shed light on the challenges and opportunities within a multicultural student cohort, emphasizing the need for inclusive, flexible, and tailored approaches in teaching communication in healthcare.

The feedback gathered from students during the study provides valuable insights for refining future iterations of the course. Ongoing responsiveness to student needs and adaptability are crucial for the course's continuous success and evolution.

While these initial results are significant, continued research is essential for a more comprehensive understanding. Longitudinal follow-up surveys and a deeper exploration of the factors influencing student engagement and comfort should be prioritized. These future research endeavors will play a crucial role in advancing the development and enhancement of similar courses.

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the immediate impacts of communication skills training on medical students. The progress and findings serve as a foundation for future endeavors aimed at refining and expanding the effectiveness of such courses. The ongoing mission to equip future healthcare professionals with effective communication skills is paramount, with the progress of this study marking a substantial step forward in this academic and professional pursuit.

Human Studies:

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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Appendix:

A sample of scenario-based guidelines and case studies to practice from the course "Professional English and Communication I" implemented at East-West University, Tbilisi, Georgia[1].

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[1] The illustrated scenario and cases to practice were compiled by the author for use in the 'Professional English and Communication I' course at East-West University, Tbilisi, Georgia, 2023.

Scenario III

Cooperation with colleagues to review a patient's case
(Ongoing interdisciplinary team meetings to review a treatment plan):

Preparation Strategies:

1. Inform all team members about the purpose of the meeting and its agenda.
2. Assign a facilitator or chairperson to lead the meeting and keep the discussion on track *if needed*
3. Consider inviting any specialists or experts who may have additional insight or expertise related to the patient's case.

Guideline:

1. Collect all relevant medical records, imaging, and laboratory results for the patient.
2. Schedule a meeting with the colleagues involved in the patient's care, including other physicians, nurses, and support staff.
3. Begin the meeting by introducing all participants and their respective roles in the patient's care.
4. Present a brief overview of the patient's case, including their medical history, current symptoms, and relevant test results.
5. Encourage colleagues to ask questions or provide additional information that may be pertinent to the case.
6. Collaborate with colleagues to develop a comprehensive treatment plan for the patient, considering all available treatment options, such as determining a timeline for implementing the treatment plan, including any necessary follow-up appointments or procedures; considering the patient's insurance coverage and financial situation when developing the treatment plan; consulting with outside specialists or experts for additional input or advice, etc.
7. Document all decisions and action items agreed upon during the meeting, and provide copies to all team members.
8. Schedule a follow-up meeting to review the patient's progress and make any necessary adjustments to the treatment plan.
9. Maintain open communication with all colleagues involved in the patient's care, updating them on any changes to the treatment plan or the patient's condition.

Cases to Practice:

Instruction:
1. Read the case study carefully and identify the key clinical findings and relevant medical history.
2. Identify the potential complications and management options for the patient.
3. Research and discuss the relevant treatment guidelines and evidence-based practices.
4. Collaborate with other healthcare professionals to review the patient's case and develop a comprehensive management plan.

5. Present the management plan to the patient and their family, explaining the rationale and potential benefits and risks of each option.

Case 1: A 65-year-old man presents to the emergency department with chest pain and shortness of breath. He has a history of hypertension and hyperlipidemia. The emergency physician suspects a heart attack and orders an ECG and cardiac enzymes. The cardiologist on call is contacted and asked to review the patient's case and provide recommendations for further management.

Data for Case 1:

1. Key clinical findings and relevant medical history: The patient is a 65-year-old male presenting with chest pain and shortness of breath, with a medical history of hypertension and hyperlipidemia. The emergency physician suspects a heart attack and orders an ECG and cardiac enzymes. The cardiologist is contacted to provide recommendations for further management.

2. Potential complications and management options: Potential complications of a heart attack include arrhythmias, heart failure, and cardiogenic shock. Management options include medications such as aspirin, nitroglycerin, and antiplatelet agents, as well as invasive procedures such as percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) or coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG).

3. Relevant treatment guidelines and evidence-based practices: The American Heart Association (AHA) and American College of Cardiology (ACC) have published guidelines for the management of ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), which include prompt reperfusion therapy with PCI or fibrinolytic therapy. These guidelines also recommend aggressive secondary prevention measures, including medications such as beta-blockers, ACE inhibitors, and statins.

4. Collaboration with other healthcare professionals: The patient's case should be discussed with the cardiologist, interventional radiologist, and/or cardiac surgeon as appropriate to determine the best course of action. The nursing staff should also be involved in the management plan and educated on the patient's condition and treatment plan.

5. Presentation of the management plan: The management plan should be presented to the patient and their family in a clear and concise manner, explaining the rationale and potential benefits and risks of each option. The patient should be encouraged to ask questions and participate in the decision-making process, with the ultimate goal of optimizing the patient's outcomes and quality of life.

Case 2: A 45-year-old woman presents to the primary care physician's office with complaints of fatigue, weight gain, and hair loss. The physician suspects hypothyroidism and orders thyroid function tests. The results come back indicating low thyroid hormone levels. The physician consults with an endocrinologist to review the patient's case and provide recommendations for further management.

Data for Case 2:

1. The key clinical findings in this case are fatigue, weight gain, and hair loss, which are consistent with the symptoms of hypothyroidism. The patient's medical history, including any medications or supplements she is taking, should also be reviewed.

2. Potential complications of untreated hypothyroidism include heart disease, nerve damage, and infertility. Management options for the patient may include thyroid hormone replacement therapy, lifestyle modifications such as a healthy diet and exercise, and regular monitoring of thyroid function.

3. Relevant treatment guidelines and evidence-based practices for hypothyroidism should be researched and discussed, including recommended dosage and monitoring of thyroid hormone replacement therapy. The risks and benefits of different treatment options should also be considered.

4. Collaboration with other healthcare professionals, such as an endocrinologist or a nutritionist, may be necessary to develop a comprehensive management plan that addresses the patient's individual needs and concerns.

5. The management plan should be presented to the patient and her family in a clear and understandable manner, explaining the rationale for each option and the potential benefits and risks. The patient should also be informed of the importance of regular follow-up and monitoring

Digital Services in Georgian Tourism – The Basis of Smart Tourism

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Abstract

The paper is an integral part of the project "Research on the use of digital products in the Georgian tourism sector" which won the internal grant projects competition of Grigol Robakidze University.

Digitalization is an inseparable part of the modern world. More and more companies are trying to refine and simplify both production and service. Digital technologies are helping companies in the tourism industry to expand the scope of their activities, covering a much larger scale than was previously possible. The use of digital technologies helps companies in the field of tourism not only to improve the service but also with its help the company can use online marketing, which significantly stimulates sales growth. There are a lot of essential modern digital trends that those in the tourism industry need to be aware of, and adapt to, if they are going to successfully optimize business performance. The objective of the chapter is to identify digital services in the Georgian tourism sector, determining the level of development of smart tourism, analyze its characteristics, review challenges and opportunities in this direction.

Keywords: Social media, Georgian value-chain, Georgian travelers, Digital technologies, Georgian tourism applications, Smart tourism

Introduction

The tourism industry is vital to the economies of most countries. In 2020, the world faced a new challenge, Covid-19 completely changed the lifestyle of people, which united the world's population. From this time digital tourism is becoming ever-more interesting, as it provides a tech-driven way for people to research, plan, and experience their vacations. Georgia's current tourism offering is oriented toward low-spending neighboring markets and, although there is growth in high-spend global markets, the share is still very small. Although Georgia has seen very strong growth from China and India.

The modern traveler is unthinkable without a smartphone and other digital mechanisms. Everyone starts their journey by searching the internet for information and getting to know the thoughts of other travelers. Modern society is adapted to the field of internet and the internet is the most important source of information for them, so every company tries to adapt to the needs of the market and create an e-marketing and promotion system.

The impact of information and communication technologies on the global economy has changed significantly over the last 30 years. Digital technologies have brought significant transformation to the tourism industry, revolutionizing tourism enterprises, products and experiences, business ecosystems, and destinations. It is essential for the tourism industry to create interesting content using digital technologies at all stages of the journey. Tourism, as a service industry, has discovered the impact of information on tourism experiences. The tourism industry has always embraced the growth of new technologies, such as computer reservation systems (CRS), global distribution systems (GDS).

Digital services offer new ways for tourism organizations to implement their business models and operations. Therefore, stakeholders in the tourism industry should pay attention to the impact of digital services to improve the reliability of their information and services.

However, new opportunities for Georgian firms to capture value are emerging, not only during a trip but also before and after a trip have occurred. Given that many of these activities are digital, there is a risk that value chain actors could rely on foreign firms to provide these services. Value-chain actors are creating value by engaging online communities with shared interests. Rather than focusing on a country-centric message, value-chain actors can monetize digital social interactions by using services such as YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat to engage online communities with a shared interest. Electronic word-of-mouth and other types of user-generated content are fast becoming a widely used source of travel information for internet users.

Georgian value-chain (GVC) actors have not yet responded to these emerging trends, but Georgia's nascent digital services community is well positioned to move into this space. However, opportunities for job creation are

not limited to digital service providers, as more Georgian firms incorporate travel tech and fintech solutions, emerging GVCs will increasingly generate new in-house roles and support functions. In addition, virtual reality and augmented reality have particular relevance in emerging tourism GVCs and present entrepreneurial opportunities.

It is interesting what role digital technologies play in the field of tourism, how it is used in practice and how it replaces pre-existing services. Tourism is about exploring new things, discovering them and of course sharing them. The lifestyle of modern people is overloaded and tense, digital technologies help people to easily plan trips as well as get information about various travel services all over the world.

In the face of closed borders and fears of travel, it is more interesting to study the role of digital technologies in modern tourism, for example famous galleries and museums have moved on to arranging digital tours. We think digital services and digitalization is a topical and interesting research issue today. We will try to touch on all the research points in this direction and find out the importance of digitalization in modern tourism.

Background
History of development of existing technologies in the field of tourism

The development of the tourism industry dates back quite a few centuries, although its active development begins in the second half of the twentieth century. The development of tourism began with mass tourism groups when active travel from the world's highest-income countries began. Today's tourism industry is radically different from the industry of that time, today almost all services are computerized.

Poggi (2019) found, that digital transformation is related to innovation, the creation of new structures, the implementation of a new culture, processes and technology, and starts with the premise that travelers have changed. Customers today are not the same as they were four years ago. They live connected, have new demands and want to be surprised. The search for digital transformation also involves the creation of new products and services, at lower cost and with greater productivity.

According to Zhang (2023) the key measures to strengthen customer demand insight, strengthen the construction of information technology infrastructure, promote the application and innovation of new technologies, and strengthen the development of social responsibility projects are put forward in the path selection and countermeasures.

According to Meladze (2018) communication in a world where we're inundated with advertising and personalized communication, it is vital to build brand relationships; moreover, the power of social media means that today's tourist can tell the world about your destination's shortcomings through

YouTube or Facebook in a click. Thus, the interface between DMOs and tourists has completely changed. No longer is the marketing mix about product, promotion, path, pricing, packaging and push. It is the consumer 2.0 marketing mix based on conversations and context, connectivity, collaboration, creativity and co-operation.

Todua (2018), Todua et al. (2021) found, that social media marketing activity of travel agencies increases consumer's interest and reliability which leads to customer satisfaction. But despite the active use of social media by Georgian consumers, the levels of interest, reliability and satisfaction of consumers regarding to social media marketing, provided by tourist company, are average.

According to Meladze et al. (2018) Social media is a quick and effective way to increase the public opinion, awareness, loyalty and confidence. Nowadays, in Georgia, there are almost no Internet users, that do not use any kind of social media. In addition social media is an opportunity to determine the dependence of different parts of society towards specific products or services.

Sachaleli (2021) found, that Georgian travelers are using international applications more often than the Georgian ones, because they are often traveling abroad and this is necessary for them. But Georgian applications have great opportunities for people who want the spend holidays in Georgia.

According to Letandze (2023) more active involvement by the private sector using digital technologies will increase the number of tourists much more. It is necessary to strengthen the existing tourist facilities in the village with digital technologies, which will help integrate on important online platforms.

According to Social Media Statistics (2023) by the beginning of 2023, there were 5.18 billion internet users worldwide, which amounted to 64.6 percent of the global population. Of this total, 4.8 billion, or 59.9 percent of the world's population and 92.7% of all internet users, were social media users. There were 150 million new social media users between April 2022 and April 2023 – a 3.2% increase year-over-year. As of April 2023, the top most used social media platforms, ranked by global active users, were Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and WeChat. In terms of usage, social media is most popular with users between the ages of 18 and 29. 26.8% of internet users aged 16 to 64 discover brands, products, and services via ads on social media.

It should be noted, that compared to previous years, the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA) devotes more attention to social media and digital marketing. However, GNTA has much more work. More social campaigns are needed, because most of the tourists are active internet users.

Digital marketing tools and travel online platforms worldwide

Digital technologies are actively used in various fields as well as in tourism. Modern technologies give us a lot of opportunities and tools that help tourism services to simplify their activities and at the same time attract more customers.

In addition to a company's own website (93%), social media is the most popular channel (85%) for B2B communication. As for B2C communication Social media is the first 96% (figure 1).

Figure 1. Channels used by travel companies for content marketing
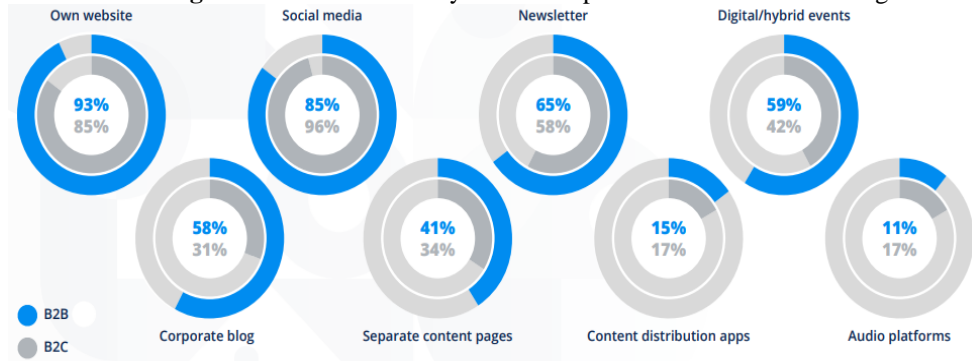
Source: Statista Content Marketing Trend Study 2023

As for social media channels, Instagram and Facebook are now the leaders in the B2C sector, while LinkedIn is still the most popular in the B2B sector (figure 2).

Figure 2. Using social media channels for content marketing
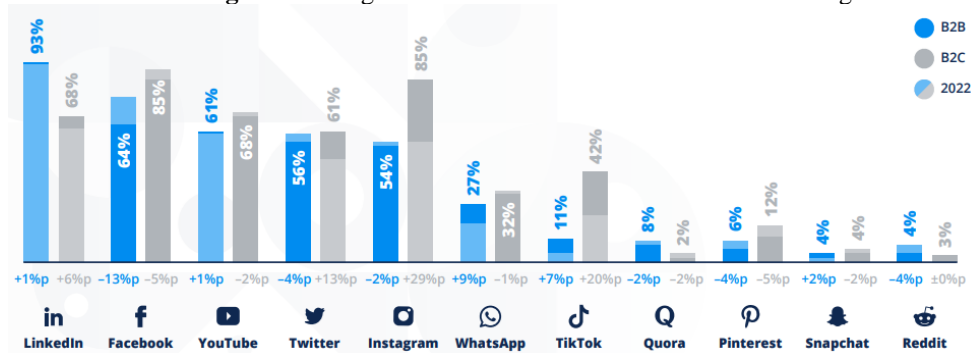
Source: Statista Content Marketing Trend Study 2023

Nowadays, tourists have many opportunities to plan their own trip. To do this, they undoubtedly use digital services. Access to information allows us to book a hotel, buy airline tickets and find detailed information about sights and food, calculate the budget in advance, buy tickets to museums or public transport. All this makes the planning process much easier and more convenient for travelers.

Methodology

The research methodology of the article is based on primary and secondary research data. The research was carried out using qualitative and quantitative research methods to achieve the goals set in the paper. Also, analysis of statistical data and websites of tourist organizations. Within the framework of the article, online interviews and online surveys were conducted with Georgian travelers.

Research Results

The use of digital technologies in Georgia has been active since the entry of world-class hotel brands such as Marriott, Hilton, Sheraton, Radisson and others into the Georgian market. However, the digital elements of self-service still need refinement. We would also like to mention the country's domestic tourism market, which makes almost no use of digital technologies. The level of digitalization is still low in the domestic market of Georgia, which has a negative impact on the sharing and dissemination of tourist information within the country.

Local hotels and restaurants do not have digital services introduced, which has a negative impact on services and sales, in our opinion, a lot of work needs to be done in this direction to actively implement the relevant applications, booking systems and platforms that will facilitate travel within the country and allow more and more people to get information about tourist places and services in Georgia.

The introduction of digital technologies in Georgia is under development, the Corona virus has accelerated the need to introduce digital services in the tourism industry, we hope that over time this direction will improve in Georgia and the domestic tourism market will actively use digital platforms, systems and applications. In order to quickly exchange information between the population and increase the interest of tourists in the domestic market, I think it is necessary to share international experience in this area, participate in foreign trainings and seminars, ensure the involvement of tourism business owners in Georgia in these activities.

There are many online travel platforms available on the Internet. Among them are Tripadvisor, Booking.com, Airbnb, Skyscanner, etc.

TripAdvisor is the largest travel platform in the world, headquartered in Massachusetts. TripAdvisor's branded sites and forums operate as online travel guides that offer users free overview of travel-related content. Founded in 2000, TripAdvisor has become one of the most popular travel and accommodation websites in the United States. In 2018, the website already had around 730 million user reviews and opinions, which included a list of more than eight million restaurants, hotels, rentals and tourist attractions. Due to the growing number and variety of global internet users who publish

reviews online, many modern travelers now use TripAdvisor to choose a vacation spot and get travel-related tips. TripAdvisor conducted a quantitative online survey of 2025 users over the age of 18 in the spring of 2021. The subject of research interest was the use of mobile phones by consumers to get travel ideas and inspirations. 36.5 percent of respondents said they used social media websites for travel inspiration or ideas. In addition to social media, what other ways do travelers use to obtain information is shown in figure 3.

Figure 3. Using a mobile phone for holiday inspiration in the US (TripAdvisor)


Source: https://www.statista.com/topics/3443/tripadvisor/
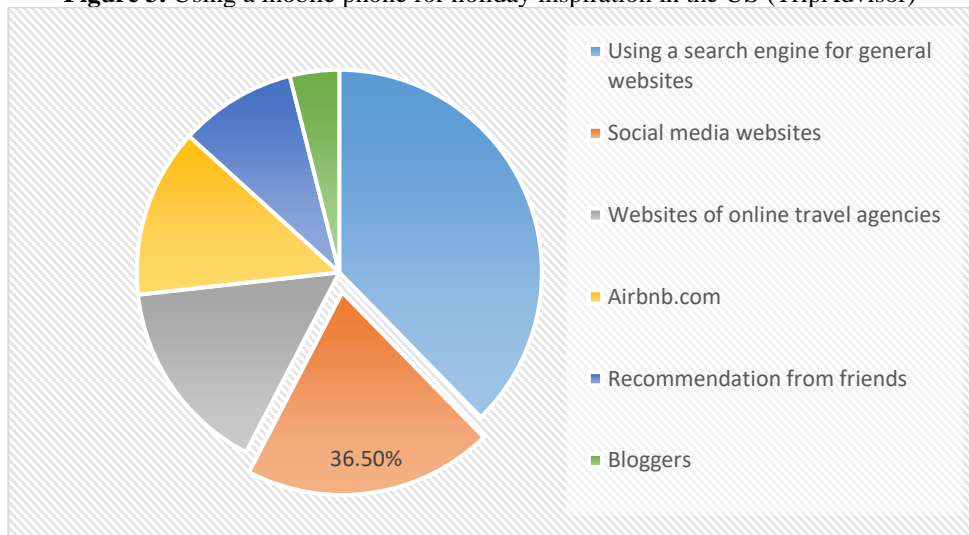
In July 2023, booking.com was the most visited travel and tourism website worldwide. That month, Booking's web page recorded roughly 716 million visits. Tripadvisor.com and airbnb.com followed in the ranking, with around 207 million and 115 million visits, respectively.

Needless to say, Georgian travelers also use various online resources when planning a trip and getting information. There is a popular group on Facebook called "Travelers Club", which unites up to 290,000 users. This group is an opportunity to share information about cheap traveling with each other. We tried to conduct a small-scale online survey like TripAdvisor with a population-based research methodology. According to quantitative research, we should have understood the ways of Georgian tourists in which they search for information when planning a trip via mobile phone. Therefore, to find out whether Georgian tourists have purchased any tourism product using any of the social media platforms. Five hundred people over the age of 18 participated in the online survey. The survey found that 20.8 percent of the respondents use social media for travel inspiration or ideas. It was also interesting to see what other means Georgian travelers use to obtain the information they want, as shown in figure 4.

Through the existing diagrams we can judge that no less Georgian traveler uses social media to plan travel compared to foreign tourists. Also, both Georgian and foreign tourists trust bloggers with almost the same percentage. (7.2% და 8.2%) As for the using of general search engine, most Georgian and foreign tourists make a choice for this option. (69% და 48.6%)

Figure 4. Use of mobile phones by members of the "Traveler Club" to plan vacations.
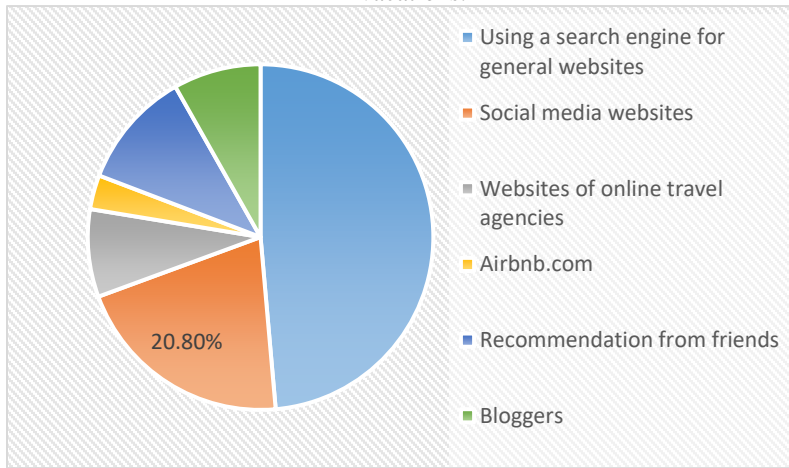
As for the answer to the question, whether any of the social media platforms have the respondents used to buy a tourism product, 47.4 percent agreed with the question, as shown in figure 5. This once again demonstrates the importance of using social media to promote tourism products and attract customers.

Figure 5. Using a social media platform to buy a tourism product by members of the Traveler Club
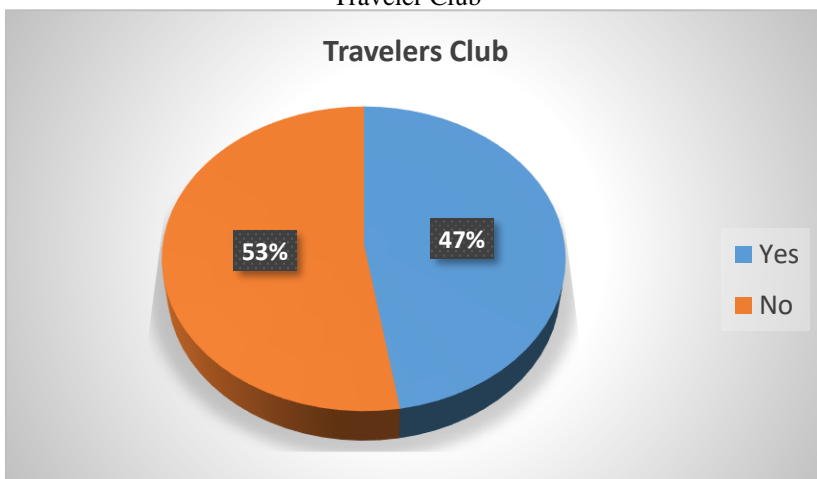
Although this study is not large-scale, it provides a general idea of the importance of social media for Georgian tourists, as well as for companies to see why they should pay attention to social media platforms. Our aim was to highlight the role and importance of social media in the field of tourism. Since today, the tourism business is virtually completely digitalized, the introduction of digital marketing in Georgian companies can bring many benefits. This will affect the development of companies, enable them to easily solve problems, investigate customer behavior, monitor and analyze the number of customers, gain information about competitors, and create a brand image that in itself will attract customers. In order to maintain the pace of tourism development in Georgia, it is necessary to focus on modern technologies and to meet the challenges of the world.

On 22 June 2019 in response to the Russian ban and the possible threats to the Georgian tourism industry Georgian activists together with businessmen and international society have launched the public campaign - Spend your summer in Georgia. Accordingly, it was created public group on Facebook. The campaign aims at boosting the image of Georgia and attracting more visitors via showing the world the tourism potential of country. They have set two goals – to develop and advance the touristic potential of Georgia and, besides, to create an information and recommendation hub for foreigners.

Meladze et al. (2019) found, that the group included around 282 096 Facebook members by August 2019 and it has been only couple of weeks since the campaign was launched. The campaign was started by 5 friends and nobody could think that they would achieve nationwide fame in a matter of days. A little later, the group changed its name to: "Spend 4 Seasons in Georgia" with 389 794 members. Nowadays this group included 389 888, As a result of this activity, was created

website: www.spend4seasonsingeorgia.com and

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/spend4seasonsingeorgia/?igshid=gg3p

Another cases of facebook activities in Georgian Tourism is public group Cheap Travel Georgia. Group was created on 11 December 2013 and now (by August 2023) included 290 377 Facebook members. Closed group National hiking federation was created on 17 September 2012 and included 36 714 Facebook members by August 2023. They have positively impacted on Georgian tourism activities by increasing consumer awareness of the tourism product.

Despite everything in Georgia, social media management did not develop properly. There are no staff in the company who are well aware of social media. Consumers are waiting more activity from companies. They are ready to express their opinions about products or services and share advice with other consumers.

Conclusion

The Internet is an integral part of modern business management. It is unthinkable for modern companies to function effectively without the use of the Internet. In the process of globalization, more and more people are registering on social networks every day and more and more people are connecting to the Internet. Tourism is one of the most in-demand business economics, with a wide range of services, many of which are online. The idea of any traveler about future travel arises from receiving information posted on the Internet. In the past, a large part of travelers paid attention to the experience of friends and relatives to plan their future trip, but today this direction is quite expanded. It is not necessary to have the experience of a relative to get information about the tourist place, hotels, restaurants, excursions there, it is enough to type the desired word in the Google search engine to get a lot of information.

Georgia has long been trying to capture a specific niche in the field of tourism, as it is known Georgia is rich in natural and cultural resources, tourists are very interested in the country, but so far many areas of tourism need to be refined, in this regard it is important to share international experience. The marketing activities carried out by the Georgian National Tourism Administration included the use of social media marketing, among other things, so the administration created platforms where tourists could get information about Georgia. These platforms are really lively, renewable and tailored to tourists.

As for private companies working in the field of tourism, there is still a lot of work to be done in this regard. Five-star hotels have websites as well as Facebook pages that provide full information about the hotel's services, but less news. Consequently, the number of questions and responses is less. Medium and low category hotels have a lot of problems, both feedback and reliability in case of online booking are low, because they use booking.com for advertising and booking physically. Which causes a great deal of inconvenience and dissatisfaction among tourists. This factor is especially difficult when the hotel is located in a mountainous or inaccessible region, when the tourist is literally out. It is also a negative moment when the hotel exists but does not use social media platforms and the tourist cannot get the information about the hotel and may not even travel to the region as he could not find a place to spend the night. Accordingly, the dissatisfied traveler spreads negative information not only about a specific tourist destination, but also about Georgia as a whole, which in the future will have a negative impact on tourist flows.

We would like to mention that Georgian-based tourism applications have been created in Georgia, which aim to create tourist satisfaction, to facilitate the connection of tourists with hotel owners. These applications are:

Expago, Guestme, Audio Guide Georgia, Mountains Resorts of Georgia. The creation of these apps is a positive development in itself, however they need refinement and most importantly dissemination of information so that tourists can find out about the existence of similar apps.

Separately, we want to talk about transport, one of the most important directions for the development of the tourism sector. In this regard, the situation in Georgia is really bad, because apart from trains and buses that connect only big cities, there is almost no other internal communication and online booking system, because domestic transport is generally a major problem in the country, therefore the biggest obstacle to travel in Georgia, Tourists do not have the opportunity to book and buy tickets online.

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Advantages of Tissue Level Implants in Case of Alveolar Ridge and Mucosal Atrophy

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Abstract

In the modern market, there is a great variety of dental implants, which differ from each other in design, geometry, connection type, surface treatment technology, etc. However, the most fundamental and main differentiating component between implants is how the implants are inserted into the bone and how it is positioned concerning the soft tissues. Accordingly, they are divided into sunken, i.e., bone level implants and non-sunken, i.e., tissue level implants, in which case the implant-abutment connection, or interface, is located at the gum level. This study shows advantages of tissue level - implants in atrophy of the alveolar ridge, also studies comparison of bone loss in case of bone - level implants and tissue level implants.

Keywords: Tissue level, bone level, epithelium, milled surface, osteointegration, crestal bone

Introduction

Brånemark's studies mainly reflect osteointegration, i.e., the interaction of the implant and the bone tissue. The Swiss scientist Schroeder, who is also one of the most important figures in the world dental implantology, in the late 70s, got acquainted with Branemark's researches, and He paid attention to the most important factor: the implant, as well as the tooth, which is extracted from the bone and gum, needed to be protected from the non-

sterile environment of the oral cavity. He created a tissue level implant -- an ideal implant that created the best conditions for soft tissue integration. This implant creates ideal conditions for healing. After its insertion, the rupture of the soft tissue connection does not take place during the entire period of its operation. "The soft tissue barrier at implants and teeth"; Berglundh T, m Lindhe J, Ericsson I, Marinello CP, Liljenberg B, Thomsen P; Clinical implants Res 1991; 2:81-90

The height of the supra osseous part in the Schroder implant was 2.8 mm. This part of the implant is made of milled metal. Today, the height of the milled portion of tissue level implants ranges from 1.6-1.8 mm.

During insertion of a gingival level implant, the oral epithelium grows and migrates in an apical direction to protect the suprastructure of the implant. With the help of hemidesmosomes, the connection-integration between the epithelium and the surface of the implant is established. At the same time, in the space between the alveolar ridge and the implant in the neck area of the implant, granulation tissue is formed, which later transforms into a connective-tissue connection. It prevents the apical growth of epithelium. The connective-tissue junction provides a conduit for the soft-tissue complex. It develops on the rough surface of the implant, and the epithelial junction on the milled surface.

Development and improvement of implant systems, implant design and geometry, and implantation methods have increased the demands and expectations for the mentioned procedure.

Progress in medicine is determined by whether we get the maximum result with minimal intervention. In some cases, the use of gum level implants allows us to do just that, especially in cases of alveolar folds and soft tissue atrophy on the lower jaw, when it is impossible to achieve a stable result in time without additional surgical intervention. Influence of the size of the microcap on crestal bone changes around titanium implants. A histometric evolution of unloaded non-submerged implants in the canine mandibula; Joachim S, Hermann JS, John D, Schoolfield, Robert K, Schenk, Daniel Buser and David L Cochran. Journal of Periodontology. October 2001

Figure 1. (Lower Jaw Distal Defect)

Figure 2. (Inserted Tissue Level Implants)

Figure 3. (Dental Implant in Different Layers)
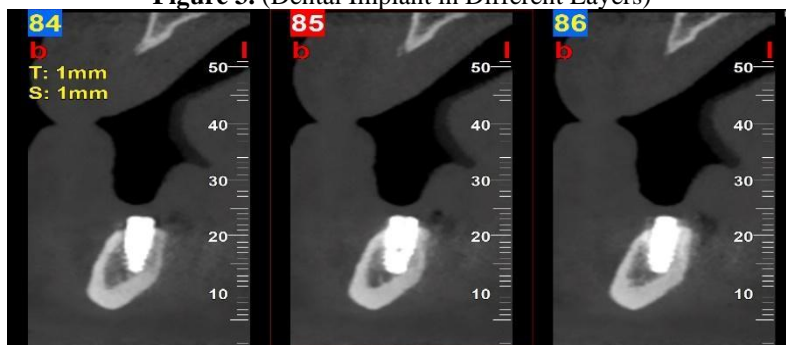
Figure 4. (tissue level implants)

Figure 5. (tissue level implants)

The most important and main component of successful osteo and soft tissue integration is the minimal loss of marginal bone during the tissue remodeling stage.

The results and aim of the research.

Our study aimed to study the marginal bone loss in the mandibular alveolar ridge and soft tissue atrophy using different brands of tissue level implants and to compare it with the rate of bone loss when using bone level implants.

We used different brands of tissue level implants, the height of the milled part on the bone varied from 1.6 to 1.8 mm. Biologic width around titanium implants. A physiologically formed and stable dimension over time." Hermann JS, Busar RK, Higginbottom FL, Cochran DL; Clin Oral Imp Res 2000 "Implant-tissue interfaces following treatment of peri-implantitis using guided tissue. "

In recent years, tissue level implants have become less popular. It, like any other implant, is not a universal implant that is recommended to be used in all clinical cases, however, in those specific cases where there is an indication for its use, this type of implant is truly irreplaceable.

The use of implants at the tissue level is not recommended in the aesthetic area, because over time, due to physiological atrophic processes, a milled neck of the implant may be visualized. It is ideal for lateral segment involvement and limb defects, as well as "all on 4" and "all on constructions.

Figure 6. (Edentulous Lower Jaw)

Figure 7. (Construction "all on 4")
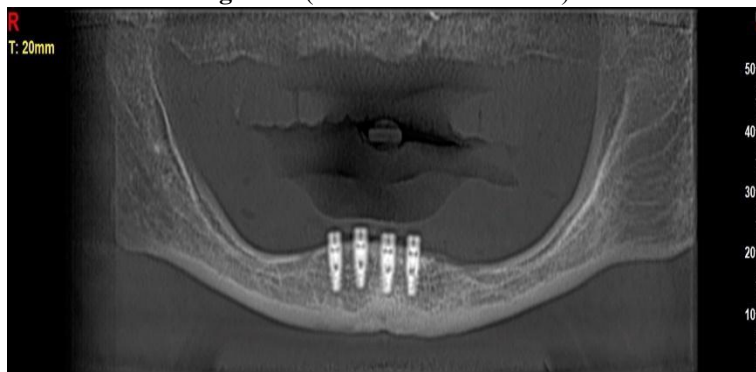
Figure 8. (all on 4 with multiunits)
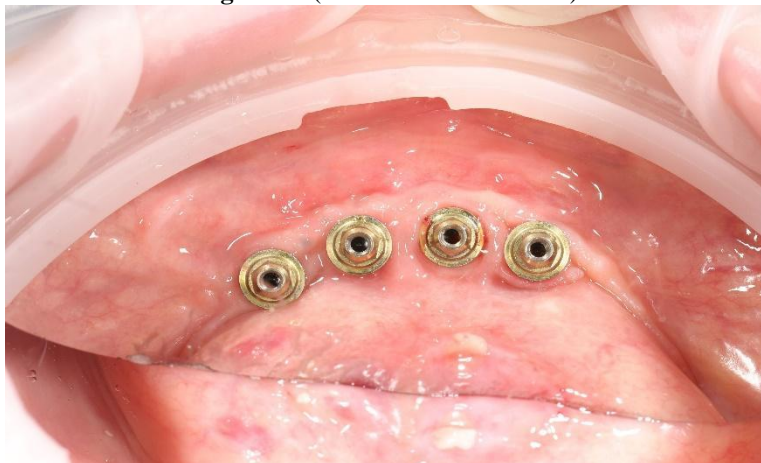
The advantages of gingival level implants are:
1. They create ideal conditions for the formation of supracrustal soft tissues. After inserting the implant, the connective tissue and epithelial tissue joints are no longer traumatized because of the removal and insertion of the superstructures, which prevents marginal bone loss.
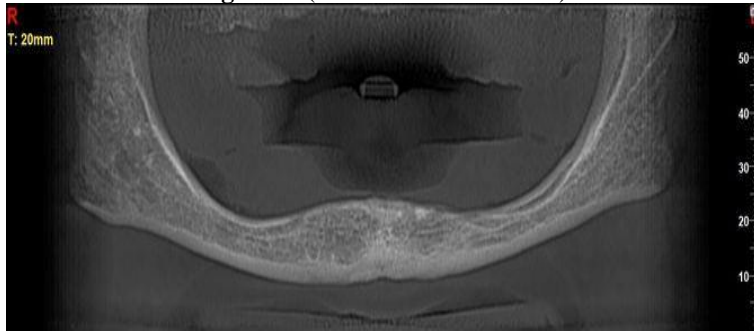2. There is a gap (1.8 mm) between the bone edge and the interface of the implant, so micro-movements during loading do not directly affect the marginal bone and do not cause its resorption.
3. In the case of non-submerged implants, the angle of inclination of the restoration cutting profile and its convexity do not represent a danger in the development of peri-implantitis and marginal bone loss.

Conclusion

Based on the above, gingival level implants are an ideal choice for alveolar folds and mucosal atrophy on the lower jaw, when short (<8mm) implants must be inserted. When keratinized mucosa is no longer present, geometric support of the implant is essential to ensure a stable result with less traumatic intervention and minimal cost.

Our study found that 4 months after implant placement, the average bone loss in the test group was 0.3 mm, and in the control group it was 1.28 mm. The study found that marginal bone loss with tissue level implants was an average of 1 mm less than with bone level implants, and the average bone loss was 0.3 mm. Thus, this implant is an alternative to other implants in case of atrophied mandible, both in case of total edentulous jaw in "all on 4" and "all on 6" constructions, as well as in the presence of lateral segmental and distal defects.

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Modern Challenges of Event Tourism and Business, Organizational Needs

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Abstract

Event tourism is one of the growing and high-income directions of the tourism industry, event tourism is characterized by a variety of content, function and purpose, events that are held around the world have a high social, economic, cultural, historical, sports, business industrial significance. The mentioned article analyzes the course of event tourism, its scope and organizational needs and the relevance of event management. The method of literature review is used for the research. The article discusses the social positive and negative effects of event tourism on the environment, economy and society, as well as the social role in the process of employment and labor market formation. Event management, which is systematically used in event tourism, is new compared to other tourism sectors and is constantly experiencing progress along with the increased demand and need. The research showed that the most important problematic aspect in the process of planning and conducting events is the lack of professional staff and the absence of necessary competencies. Also, the research found that time management is a problem, The respondents have different attitudes towards the digital systems of budgeting, registration and identification of events.

Keywords: Challenges, event tourism, business, organization

Introduction

Event tourism is one of the fastest growing and most profitable areas of the modern tourism industry, According to Statista source, the income from

event tourism is characterized by a stable growth rate, from 2019 to 2023, the income increased from 920 million to 1.27 billion, if the growth rate is maintained, the income until 2030 will equal 1.78 billion dollars many important and diverse events are held around the world that serve different purposes. The article discusses the importance of event tourism from the point of view of business. The relevance of event tourism is determined by its high importance in event management, event tourism is a direction with high income and growing potential, large events can bring colossal income to the region, and the city, It can contribute to the employment of the population, improvement of the socioeconomic situation, because as a rule, the involvement of the local population in the process of organizing cultural type events is high, as well as the indicators of the sale of the things made by them, event tourism also contributes to the popularization of the country's culture. This study answers the question, what scale of events are organized on an international scale? How well is the event planning process going? What disruptions does the event management industry face? How does the labor market respond to new industry challenges? What are the competencies of event managers, event creators, assistants, technical employees, organizers, and staff working in events, what changes can events undergo depending on consumer and market demand? The purpose of the research is to determine what challenges event tourism is facing. In today's highly competitive environment, companies have to take care of service quality, and not only quality. Consumers' savvy and changes in consumer demand led to the emergence of a variety of products and services on the market. Competition in the tourism business industry is high, especially when it comes to events of high social, economic, or cultural importance, which must satisfy not only individual but also corporate demand standards, thus increasing the role of organizational order, adequacy of labor resources, professionalism, and competencies. Event management serves the proper organization, proper planning, and implementation of events of various scales, thus the quality of event tourism depends significantly on event management.

Taking into account the goals and objectives, the main research questions were:

What industrial and organizational challenges does event tourism face? What is the relationship between event tourism and event management? What role does event management play in the event tourism development process? *What difficulties do people responsible for organizing events face in the part of organizing events? What resource and knowledge deficits are these difficulties related to? What is the state of competencies of event management experts in the labor market?*

The purpose of the article is to determine the industrial-organizational challenges facing event tourism based on the analysis of sources and

conducted research. What novelties and modern requirements event tourism should respond to, and what is the trend of demands and needs, are the tasks of the article:

- Analysis of research and sources about event tourism,
- To study the connection between event tourism and event management,
- Studying the progress of event tourism services and events in accordance with consumer requirements,
- Revealing the difficulties in the planning and implementation of the measures.

Literature review: the article discusses and analyzes the sources and statistical data directly related to event tourism, namely Donald Getz's and Stephen Page's tourism management, where the current aspects of event management and tourism are studied in depth, The trend and progress of event tourism development, the article presents the connection between event management and event tourism, where the interrelationships between them are clear, thus event management cannot be overlooked in the process of discussing event tourism.. The article also uses Omer Choban's research on modern challenges and trends in tourism. Among the studies used in the article is a study carried out in Nigeria, which will examine the state of event tourism, in particular the involvement of the population in event activities and the problems in the event management process, 50 respondents from 3 residential areas of Nigeria were interviewed for the study. Literature review and survey methods were used in the sources and studies used for the article. According to the sources used, the development and organized flow of event tourism significantly depends on event management, rational planning processes, and practical skills. The article draws on Sonia Zlatanov's research on the role of events in the tourism industry, as well as research organized by the Fraunhofer Institute, which explores and explores the future goals of events and possible service formations.

Importance and types of event management

Event tourism, as one of the most profitable, demanding and creative directions of tourism, which has not lost its relevance since the beginning of the 21st century, unites people with many different interests and motivations People of different age groups, motivations, and professions, allows them to travel, book separate tours just to be able to attend events of different types,

content, scale, purpose, specificity. From the point of view of event tourism analytics, it is important to analyze its relationships with event management, digitization of services, and labor market opportunities, because the theoretical and practical role of event management in the process of organization is high, the skills of the labor market in the process of planning events, and the digitization of services in terms of consumer demand and business digitization.

Event tourism, like other areas of tourism, affects the socioeconomic factors of the society, and significantly changes the main economic interests of the city, region, and sometimes the country. Thinking and understanding about the financial importance and potential usefulness of events actually started at the end of the twentieth century (Mayri and Whitford, 2013). Accordance with the development, it covered the directions of education, science, art, culture, and tourism and contributed to the promotion and reconstruction of the fields. In tourism, as an already well-developed industry, the consumer contingent that is interested in traveling for events is quite well studied, thus, the interests of these specific consumer groups are not only vacations, nor only visiting individual locations, Part of the selection of locations is influenced by planned future events, which can be music festivals, cultural events, art and cinematography, important sports events, and others, so the main motivation is not to relax, but to attend, participate, and inform about an event of a certain content..

According to the history of the development of events, small-scale activities were still recorded in the Northern Roman Empire in 476, although they certainly did not have an organized and predetermined financial or tourist purpose (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013). Modern events are diverse in their purpose, but the most interesting thing is that they can unite people with common interests, form a collective opinion, and create common impressions.

Events can be cultural events, business and trade, educational and scientific, sports, and private events. Cultural events can be divided into cultural festivals, carnivals, religious events, and others. As for the largest festival in the world, it is organized every year in Germany, it is referred to as the October festival, the festival is held in Bavaria, the festival is distinguished by its duration, it lasts up to 16 days, the number of visitors reaches 6 million. Events are characterized by several signs:
- Events are gatherings of people
- Events are temporary in nature.
- Events are often displays of ritual.
- Events are, in some sense, unique occurrences.[1]

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[1] Zlatanov S, (2015) The role of tourism in tourism development, Published in Bizninfo Journal, 6(2), 83-97.

According to the classification of events:
- Mega-type events are intended for broad trade and market purposes, mega events can be considered business conferences, and entrepreneurial exhibitions where modern inventions are shown and introduced to the public.
- Minor, that is, relatively small-scale events and activities include cultural, musical, and art-related events,
- The third category of major events, Major events, are related to specific events, for example, the literary festival that is held in Jaipur.

Organizing events allows the local and international tourism industry to generate colossal amounts of money, improve socio-economic indicators, and increase cultural awareness. In addition, event tourism:
- contributes to the development of the region's infrastructure
- improves the socio-economic situation of the region,
- Event allows companies in terms of obtaining additional financial benefits,
- contributes to the promotion of the tourism industry, organizations and their activities
- Creates innovative staffing requirements in the market for the latest positions of event manager, coordinator, organizer and others,
- Creates additional jobs, promotes the development of the labor market and improves working conditions,
- unites citizens of different countries of the world and allows them to experience collective feelings,
- contributes to the promotion of science and innovative achievements,
- Enables local citizens to sell handmade goods, is a source of additional income for the local population,
- Enables the world's biggest sports fans to attend awards, major games, Olympics and competitions,
- Helps countries create a creative and positive image of locations and reposition brands.

This is just a small list of the benefits that event tourism and management can bring directly and indirectly. The increase in the number of visitors and tourists in different locations of the world is in most cases thanks to the organization of events and festivals. Asia is distinguished by its diverse

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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293478773_The_role_of_events_in_tourism_development

cultures, as of 2018, 318 million tourists visited the Asian continent, and Asia is home to the 10 most visited cities in the world.

The Getz classification is also significant, which groups events into several parts: mega-periodic events, periodic events, regional events and local events. The events of the first category are characterized by high activity, share and importance in the tourism business, in the case of small and regional events, the revenues are much less. In addition to cultural, educational, sports, recreational and business events, political events are also important and are becoming more relevant day by day. The organization of political events and conferences is also associated with quite large costs and revenues, it includes VIP visits, political events, political summits, and royal meetings. A very good example of political events is the World Economic Forum.
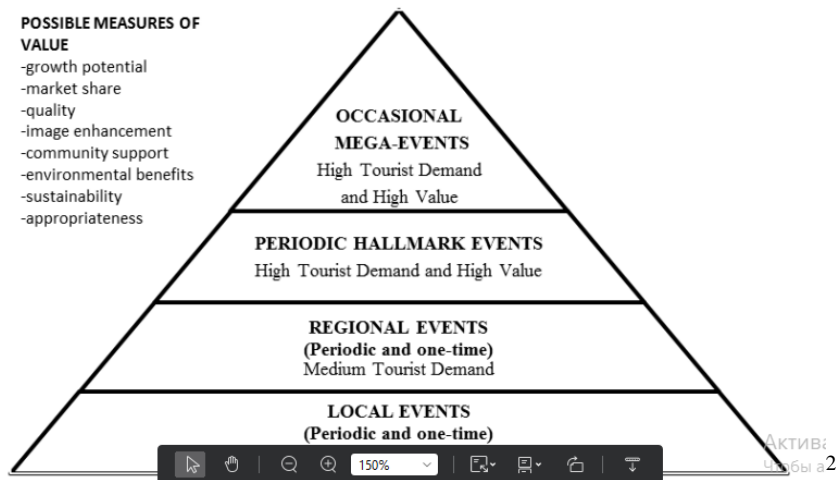
Figure 1. *The portfolio approach to event tourism strategy-making and evaluation, Source: Getz (2005)*

From the point of view of event management, it is important to define the parties that participate in the process of organizing events, the responsibilities of planning, organizing, conducting the event, financing, controlling, are distributed to these people:

- The leading organizer of the event,
- Community of the event, community: represents the people who define the purpose, essence, theme of the event, these people are the important community present at the event.
- Participants and viewers: people who have different interests and motivations, while participants can be people who want to make

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[2] Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: Definition, evolution, and research. Published in Tourism Management Journal, 29 (3): 403–428.

investments, or inventions, buy different products, or people who have certain commercial goals.
- Employees, employees: there are people who fully perform organizational, technical, financial, and other activities, and lead meetings, conferences, and events to the end.
- Sponsors: there are people and companies who provide financial support to the event.
- Event Associations: different types of associations that provide events.
- Public organizations:[3]

An article published in 2023 analyzing the challenges of event tourism identified several additional important factors that hinder the process of planning and conducting events:
- Shortage of human resources with necessary skills, difficulty in finding financing for events, lack of infrastructure providers, suppliers, intensive increase in rent, price, and others.[4]

Event statistics and labor market

According to the data of 2023, worldwide demand for conferences that are held directly physically and where the number of seats is limited has increased, such conferences are supported by marketers, according to data from 2023, 55% of organizers believe that private, attendance and limited number of conferences create important connections. 86.4% of organizers say that in 2024, compared to 2023, they should increase the number of personal events that they already plan or will plan and implement. The duration of 61% of virtual events is 1 day. [5]

According to the organizers, the revenues from the events will reach 1.9 billion US dollars by the end of 2022-2023, the profitability of the events is significantly determined by performances, show elements, their technological and global importance, and the quality of organization and service level also play an important role.

The involvement of companies in event management in Great Britain is quite high, companies are increasing the financing of events, the daily cost of events in Asia is expected to increase to $711, in North America $554, and in Europe, the daily cost of holding a small and simple event is determined to $427. The organization of events renews and has a positive effect on

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[4] Puzari, P, Thadani, R, 2023 Challenges Faced by Event Management Industry, Published in International Journal of Research and Publication Reviews, Vol 4, no 3, pp 1311-1314, March 2023

[5] Bizabbo 2023, The Events Industry's Top Marketing Statistics, Trends, and Data, https://www.bizzabo.com/blog/event-marketing-statistics, (Accessed 19.12.2023)

accommodation facilities and hotel occupancy, especially if the mentioned events are also held in conference halls, in such a case the hotel receives income from conference hall rent and room bookings, the increase in the intensity of events is directly proportional to the hotel's occupancy rates. By 2023, hotel occupancy will increase by 4.9% through events.[6]

The relevance of events in the international tourism business industry leads to the promotion of vacation locations, event tourism is also referred to as travel tourism, despite the short-term usefulness of events, its importance is still great in the promotion of travel culture, and tourist locations. Some countries generate colossal revenues from systematic events, develop infrastructure, promote culture, increase awareness of traditional cuisine, sell traditional products, and more. The culture of organizing and conducting mega events in Germany is highly developed, organizing large-scale events every year, hosting millions of tourists, and providing stable financial benefits to the economy. Conferences and meetings play an especially important economic role in the economy of the country, only according to the data of 2019, 420 million people attended the conferences held in Germany. The number of events held in Germany exceeds 3 million, it ranks first in the ranking of the International Congress and Convention Association. Due to the high economic, social and political significance of the events, the innovative connection of the "future meeting space" operates in the country. The association was established by the Fraunhofer Institute and the German Convention Bureau. The mentioned association aims not only to develop the activities of events but also to provide recommendations of high standards. The space for future meetings also implies a research project, the purpose of which is to study the importance of existing events, and to reveal innovations and trends.

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[6] Bason, E, Chamov A, etc- (2023) Global Meetings and Events Forecast. https://www.amexglobalbusinesstravel.com/content/uploads/2022/10/2023-Global-Meetings-and-Events-Forecast-opt.pdf
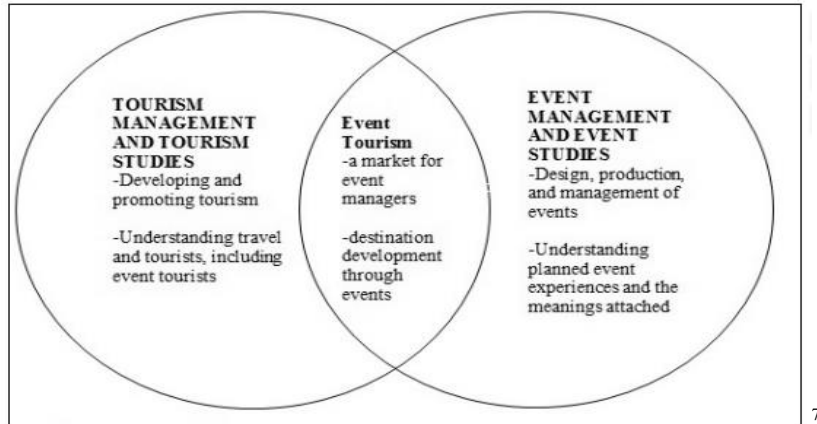
(Figure 2. Event tourism at the nexus of tourism and event studies / Source: Getz (2008)

One of the subjects of event tourism research is the management and organization of events and their quality. In event management, we find the following positions:
- Event manager, organizer,
- those specialists,
- Event Coordinator,
- meeting organizer,
- Event producer,
- Funding manager and other positions.

The shortage of personnel in the global labor market and the hunger for competencies and professionalism are still relevant, although there are several important aspects that are related to both the planning of the work process by the organizers and the correct personnel policy by human resources managers, recruitment and training of personnel in a short period of time:
- Before planning the work process, it should be determined what the situation is with the customers in terms of the number of employees, competencies and knowledge, to some extent this should be checked in advance,
- The operational part, personnel plan, function with duties must be defined in advance,
- The number of employees should be determined in case of maximum and minimum attendance of guests,

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[7] Getz, D., 2008. Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research. *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), pp. 403-428.

- In addition to staffing problems, the second challenge for event management is budget planning. Unfortunately, many managers find it difficult to correctly define the budget in advance and correctly plan expenses.
- In order to avoid similar problems in the modern business industry, event planning programs are often used, which ensure the organizers against excessive costs and limit the normal indicators with an algorithm.
- Time management is also a difficult challenge in event management, secondary tasks are often put aside, so they often remain unfulfilled. In this regard, it is effective to set deadlines and specific time limits, which will be intended for the completion of specific tasks and tasks.
- Event management is a very diverse direction due to the fact that the content and topics of events can be extremely different from each other, therefore there is no specific universal knowledge that can be used effectively in the process of managing and organizing all event projects. Event managers constantly suffer from a lack of practical experience, because, unlike usual music festivals, in the case of political summits and business meetings, the needs, requirements, specifics and details of the case are different, and changing, so people in this profession constantly need to consult with other specialists and deepen their knowledge.
- When the number of guests announced at the events exceeds the planned number, there is a wrong planning of the process by the event manager.
- All properly organized events have a strictly defined structure and program, a plan of action, if it contains speeches, presentations and other activities, if the event manager has sufficient knowledge and experience, he executes the sequence of the program with the accuracy of minutes and sometimes seconds and implements the planned steps in a certain time.
- Congested program Events that are characterized by a congested, long and tiring program indicate the event manager's lack of knowledge and experience. [8]

The process of organizing events is related to both the practical part of its implementation and the theoretical and practical aspects before its planning, including

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[8] 15 most common event planning challanges & their solutions, https://www.socialtables.com/blog/event-planning/biggest-event-planning-challenges/ (Accessed: 15.01.2023)

Before organizing the events, the event manager should be well aware of the possible restrictions that may apply to the planning, format, scale and other components of the events, legal restrictions and prohibitions may not allow the organizers to make noise, use the space without permission, restrictions may apply to time, duration, etc.

- Funding and fundraising is the most important part of events, without financial resources it is impossible to make expenses, purchase products, pay salaries, cover rent costs, etc.
- Infrastructure – technology and equipment that must be defined in advance, located, tested, installed, and checked for functionality.[9]

Typical functions	Major tasks
Event Facilitator/ Coordinator	Work with events in the destination to help realize their tourism potential (finding, advice, marketing)
Event Tourism Producer	create and produce events specifically for their tourism value -stakeholder management (with numerous event partners)
Event Tourism Planner	Develop a strategy for the destination -integrate events with producer development and image marketing branding
Event Tourism Policy Analyst and Researcher	work with policy makers to facilitate event tourism -conduct research (e.g, feasibility studies, demand forecasting, impact assessments and performance evolution's)
Event Buddings	bid on events, -develop relationships leading to winning events for the destination, -conduct risk assessments and feasibility studies for each potential bid
Event Services	-provide essential and special services to events (e.g travel and logistics. accommodation and venue bookings, supplier, contacts)

[10](*Figure 3. D.Getz, S,J Page/Tourism Management 52 (2016) 593-631*)

In order to develop and popularize international business, organizations, companies, and countries are actively using the method of organizing exhibitions, which have reached an international scale, and exhibition-type meetings contribute to increasing the awareness of companies. Strengthening of connections, exchange of information as well as creation of

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[9] Puzari, P, Thadani, R, 2023 Challenges Faced by Event Management Industry, Published in International Journal of Research and Publication Reviews, 29(3) pp 403-428, March 2023
[10] Getz, D , Page, J, S (2016) Progress and prospects for event tourism research, Published in Tourism Management Journal, 15 March, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277354919_Progress_and_prospects_for_event_tourism_research, 52(4),

alliances and implementation of business agreements between companies, which has a positive impact on the income indicators of the local and national economy, and the growth of exports. According to the data of the last years, the number of exhibitions covered 180 countries and invited 353 million visitors to the exhibition. Exhibitions provided employment for 3.4 million people and provided business sales of 298.7 billion euros. North America and Europe accounted for the largest number of exhibiting companies, with 34.1% to 28.2%, while Africa and the Middle East accounted for the lowest share. Exhibitors exhibiting companies, services, and products generated sales revenue, with North America at €127.5 billion, Europe at €93.8 billion and others
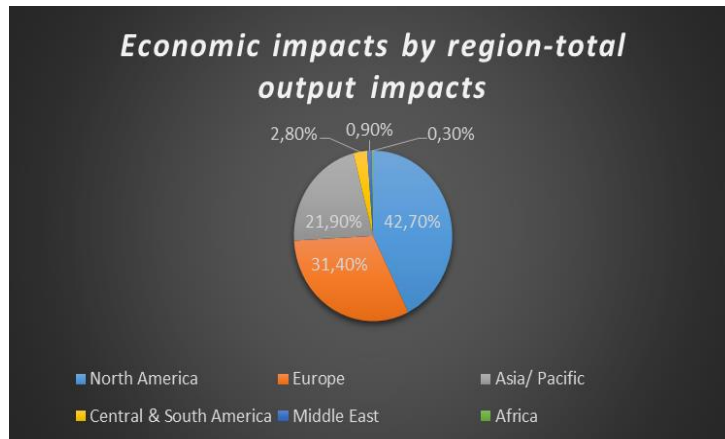
Figure 5. *Economic impacts by region-total output impacts*
Source: Oxford Economics, 2022, Global economic impact of exibitions

Methodology

For the analysis of event tourism and event management, we will consider several studies that were carried out by the method of questionnaires and focus groups.

In the research conducted in Nigeria, 97 respondents were interviewed through the questionnaire method, the data were grouped in the form of a table, among the participants in the study, 60% were male and 40% were female, 56% of the respondents were Christians, 28% were Muslims, and 16% were traditionalists.63% of the respondents are event organizers, those who plan events, and 37% are employees working in hotels.

Also important is the study organized by the Fraunhofer Institute in 2020, through which the researchers studied the respondents' attitudes toward innovative services. The Kano model is used in the research, which establishes the relationship between product characteristics and respondents' satisfaction. The number of respondents was 500, among them 30.4% represented event participants, 43.1% were event planners and organizers,

and 26.5% were service providers. During the research, the respondents' attitude towards innovations, news, and online registration of events was studied. using the online platform for events,

Results:

The results of the research carried out in Nigeria revealed several important aspects: about 43% of respondents state and strongly agree that they had problems in the logistics of events, and transportation of food, 30% agree, 5% disagree, 9% strongly disagree. On the question related to the part of marketing, event planning, and coordination with suppliers, 59% of the respondents perceive it as a difficult part, and because of the security problem, they focus on harming tourism more than the benefits, and 39% of the respondents strongly agree, 24% agree, 12% and others.

	I had trouble planning logistics for an event, such as food, transportation, lodging, and entertainment.		Government policy contributes to the reasons why event management is not working and contributes to the economy of the state.		Budgeting, finding the right venue, Managing logistics, Coordinating with vendors and suppliers and marketing the event posed a lot of difficulty for the growth of event management.		Getting customers affects the hospitality industry and its growth within the economy.		Insecurity in the state has done more harm than good to the hospitality industry.	
IT	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
SA	43	44%	29	30%	57	59%	31	32%	38	39%
A	29	30%	31	32%	31	32%	29	30%	23	24%
U	11	11%	9	9%	2	2%	6	6%	10	10%
D	5	5%	15	15%	6	6%	13	13%	12	12%
SD	9	9%	13	13%	1	1%	18	19%	14	14%
Total	97	100	97	100	97	100	97	100	97	100

Figure 6. Sourse: Oke, A, 2023. The Challenge of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry (a case study of okitipupa, akure and owo, ondo state

The majority of respondents 48% strongly agree that consistent, line-by-line budget planning is needed to overcome event management challenges, 63% think it is better to do your own research and ask your network, business partners, colleagues, referrals in the process of choosing vendors and suppliers.

	To overcome the challenges of event management when running out of budget, it is important to map out the budget line by line and include a cushion! Inevitably, some costs will change, and there will be unexpected add-ons.		It is good to conduct your own research and also ask your trusted network of colleagues and business partners for referrals when choosing the right vendors.		To overcome security challenges, it is good to assess security risks, keep security Security visible, create security checkpoints, match IDs to registration information, Keep private events private; Develop an emergency plan and screen your staff.		To manage time, event planners should create timeline months in advance and make sure that every item has a responsible party and a deadline.		Partnering with the right service provider can help event planners access structured training programmes that ease the learning curve and familiarise them with virtual event best practises.	
IT	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
SA	47	48%	61	63%	71	73%	78	80%	81	84%
A	25	26%	20	21%	19	20%	19	20%	13	13%
U	5	5%	4	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
D	11	11%	7	7%	6	6%	0	0%	1	1%
SD	9	9%	5	5%	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	97	100	97	100	97	100	97	100	97	100

Figure 7. Sourse: Oke, A, 2023. The Challenge of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry (a case study of okitipupa, akure and owo, ondo state

Almost the full majority of the respondents, 80%, also strongly agree, 20% agree that event managers should organize and plan the event in detail in time, in order to know exactly and be sure that they managed to take into account and plan all the details in the specified time.[11]

About pre-registration of events in digital format, 35.5% of respondents expressed interest. For 14.1% of respondents, this format is an important part of the future. The need for digitalization of business is evident in many fields, as well as in tourism, sales of accommodation facilities and promotion of facilities are facilitated by online booking platforms. Also important is a unified system for organizing events, which will accept online bookings and provide digitization of services. [12]

In accordance with the aim of the mentioned research, which meant studying the respondents' attitudes towards innovative initiatives, a negative attitude towards the face recognition system was revealed. According to the respondents (53%), the system that requires facial recognition for registration of participants is against their will not to reveal their identity by photo, face, etc. According to the respondents, it is undesirable for guests to show their faces during the registration process, disclosing very personal data will be an annoying fact for potential guests. As well as keeping a photo of their identity.

Conclusion

Considering the sources we reviewed, the relationship between event tourism and event management is directly proportional, the process of properly conducting event tourism and the development of the industry is significantly dependent on event management, event management ensures the process of planning, implementation and optimal completion of events, Event management is a prerequisite for the development of tourist events, in order for each event to be carried out in accordance with the planning of the theme, it is necessary to mobilize and manage professional, competent personnel.Based on the analysis of the labor market, the knowledge and experience of event managers is not satisfactory, the labor market and event tourism suffer from a shortage of competent personnel, as we mentioned above, most of them do not have practical and theoretical skills for events of different topics. In the process of organizing events:

In the process of organizing events:
- The problem of shortage of personnel competencies
- Financial planning and budgeting problem,

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[11] Oke, A, 2023. The Challenge of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry (a case study of okitipupa, akure and owo, ondo state

[12] Dienes K, Naujoks T, etc, (2020) The future role and purpose of business events, Fraunhofer Institute For Industrial Enginering Irao,
https://www.evvc.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Future_Meeting_Space_3_Study_en.pdf

- Problem of recruiting other team members needed for events,
- Event tourism and event management must respond to market demands and industrial challenges from an organizational point of view,
- Taking into account the business digitization process, the digitization of certain services will also be a necessary market requirement in case of event tourism.

In the competencies of event organizers and managers, it is important that event organizers and managers constantly improve their knowledge and experience,

- correctly implement the event tasting process, take into account the importance of time management,
- plan with complete accuracy part of the preparatory activities scheduled in time,
- Constantly monitor the timeliness of preparatory work, correctly plan the budget,
- carry out cost estimates and purchases, correctly plan the event program and control the guest lists, be ready for possible unpredictable results.

Experts in the field hope that the importance of events that can be attended directly will increase in the future, but at the same time, the introduction of digital technologies and online systems can change the situation and the events will move to an online format. Therefore, the probability of events moving to a virtual format is very high.

- Implementation of events in a hybrid format is already a part of modern reality,
- In the future, deepening the culture of holding events will lead to the strengthening of social ties and the bringing together of the group societies that will be participants in the events.
- Participating in events will acquire not only the function of creating connections but will also become a source of new inspiration and introduction of innovations
- In order to encourage and improve accommodation facilities sales and facilities, it is important that accommodation facilities and event management companies introduce an online form of service, under which users will be able to book online not only conference space, but also:indicating the number of guests, names of food and beverages, number, conference program, technical needs, hall decoration, number of service personnel and other details, taking into account the results

of the research, online reservation systems for guests should be secure and anonymous if desired,

- It is also important to search for possible ways to solve the problem of staff competencies, the host accommodation facilities for events organized in event tourism are high-class hotels,Event host hotels and event management companies should implement periodic staff training programs that will provide them with service etiquette, event technical support, financial planning, and other important operational knowledge.
- Considering modern practice, the part of insurance and security of conferences is especially important, a universal system must be created that will unite all organizers and information about their activities, because part of separately organized events, especially in scientific areas, is illegal and unreliable.

In this way, the role of several aspects in the event tourism development process is particularly large, including event management, which ensures the quality of event planning and management. The role and importance of the formation of the labor market, the development of human resources and professional staff is also great. For the development of event tourism, it is necessary to eliminate the hindering factors in the process of planning and organizing events, related to budgeting, personnel policy, infrastructure, time management and format.

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Unemployment and Digital Labor Platforms in Georgia

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Abstract

This article addresses the pressing issues of unemployment and employment in Georgia over the past three decades. With an average unemployment rate of around 20 percent, affecting approximately 300,000 people from 2010 to 2022, the labor force faces significant challenges. The advent of technological progress has highlighted the necessity for novel approaches to the labor market. In this context, digital work platforms have emerged as potential solutions, offering new forms of employment and creating opportunities driven by advancements in digital technologies. The aim of this study is to identify innovative employment opportunities in the context of the current unemployment situation in order to improve the Georgian labor market conjunction. The study draws upon interviews with labor market specialists and presents conclusions based on primary and secondary data. While the research indicates that digital work platforms do not currently play a major role in employment, their significance is projected to grow in the future. The extent of their impact on the population's employment prospects will depend on Georgia's technological development and educational level. These platforms demonstrate the potential to generate flexible jobs and provide supplementary income opportunities. However, challenges associated with their development must be addressed for their successful integration into the labor market.

Keywords: Unemployment; New forms of employment; Online work platform; Digital labor platform

Introduction

Reducing unemployment and improving the labor market in Georgia requires continual efforts and innovative solutions. Despite the attempts of various governments to address the issue, the results have been insufficient. With persistently high levels of unemployment and ineffective employment rates, it is important to explore the potential of modern technologies in the labor market. Assessing digital work technologies, which differ significantly from traditional approaches, is critical to improving the labor market situation in Georgia (Kvirkvaia, 2022). The paper presents the characteristics of new forms of employment based on the summarizing of research carried out in recent years. It provides a brief summary of reports from various international organizations that focus on digital technologies and specific work platforms.

Research methodology

The methodology used is based on primary and secondary research data. Official data from the National Statistics Service of Georgia, as well as information and data taken from the web pages of various companies, reports published by international authoritative organizations in recent years, scientific research papers, and published articles, were used in the research.

The presented research uses the materials[1] of interviews with labor market specialists, which were carried out in an online format using a pre-developed questionnaire. The interviews involved labor market theorists, practitioners, and representatives from various sectors connected to the labor market. Labor market specialists shared their evaluations of the proliferation of digital labor platforms in Georgia during the interviews. The specialists addressed questions regarding the significance of digital work platforms in employing the workforce and reducing unemployment. The interviews also covered the potential challenges, opportunities, and overall impacts associated with the development of digital work platforms in Georgia. Throughout these interactions, experts provided their opinions on the essential measures needed for the development of digital work platforms

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[1] Interviews with labor market specialists were carried out within the framework of the project implemented by the European Training Foundation in Eastern European Partnership countries. See: Kvirkvaia, M. (2021). Platform work-Georgia. Country profile. https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-06/platform_work_georgia_0.pdf.
In European Training Foundation report (ETF): The future of work – New forms of employment in the Eastern Partnership countries: Platform work.
https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-07/future_of_work_platform_work_in_eap_countries.pdf.

As part of the presented work, the data received from labor market specialists underwent processing. Statistical data pertaining to the labor market in Georgia were analyzed, and a review of scientific literature was conducted. Subsequently, conclusions and recommendations were developed regarding unemployment and digital work platforms in Georgia.

Analysis of unemployment and employment situation in Georgia.
The analysis of official data published by the National Statistical Service of Georgia[2] provides some insight into the assessment of the unemployment and employment situation in Georgia. According to the current methodology of the labor market in 2010-2022, the highest unemployment rate was recorded in 2010 (27.2 percent) while the lowest was in 2022 at 17.3% (Table 1). Although there are some changes in the number of unemployed[3] people, on average, 300 thousand are unemployed, which is a significant concern that leads to various social problems, which need to be discussed separately.

In the labor market indicators of Georgia, the number of self-employed is quite high (about 400 thousand). Most likely, some of the self-employed do not represent the actual employees or, in the best case, belong to the ineffective employees. In general, the inefficiency of employment in Georgia is also reflected in the distribution of employees according to the types of economic activity[4], according to which almost a fifth of the workers are employed in agriculture, where wages, labor productivity, and incomes are low.

Labour Force Indicators.**Table #1**
thousand persons

	2010	2012	2014	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Population	3,799.8	3,739.3	3,716.9	3,726.4	3,729.6	3,723.5	3,716.9	3,728.6	3,688.6
Labor force	1603.8	1654.7	1629.0	1641.4	1605.2	1572.8	1523.7	1533.6	1551.6
Employed	1167.6	1212.2	1255.0	1286.9	1296.2	1295.9	1241.8	1217.4	1283.7
Hired	710.0	759.4	795.5	869.3	903.5	897.5	845.3	829.4	870.9

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[2] https://www.geostat.ge
[3] Unemployed – – A person aged15 years and older, who during the reference period (7 days preceding the interview), was not employed and within the previous four weeks actively searched for work and in case of success was ready to start work within the next two weeks.
[4] https://www.geostat.ge/ka/modules/categories/683/dasakmeba-umushevroba

Self-employed	455.2	445.2	453.0	416.8	392.2	397.9	395.9	387.1	412.1
Unemployed	436.2	442.5	374.0	354.5	309.0	276.9	281.9	316.2	267.9
Unemployment (%)	27.2	26.7	23.0	21.6	19.2	17.6	18.5	20.6	17.3

Source: The table is compiled according to the data of the National Statistical Service of Georgia.

One of the indicators of inefficient employment can be considered the remuneration of employees. According to official data, a certain increase in the level of the average monthly nominal salary was recorded in the third quarter of 2022 and amounted to 1595.0 GEL. However, If one takes into account the average exchange rate[5] of the Georgian Lari against the US dollar for the third quarter of 2022, the average monthly nominal salary level is less than 600 US dollars. There is a significant difference between the average monthly nominal wages according to the types of economic activity. For instance, in 2021, the average monthly nominal wage in the field of education was only 834.9 GEL, while the same figure in agriculture was 950.3 GEL. The Georgian labor market faces significant challenges, including inadequate cooperation between employers and higher education institutions (Kikutadze et al. 2021), the incorrect professional orientation of young people (Kvirkvaia et al. 2018), unemployment in regions (Kvirkvaia, 2016), and low-income levels of the population.

Based on the analysis of official statistical data, the unemployment rate of approximately (on average) 20 percent, the high number of self-employed people, and the general indicators of inefficient employment (Tsartsidze, 2018) indicate the severity of the problems in the labor market of Georgia. The mentioned problems are not new for Georgia and have been the subject of constant discussion for the past three decades. Therefore, in contrast to the previously used traditional approaches, it is necessary and urgent to find and study new approaches and forms of employment.

Digital work platforms

The advancement of digital technology has greatly affected all aspects of public life. The changes have also been reflected in the sectors of the economy and labor markets, where adaptation to technological innovations has been taking place intensively during the last decade. International organizations, individual researchers, governmental and non-governmental organizations, scientific institutions pay significant attention to digital work

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[5] 2022(III) USD/GEL (Period average)= 2.8235

platforms in the modern labor market. In the scientific literature, digital work platforms are viewed as innovative employment solutions and opportunities for workers resulting from advancements in digital technology.

Ongoing changes in the modern labor market and important studies and reports on digital work platforms have been published in recent years by the following organizations: International Labour Organization, (2021); European Training Foundation, (2021); World Economic Forum, (2020); Eurofound, (2018); European Commission, (2021) etc. Also, the following researchers devoted fundamental scientific works to the mentioned issues: Pulignano, Grimshaw, Domecka and Vermeerbergen (Pulignano et al. 2023), Johnston, Ergun, Schor, Chen (Johnston et al. 2022); Vallas, Schor (Vallas et al. 2020); Howson, Ferrari, Salem, Johnston, Katta, Heeks, Graham (Howson et al. 2022); Farrell, Greig (Farrell et al. 2016); Choudar **(**Choudary 2016**);** Chernykh **(**Chernykh 2021**);** Mandl, Curtarelli, Riso, Vargas, Gerogiannis (Mandl et al. 2015) etc.

After reviewing the literature, reports, and scientific papers on digital work platforms, common approaches and characteristics have been identified that accurately represent these platforms. Digital work platforms serve as intermediaries in the labor market, based on modern digital technologies. Connecting labor supply and demand through the platform is based on certain algorithmic management. The goal of developers of digital work platforms is usually to make a profit. Digital work platforms use different business models of operation. Depending on the model, the platform's revenues are derived from fees for the services of the supply or demand side (fixed or depending on the cost of the service) or from fees paid by both parties for the service.

Digital work platforms can be divided into two groups. The first is online digital work platforms, where workers perform tasks online and remotely. Such jobs include, for example, graphic design, translation services, consulting, project management, etc. Examples of online digital job platforms are Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer, etc. The second group refers to such mediation of the digital work platform in the labor market, when the employee has to perform work (task) on the spot. Such jobs include, for example, transportation services (taxi and Courier services), food delivery; housekeeping; On-site training and consulting, etc. Examples of the second group of digital work platforms are Deliveroo, Glovo, Uber, etc. In today's labor markets, numerous digital platforms of varying sizes are gaining significance in terms of employment opportunities. Some even have a global workforce in the millions (see below employment in Uber).

Employment on digital work platforms
The authors of this article believe that digital work platforms can reduce unemployment and provide extra sources of income for the employed

population. From this point of view, international experience is interesting, especially with regard to employment on digital work platforms.

In 2021, there were 12 million platform (Piasna et al. 2022) workers (external employment) in the EU and 3 million internal platform workers. When considering the number of people employed within digital work platforms, we must take into account that (ILO. Working group, 2021) there are two types of work relationships on digital labour platforms: workers are either directly hired by a platform (internal employment) or their work is mediated through a platform (external employment). Data on the number of workers hired by platforms are available either from annual reports or Crunchbase[6] and Owler databases[7]. The data shows that most of the digital labour platforms are micro and small enterprises employing either fewer than 10 employees or 11-50 employees. Only a few delivery and taxi platforms have more than 1000 employees. For example, Uber has 26,900 employees, mainly highly skilled professionals such as lawyers, marketing experts, software engineers and other professionals. The company also has professional taxi drivers on permanent staff. Also, as of 2020, more than 5 million people are employed on the Uber platform. Drivers, who either own or lease cars, with the majority of them being labeled as self-employed or "driver-partners" are employed through the mediation of Uber. Compared to Uber, the number of direct hires (internal employment) is small, only 50 people, on the PeoplePerHour platform, although it employs of a much larger number of workers through mediation.

The global count of freelancers registered on digital work platforms, along with the current employment landscape, offers valuable insights into the realm of digital work platforms. A group of scientists (Kässi et al. 2021) combine data collected from various sources to build a data-driven assessment of the number of such online workers (also known as online freelancers) globally. in their opinion, there are 163 million freelancer profiles registered on online labour platforms globally. Approximately 14 million of them have obtained work through the platform at least once, and 3.3 million have completed at least 10 projects or earned at least $1000.

Existing research indicates that digital work platforms serve as the primary source of income for only a small segment of the workforce. For instance (Tay and Large. 2022), US and EU surveys show that 16 per cent of US adults and 11 per cent of the working-age population in 14 EU states (aged between 16 and 74) have earned money or provided a service via a platform, while a smaller proportion use digital labour platforms as their primary source of

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[6] https://www.crunchbase.com
[7] https://www.owler.com/company/database

income. For instance, labor platforms constituted the primary income source for 1.4% of EU citizens. (ILO. 2021).

When examining the advantages of digital work platforms, there is a notable emphasis on "flexibility". In this regard the central argument (Cano et al. 2021) most commonly used by platform companies is that platform work offers workers the 'freedom' and 'flexibility' to work whenever and wherever they want, becoming a source of income while positively contributing to platform workers' work–life balance. The attractiveness of flexibility for workers is confirmed by global studies (ILO, 2021) according to which the motivation to work on online web-based platforms for 29 percent of workers was due to job flexibility. In some countries, the motivation to work through a digital work platform is even greater because of the flexibility. Despite varying opinions, it can be assumed that the flexibility factor significantly contributes to the work-life balance of individuals working with digital work platforms

The positive aspects of digital work platforms also encompass: decreased transaction costs linked to employment; outsourcing of labor; work without the need for labor migration; potential for supplementary income, and so on. Regarding issues associated with digital work platforms, it's important to highlight concerns about employment status, high registration fees, surplus labor on these platforms, and so forth.

Research results

According to the research, common digital work platforms in Georgia are Glovo, Bolt, GG Taxi, Alo Modi, Yandex Taxi. According to the same study, a certain amount of the population of Georgia was registered on international online work platforms such as Weblancer, Freelance, Upwork, Fiver, Guru, etc. The distribution of online work platforms in Georgia varies significantly by region, with most online platform jobs concentrated in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi.

Online platform works and on-location service employees opportunities in Georgia are in the following areas: IT programming, graphics and design; Marketing and Social Marketing; Advice and consulting (accounting, writing CVs, etc.); Text typing, translation and spelling, courier service (food delivery; product purchase/delivery; delivery of various items, etc.); Transport services (taxi services); House cleaning; Plumbing; Electricity; Child care, etc. According to the study most freelancers and on-location workers do not register on official online work platforms. For them, Facebook groups, LinkedIn, acquaintances and friends are more comfortable and easier than officially registered online work platforms.

Based on the interviews the job for those registered on online platforms can be both primary and additional. However, in their view, it is likely that

only for a small proportion of registrants this job may be main. However, there are no accurate statistics on registrations in Georgia. The interviews show that the gender composition of online work platform workers and on-location service providers in Georgia varies according to the type of activity. For example, courier, taxi, household and electrical repair work is almost entirely done by men. While pedagogical, childcare, translation and text typing activities are mostly done by females. Their age structure also varies according to the types of activities. Based on the profile of the registered employees and the results of the interview, it can be concluded that the age of the employees in the above-mentioned areas of activity is mainly middle and lower age. However, in some areas (taxi service, housekeeping and tidying) the working age is above average.

Based on interviews with labor market specialists, it is evident that individuals working through digital work platforms in Georgia face the same challenges as people employed in a similar format in other countries. In particular, the employment status and social security of workers represent an important challenge of digital work platforms.

In the future, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive nationwide survey of digital work platforms and the employees within the platform.

Conclusion

Given the high levels of unemployment and ineffective employment in Georgia, the current labor market situation demands non-traditional methods for improvement. Employment within the framework of the digital work platform should be considered as a new form of employment for the population, which can, to some extent, improve the situation in the labor market.

It is clear that online work platforms are at an early stage of development in Georgia. Services within digital work platforms and employment within the platform is a new form of employment in Georgia, which is gradually becoming more popular. It should also be noted that there is no accurate information about digital work platforms and the employees within them, which complicates the complex analysis of the issue.

The development of online platform work in Georgia will help alleviate (not completely solve) the acute unemployment problem in the country. It will also enable the population of the regions of Georgia, especially young people, to be fully employed on the ground (without migration to the capital or abroad) or to earn an additional source of income. Similarly, the development of online platforms will help to ground qualified personnel who are very important for the development of the country's economy today, and the demand for such personnel will increase in the future (for example, IT specialists).

For digital work platforms to thrive, it is crucial to have the right conditions in place. This primarily involves ensuring that the workforce is adequately prepared to meet the demands of the labor market. To achieve this, workforce training should focus on the knowledge, skills, and qualifications required to perform the tasks and jobs offered within the platform's framework.

In the future, the extent to which digital work platforms will be utilized for employment opportunities will be influenced by factors such as the accessibility of information technology infrastructure throughout the country, the potential for workforce training in information technology, as well as the proficiency of the workforce in foreign languages, etc.

The legislation should determine the status of employees within the digital work platform, which will relatively regulate their social security issues and also enable them to stay informed about new employment opportunities.

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European Universities Best Practices:
The Case of INVEST EU Alliance

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Abstract

　　　　Established in 2018, the European Universities Initiative (EUI) strives to foster collaboration and integration among higher education institutions across Europe. The EUI's core objectives encompass forging transnational alliances, facilitating mobility, championing multidisciplinary approaches, celebrating linguistic diversity, advancing innovation and research, prioritizing student-centered learning, and nurturing long-term sustainability. Central to this initiative is the enhancement of education quality and the promotion of student-centric learning methodologies. Within the scope of the EUI, the INVEST European University stands out as one of the 47 integrated alliances, endorsed by the European Commission. INVEST is dedicated to crafting distinctive collaborative educational paradigms that contribute significantly to regional progress and sustainability. This paper provides a comprehensive overview of the INVEST Joint Education Model, showcasing a range of excellent practices that position the alliance as a key player in the European educational landscape. Specifically, this paper delves into the strategic quality assurance framework, the unified pedagogical approach supporting diverse educational products, the dynamic collaborative platforms like living labs that engage stakeholders and serve as experimentation grounds, the enriching fellowship programs, faculty and student mobility initiatives, eco-friendly digitalization of services, and innovative entrepreneurship and internationalization processes. This study not only offers

insightful recommendations but also tangible real-world examples for instructional and support staff navigating the realm of digital transformation within inter-institutional partnerships.

Keywords: European, Universities, quality, assurance, mobility, joint, pedagogy, digitalization, regional, development, living, labs, sustainability

Introduction

Collaborations between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are expanding and have the potential to enhance innovation, inclusion, mobility, academic teaching, and university competition, (Charret and Chankseliani, 2023). In order to meet the significant socioeconomic concerns of the twenty-first century, make the transition to a more digitally advanced society, and get ready for the fourth industrial revolution, EUIs are a crucial strategic driver for HEIs (Broo, Kaynak and Sait, 2022) and international higher education organizations (Asgharzadeh, 2023). The demand for innovative educational transformation projects to accomplish inter-institutional educational goals has grown as a result of growing HEI cooperation. Therefore, best practices for this area of educational digital transformation are needed.

At the same time, HEIs are required to equip students, employees, and researchers with the skills necessary to successfully manage the sustainable and digital transformations and create a resilient society due to the rapidly changing labor market and societal transitions. Universities are important players in Europe, able to handle significant societal concerns, evolve into real engines of urban and regional development and foster citizen participation in addition to their main responsibilities of teaching, research, and innovation Bertoletti et al., 2022). The following characteristics, which became the core tenet of the European University concept, are highlighted in the European Commission's vision for the formation of the European Education Area (Asderaki, F., 2022): Mobility for education should be a standard, educational institutions and university study should be discernible and quantifiable throughout the EU, speaking one more language in addition to one's mother tongue should be a standard, and everyone deserves accessibility to higher education regardless of their social or economic circumstances. It is important for citizens to feel connected with the multitude of cultures and historical significance of Europe. This necessitates considerably greater levels of collaboration between institutions and their regional innovation ecosystems. By promoting excellence, innovation, and inclusion in HEIs across Europe, the European Commission hopes to hasten the transformation of current European University Alliances into the universities of the future that will have a fundamental, institutionalized, and long-lasting impact. In this paper, we present the INVEST EUI model for joint education. INVEST stands on a few

core features and innovative ways of structuring courses and offering its educational assets to students and lifelong learners: competence based education, Living Labs, a virtual campus, EDUC8EU (Iatrellis et al., 2023), embedded mobility foundation, a concrete quality assurance system, innovative fellow programs, entrepreneurship and internationalization are the traversal key sectors and cornerstones of the INVEST ecosystem impacting all its internal and external regional and European level stakeholders.

The INVEST Joint Education model is merely one part of a robust engine that depends on a number of other essential characteristics originating from other INVEST EUI alliance components (Figure 1). These components will be illustrated in section two and three of this manuscript. In parallel, a solid technical infrastructure, streamlined administrative processes, staff training, effective communication strategies, and marketing campaigns to raise awareness of our educational model are also necessary for its implementation and operation, in addition to the qualifications, motivation, and skills of its academic and administrative staff. The international component of INVEST, which is a key feature of our model, since it gives the ability to students and faculty from any place in Europe to become part of a multicultural environment and collaborate with many other colleagues of common interests. However, the model comes with new difficulties and challenges, like those associated with various higher education legislation at the national and EU levels, which call for the direct participation of the Commission and the member states.
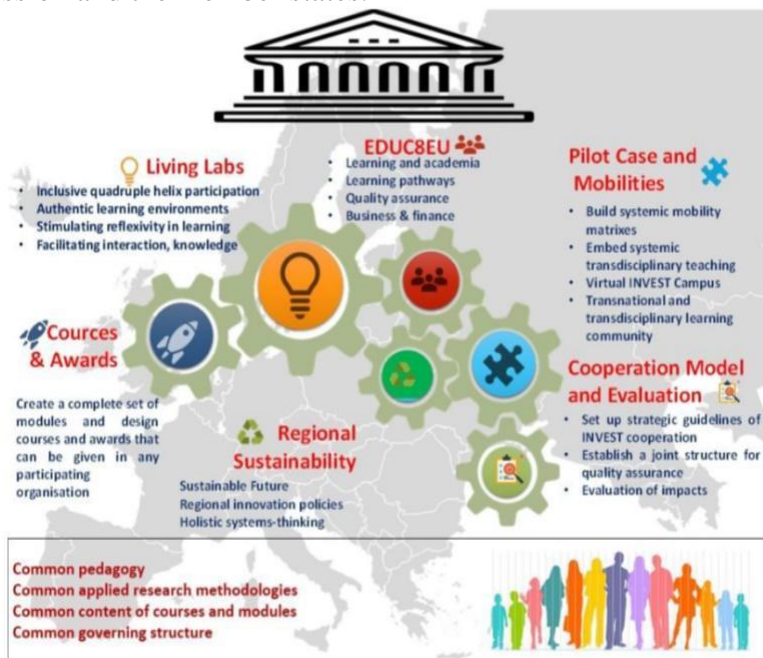

Fig. 1. Key aspects of INVEST.

Following the European Education Area directive to establish a unique HEI framework by 2025, the INVEST EUI Alliance seeks to provide high-quality education with a positive impact on research, student employability on highly specialized jobs, and societal advancement at the national and European level. Furthermore, INVEST highly promotes a holistic, high-quality and inclusive approach to education that ensures all participants have access to the opportunities and tools they need to succeed. The alliance is made up of five partner universities. It is pursuing a cooperative plan to assist the transformation of education in a society that is inclusive through green digitization and urban and regional development.

INVEST members are: (a) the Slovak University of Agriculture (SUA) in Nitra Slovakia, the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development (UARD) in Plovdiv Bulgaria, the University of Thessaly (UTH) in Volos Greece, the Karelia University of Applied Sciences (Karelia UAS) in Joensuu, Finland, and finally the Van Hall Larenstein, University of Applied Sciences (VHL) in Leeuwarden and Velp Netherlands. In this paper, we focus on the intrinsic characteristics of the INVEST higher educational model and outline its fundamental components as best practices, showing how they foster inclusive and competence-based learning for jointly designed and taught and operated degrees for Bachelor's, master's and PhD programs.

INVEST Educational Model

The INVEST EUI Alliance aims at strengthening the link between teaching, research, innovation, and knowledge transfer focusing on the innovations of regional sustainability. The alliance has as major objective to create a modern European university that meets the needs and requirements of the new generation of Europeans as leaders in introducing sustainable life in regions across Europe. By 2025, INVEST will be recognized as an inclusive higher education institution, implementing a personalized and competence based pedagogical approach, and focusing on flexible curricula and individual learning paths. By 2040, INVEST will focus on: (a) sustainable cooperation for education, (b) research, innovation, and knowledge transfer, and (c) raising the quality and competitiveness of participating universities and contributing to the economic, social, cultural, and environment-friendly sustainable development of European regions. The alliance's basic principles include:

- Trust among participating universities,
- Respect for academic autonomy,
- Maximizing quality of education and research,
- Maximizing the usefulness of university activities for the development of the European economy,
- Enhanced partnership with stakeholders in regions,

- Stimulating mobility of students, teachers, and researchers,
- Joint and flexible curricula such as lifelong learning forms,
- Impact analysis and assessment of existing courses and
- International accreditation of universities in the alliance.

A. *INVEST pedagogical features.*
All INVEST study programs fulfill the following characteristics:

- They are innovative, international, high quality, and near by the cutting-edge technology and European sustainability issues. At the same time all programs contain embedded mobility.
- There is involvement of the real world: labor market and stakeholders are involved in the development and delivery of the programs.
- They are personal, inclusive, and flexible towards students.

The dimensions of the INVEST educational methods that we distinguish are based on the following characteristics:

- Student-centered approach.
- Real-world learning / competence based.
- Challenge-based education geared towards problem-solving.
- Multidisciplinary, trans-disciplinarity and/ or cross-disciplinarity approach of regional development and sustainability issues.
- Blending the integrated role of conventional and applied research.

Independent from the outcomes of the work field consultations to be held, we also identify the following core competence fields that give direction to the curriculum design and content of the INVEST degree programs.

- Competences in the field of sustainable regional development.
- Entrepreneurial competences, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- Research and problem-solving competences.
- Transdisciplinary/Transversal competences.
- Communication and social interaction competences.
- Intercultural competence field, including cultural awareness, multilingual and internationalization.
- Competences on self-managing, personal development, intrapersonal skills, digitalization.
- Specific key competences related to the degree and discipline, in consultation with the working field.

As a result, built upon a shared vision for education, a transparent and uniform framework applied to degree programs ensures equality among

students, both in terms of their study abilities and their ability to fully leverage the opportunities that INVEST aims to provide in alignment with individual student needs. The path from qualification profiles and competences to assessments, culminating in education, is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

Fig. 2. The Body of Knowledge and Skills, (BoKS) in the road from qualification profile and competences to assessments in INVEST.

B. *INVEST Bachelor specializations.*

The development of the bachelor's degrees (structure of degrees and the realization of the educational model) can be seen as a multi-stage process:

Stage 1: Development of five specialized bachelor's degrees, each hosted by one of the partner universities. These degrees are based on the fourth year of an existing program and focus on regional sustainability. These one-year specializations include 30 ECTS of coursework and 30 ECTS of research within the INVEST Living Labs. Students spend a year abroad and receive both their home institution's degree and an INVEST specialization diploma.

Stage 2: Development of another five degrees, one at each partner university, following the same model. The alliance will collaboratively create a module portfolio for these programs, emphasizing competence-based learning.

Stage 3: Gradually expand the one-year specializations introduced in Stage 1 to two-year programs for all Phase-1 and Phase-2 bachelor's degrees or a significant subset, as they gain popularity among European students.

Later Stages: Continue adding modules to existing programs and introducing new bachelor's programs, potentially leading to INVEST's full utilization of the alliance's capacity or even establishing INVEST as an independent university. The structure of the bachelor degree specializations is shown in Figure 3 below:
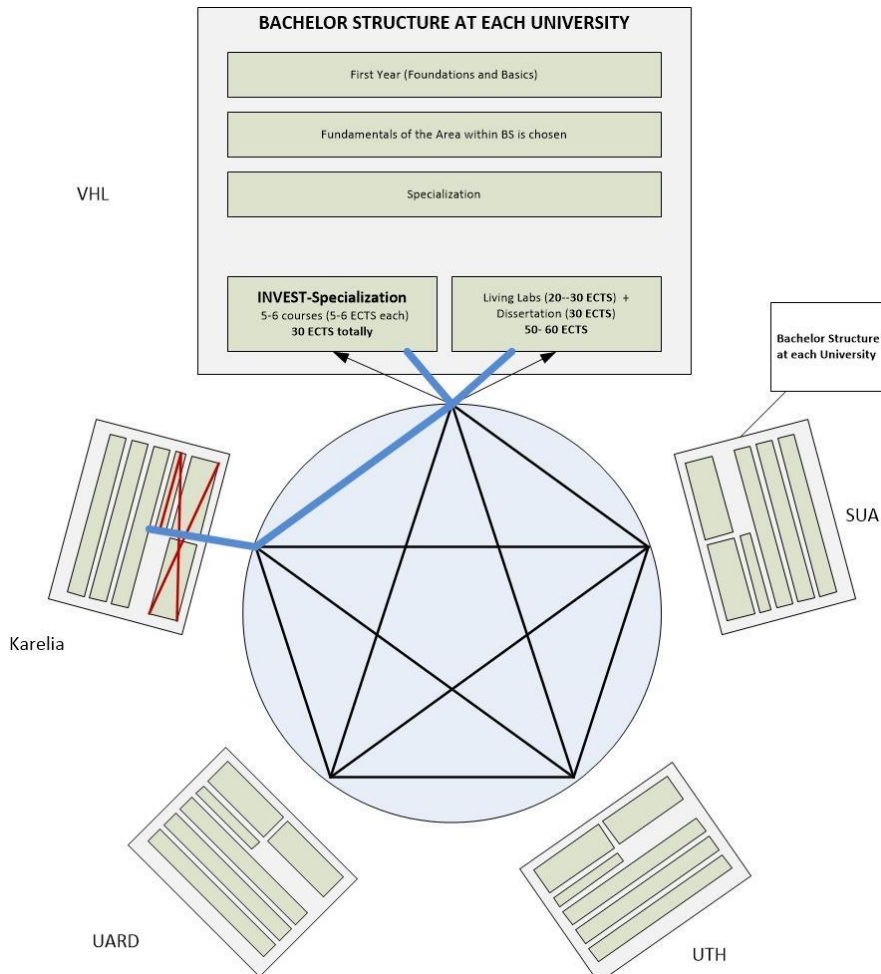
Fig. 3. Structure of the bachelor's degree program specializations.

C.   *INVEST postgraduate programs.*

The Alliance introduced four master's degree programs, to enhance students' expertise in INVEST-related topics and address complex issues in the regions at hand. These programs, focusing on advanced research and problem-solving skills, are designed to attract students from diverse backgrounds and countries. The programs are collaboratively developed by INVEST partners, adhere to European standards for joint degrees, and require evidence-based learning. They offer student mobility, the opportunity to study at two different universities, and integrate language courses in host universities' languages to highlight the multicultural characteristic of the effort.

There are many advantages related to the joint design and operation of postgraduate programs: First, for the students as they gain exposure to diverse

cultures and languages through studying in multiple institutions, experiencing sustainability problems in different regional contexts, and developing a European approach to complex problems. They also build a global network of professionals, researchers, and scientists for their future careers. Secondly for the faculty members as they can collaborate with partners to develop the master's programs, gaining a broader perspective on sustainability issues. The INVEST master's programs incorporate learning communities and the Living Labs methodology, providing new perspectives and expanding expertise. Faculty can also use mobilities for teaching at another partner university, provided that their expertise aligns with the master's subject. Finally, the newly introduced postgraduate degree methodology presents advantages for the Alliance institutions also. Partner universities save development time and investments by sharing common modules, ensuring seamless transfers, and offering more master's programs options. They also provide more opportunities for master's students outside their organizations, offering course elements in specializations not available by their faculty, and providing greater continuity in professional practice projects.

Quality Assurance

The INVEST project emphasizes the importance of identifying target group needs, feedback systems, and research to ensure project sustainability. Quality assurance processes include fair assessment, transparent criteria, and student feedback. For the INVEST case we distinguish two separate cases of quality assurance processes: (a) internal quality assurance which refers to the quality of the INVEST project implementation and cooperation and (b) external quality assurance which refers to the INVEST university we designed.

Conditions and recognitions are of significant importance for both aforementioned cases. We require student progress, consistent admission policies and recognition procedures. The academic role of INVEST is evolving towards student-centered learning, and staff development. Thus, they are both essential for the internal as well as the external quality assurance. Resources for student support include physical and human elements, tailored to diverse student needs. Data collection focuses on key performance indicators, student satisfaction, and career outcomes. Regular program reviews and adaptations involving students and stakeholders ensure program relevance and quality.

*A.	Internal quality assurance.*

The needs of the target groups, end users, and target sectors should be clearly identified throughout the project. This guarantees project sustainability and promotes a philosophy of advice, discussion, and investigation. INVEST

has created official feedback systems that offer quantifiable data and guide project planning and execution. To pinpoint the project's novel features and define its goals, research and awareness of the target population has been done. All INVEST Alliance partners have embraced innovative components, which they have been evaluated against current quality requirements. This process of continuous evaluation via evaluation forms distributed among all involved partners and stakeholders will be an on-going process until the end of INVEST project operation while there will be an ongoing analysis process to improve project quality. We must note that the success and sustainability of the project depend on everyone's understanding of the work package's goals, tasks, and requirements. Thus, to improve project sustainability and partner satisfaction INVEST established a culture of respect and mutual consideration.

B.   External quality assurance.

The following factors are taken into account for the quality assurance processes for assessment since they are crucial for tracking students' progress and careers: (a) the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved, (b) students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process, (c) when possible, assessment is carried out by more than one examiner, (d) the regulations for the assessment are published in advance.

In terms of the conditions and recognitions needed for the external quality, it is in the best interest of individual students, programs, institutions, and systems to provide the circumstances and assistance required for students to advance in their academic careers, which is one of the key objectives of the INVEST project's quality assurance. When students are movable within and across higher education institutions as part of this EU University, having appropriate entrance, recognition, and completion procedures is crucial. The implementation of access policies, admission procedures, and criteria have been implemented and they are transparent and consistent. Furthermore, partner institutions have set up procedures and equipment to gather, monitor, and act on data on student development. Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility in INVEST. Appropriate recognition procedures in partners' countries are based on: institutional practice for recognition being in accordance with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention; cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies, and the national ENIC/NARIC center in order to ensure consistent recognition across the country. Documentation describing the certification attained, the learning outcomes that were attained, and the

context, level, content, and status of the studies that were undertaken and successfully finished are provided to students.

Discussion Living Labs as Knowledge Initiators

Studies on regional development and sustainability of urban and rural areas in Europe are crucial to promoting creativity in higher level education and society. Activities in education and research may be intended to address societal challenges and develop solutions for specific problems. "Living Laboratories" (Living Labs) present a significant opportunity to evaluate everyday activity and cooperatively explore possibilities by fostering contact between researchers and users. The Living Labs are a co-construction method introduced by INVEST Alliance universities to create student competencies and learning objectives for educational components in bachelor's and postgraduate education by resolving complex, multifaceted societal challenges (Figure 4).
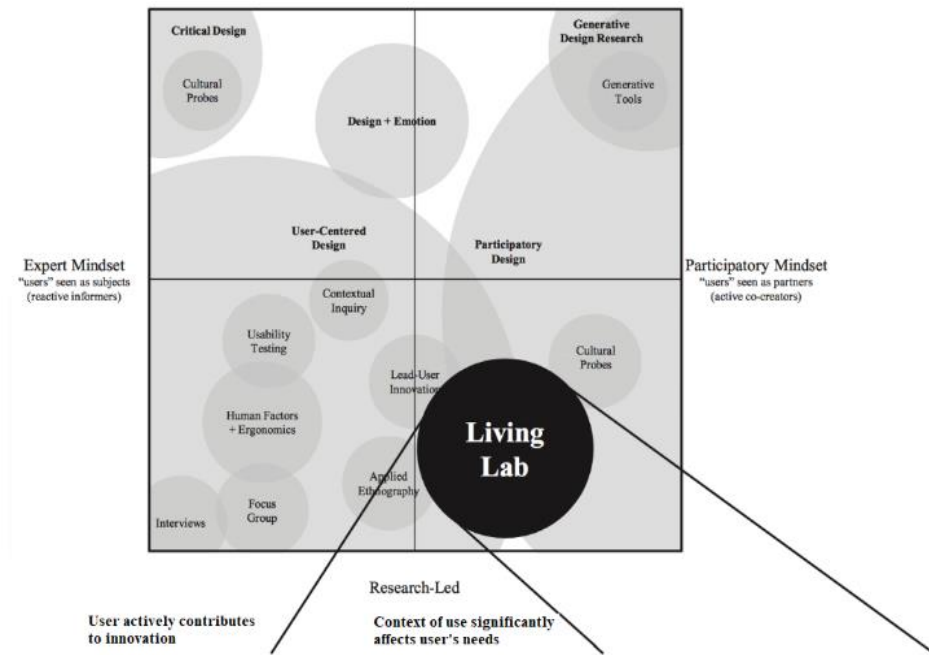
Fig. 4. The interconnection between the expert and participatory mindset in the Living Labs concept.

Living laboratories have strong relationships to the areas they live, whether those areas are cities, regions, or university campuses. In an open innovation paradigm, which might be utilizer-driven, enabler-driven, provider-driven, or user-driven, they combine research and practice (Masseck, 2017). The benefit of a Living Lab approach is that it enables participants and stakeholders to engage in reflection that can lead to a variety of outcomes,

including new knowledge for operations development, new knowledge to support operations development, new knowledge for product development and business development, and solutions for problems encountered in daily life that are always open-source or part of commons that are being developed (Filho et al., 2023; Andone et al., 2022).

Student and faculty mobility
Academic mobility is a manner to internationalize the academic curriculum to foster learners' integral development. Student learners consider that the academic mobility significantly contributes to fostering disciplinary competences and technological and investigative skills. In INVEST the value of mobility of students and faculty is taken as one of the most important pillars in promoting European education. Equal value also relates to the following activities with the students/faculty once they return from their academic experience. In the following paragraphs we present the advantages related to students, faculty, the involved institutions and finally the countries of the institutions.

A.   Advantages for the students
One of the greatest advantages is the _Diverse Learning Experience_. By being exposed to many cultures, languages, and educational systems, students' horizons and perspectives are broadened. At the same there exists _Education Enhancement_. This is because students' academic experiences are enriched and given the opportunity to explore specialist topics thanks to access to courses and resources at partner universities. Students also gain _Language Proficiency_ which is a key asset in today's increasingly interconnected world and is frequently enhanced by students studying abroad. The new adopted educational environment offers to students an increase of their _Global Networking_. It can be easily proven that, creating global networks can be a big help in their future professions by opening doors for collaboration and employment prospects. Students also gain _Cultural Competency_, which enhances their capacity to function in intercultural environments. Finally, we need to highlight the characteristic of _Personal Development_ since, studying and living abroad encourage independence, flexibility, and resilience, all of which promote personal development.

B.   Advantages for the institutions' faculty.
For the faculty the most important advantage is the _Research Collaboration_ since, faculty members can work together on research projects and publications with colleagues from affiliated institutions. At the same time, faculty members of different institutions become exposed to _Pedagogical Innovation_ by observing various teaching philosophies and techniques can

encourage pedagogical innovation. *International Recognition* is also another characteristic that comes with their mobility because, their reputations and international recognition can both be improved by their involvement in
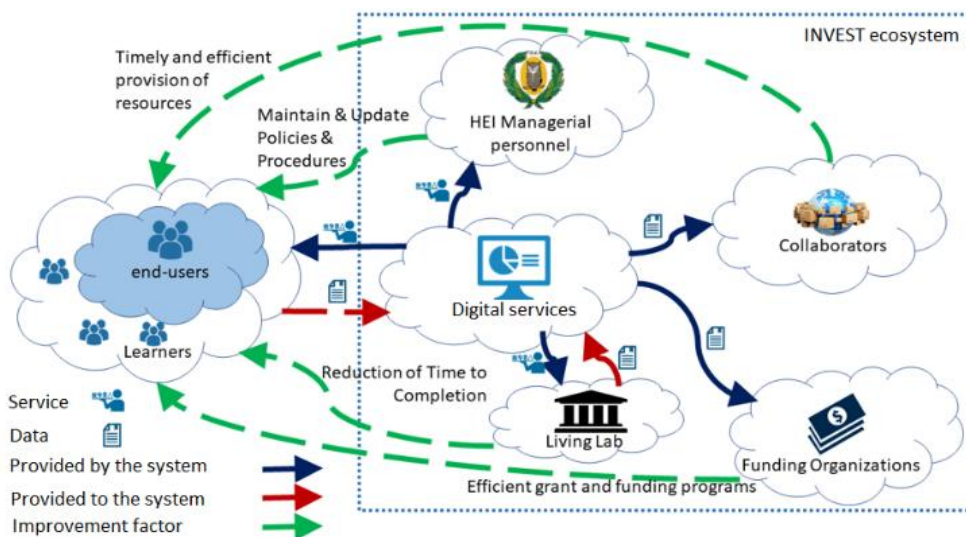
European Universities Alliances.

Fig. 5. EDUC8EU technical architecture

Finally, the aspect of *Opportunities for Networking* holds also for them as for the students. Faculty members can broaden their contacts in the business world, which may result in new collaborations and research opportunities.

C.   *Benefits to institutions and countries.*

Being a member of the European Universities Alliances can help an institution gain *Enhanced Reputation* and become known as a major player in international research and education. This also creates *Student Attraction* since it is simpler to draw in international students, which contributes to a diversified and active campus environment. The mobility of students and faculty brings *Collaboration with Partner Institutions* which can boost the output, impact, and visibility of research. At the same time, *Sharing Resources* can reduce costs and enhance infrastructure. This includes sharing libraries, labs, and other facilities but also boosts *Institutional Learning and Continuous Improvement* by studying top practices at partner universities.

From the side of the participating countries, nations always look for the *Talent Retention* at their home country. However, through tuition and living costs, the presence of overseas students supports the community's economy and creates an *Economic Impact*. By collaborating among European Universities Alliances, research can be advanced, which is good for the nation's knowledge economy thus there is great *Research Advancement*.

Finally, promoting international mobility encourages diplomatic efforts and _Cultural Interchange_, which improves relations between nations.

The Invest Digitalization

The INVEST digital services represent fundamental components of the INVEST university. Leveraging advanced technologies such as AI, fuzzy logic, and semantic web technologies, these services aspire to revolutionize the educational landscape. They facilitate seamless information sharing within partner universities, across collaborators, living labs, adjunct faculty, and funding organizations. More importantly, they extend their reach across the entire INVEST ecosystem (Figure 5), with the ultimate goal of optimizing the educational process while concurrently minimizing associated costs. This strategic digitalization aims to position INVEST university as a prominent player within the tertiary sector, emphasizing functionality, effectiveness, sustainability, and competitive advantage. It achieves this by satisfying societal demands and enabling all stakeholders (partner universities, collaborators, funding organizations) to create shared value within a well-defined modeling framework (Porter and Kramer, 2018).

The EDUC8EU software platform represents a significant facet of INVEST's digital services. This intelligent academic advising system leverages cutting-edge technologies to offer tailored recommendations for students' educational journeys. EDUC8EU aggregates and analyzes data from diverse reputable sources, continuously enriching its database with information from widely recognized career inventories such as ESCO and o*net classifications (Iatrellis, Kameas and Fitsilis, 2018) This knowledge repository supports INVEST European University programs at all academic levels, spanning bachelor, master, and doctoral offerings, along with extracurricular educational activities like Winter/Summer schools and living labs. EDUC8EU is designed to encompass the entire lifecycle of the academic advising process, providing a parameterizable toolkit to address diverse business and educational needs and scenarios. Designed to empower students with valuable insights into their chosen learning pathways, the system includes a powerful skill gap analysis component. By identifying skill gaps early on, students can make informed decisions about their learning pathway selections. This strategic approach ensures that they are equipped with the necessary skills to excel in their chosen fields upon graduation.

The Virtual Campus (Figure 6) is yet another facet of INVEST's digital service offerings, serving as a cornerstone within the INVEST alliance. This secure, scalable, and contemporary application acts as a central gateway, supporting users across all partner universities. It facilitates collaborative development, encompassing joint degrees, courses, mobility programs, and training materials, including lifelong learning opportunities. The platform's

primary objective is to digitalize and standardize educational and administrative processes across the alliance, simplifying registration and admission procedures. The Virtual Campus public website extends its services to guest and public users, providing extensive information on participating universities, available bachelor's and master's programs, course listings, instructor profiles, news, events, registration, login services, an online repository, FAQs, and contact information. Additionally, the platform integrates a range of built-in modules, enhancing team collaboration, process management, and overall productivity, establishing itself as an invaluable tool for INVEST's academic initiatives.
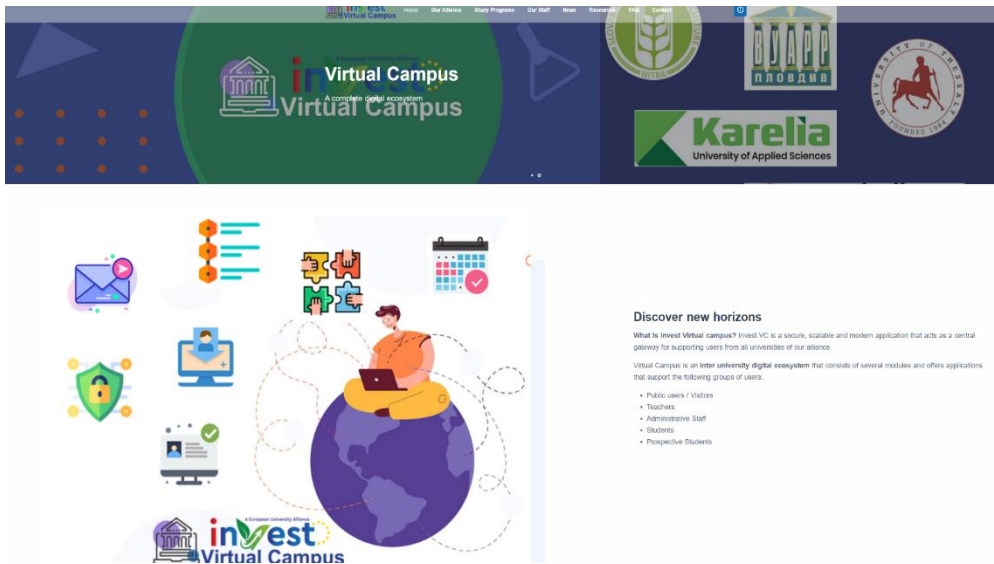
Fig. 6. INVEST's digital services ecosystem.

Internationalization

Political unpredictability and migratory flows all increased in Europe over the past ten years. European leaders have advocated for EU-wide policies that support social cohesion, integration, and equality throughout the continent during tumultuous political and social times. The European University Initiative (EUI), and especially INVEST as new flagship program for the internationalization of higher education throughout Europe, is one of the main actors in advancing European values and identity, contributing to quality assurance, and increasing the competitiveness of higher education in Europe via strategic and transnational collaborations.

At the same time, Europe has a long history of participating in the formation of strategic alliances, knowledge collaborations, and joint initiatives, thus cross-border education collaboration and mobility are nothing new to the continent. The Bologna process, the European Qualifications Framework, the common quality assurance, and the European Credit Transfer

System were some of the initiatives that the European Education Area, which was the first vision to be implemented, focused on bringing together national higher education systems. The second vision included university consortiums, joint and double degrees, and international research networks in addition to shared standards. INVEST represents part of this second vision. The third and present vision places a strong emphasis on eliminating barriers from cross-border cooperation by establishing new institutions outside of existing national jurisdictions through the European Universities Initiative and through funding competition and diversity.

Along these lines, INVEST presents a new paradigm for global higher education in the EU as the ultimate higher education endeavor and a long-term plan (Estermann, Pruvot and Stoyanova, 2021). INVEST makes a great effort for promoting internationalization in higher education since 2020, highlighting its importance in response to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. From the beginning of the INVEST project operation, all participants have made the shift for internationalization from a marginal aspect to a key element of reform strategies, driven by economic rationales and geopolitical changes. Key manifestations of INVEST internationalization include student and scholar mobility, reputation building, and a shift from cooperation to competition. INVEST represents the new European educational system supported by the "European Education Area 2025" that will not be hampered by borders with the objective of uniting Europeans to address social concerns, fill skills gaps, and boost the competitiveness of European higher education on the global stage (Brooks and Rensimer, 2023). To comprehend the consequences and impacts of the INVEST Alliance operation and whether these impacts coincide with the structural processes in European higher education, we distinguish three different scenarios in terms of building these processes:

(1) The *EUI Ivy League scenario* where EUI participants promote excellence through social cohesion, cooperation, and inter-European knowledge diplomacy. The consortiums will serve as representatives of the European level league and attract top talent. However, the EUI model's international competitiveness can lead to institutional isomorphism, with non-EUI universities forced to conform to an EUI-friendly model, reinforcing the divide between elite and mass education.

(2) The *well-endowed EUI institutions scenario* (Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities, 2020) where, the EUI supports existing strategic alliances and networks with better funding, often viewed as glorified strategic alliances. EUI funding is used to elevate existing alliances or consortia with well-funded universities, avoiding a "Matthew Effect" (Claeys-Kulik, 2019) and closing the

innovation gap within Europe. It is not funding new alliances but rather existing ones.

(3) The *European Status Quo scenario* where the EUI is focused on a convergent internationalization of all universities. The adaptation of the model throughout Europe sparks a new status quo in higher education, as participation is inevitable because of marginalization of non-involvement. The EUI becomes the model for all universities in Europe. Through forced participation, smaller countries and institutions are integrated into the whole EUI framework.

Conclusion

Briefly summarize the most important conclusions and the take-home message of the article.

Sustainable education can be achieved through a variety of complementary activities and practices. The INVEST Alliance European University educational model incorporates a number of these described in the previous sections, providing fresh ideas for a more inclusive, egalitarian, and sustainable educational system to the European Higher Education Area. In order to transform higher education for the benefit of our ecosystem and all of its internal (students, staff, researchers) and external stakeholders (companies, local communities, the civil society at large), the INVEST model develops a holistic approach that integrates content, tools, pedagogies, joint bachelor and postgraduate degree programs, a portfolio of mobility channels, and a set of innovative teaching/learning environments. It has been found that blended mobility challenge-based project courses, which bring together students working remotely to address a problem posed by a corporation integrated in an international and interdisciplinary team, are particularly effective at fostering employability and internationalization.

Through internationalization at home (virtual mobility) activities that give students the chance to experience international contacts during their studies regardless of any barriers to international mobility they may face, a variety of structured bachelor specializations and master's programs, or more generally joint courses, can significantly boost mobility rates. These two real-world examples are only a couple of the many possibilities INVEST is investigating to revolutionize higher education and add a truly inclusive dimension. After 2020, there is a "new game" in the field of higher education thanks to the European Universities project and the altered social climate brought on by the covid pandemic in Europe. Due to this, European Universities now have a rare chance to drastically change the way higher education is delivered. All initiatives, and development of best practices correspond to a solid foundation for new universities to become part of the modern stream in higher education.

Data Availability: All the data are included in the content of the paper.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

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The Correlation between the Bone Morphotype and Density and Root Apical Resorption of the Anterior Teeth Due to Orthodontic Forces

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Abstract
The potential side effects of modern orthodontic treatment and its unfavorable impact on dentition and hard tissues have been extensively discussed in professional literature for decades. The presence of uncontrolled forces can result in pulp necrosis, radicular reabsorption, and/or loss of alveolar bone. Dehiscence and fenestration are more commonly found in anterior than posterior teeth, where only the periodontal ligament and the mucosa protect the dental root.
Most studies investigating the effect of periodontal phenotype over gingival recession in orthodontic patients have primarily focused on examining the soft tissues. However, due to the vulnerability of thin alveolar bone, the previous evaluation of orthodontic candidate patients may also include the analysis of hard tissues. Bone density plays an important role in facilitating orthodontic tooth movement, such that reductions in bone density can significantly increase movement velocity. These types of localized density changes can

affect the rate of orthodontic tooth movement and may also influence the risk of unwanted outcomes, such as the occurrence of dental external apical root resorption.

According to the literature, the links of root resorption with the bone morphotype and the density are relevant in clinical dentistry but have not been studied in detail. However, the existing data is not yet conclusive.

Keywords: External tooth root resorption (EAAR), bone mineral density (BMD), orthodontic tooth movement (OTM), the bone morphotype, cone beam computed tomography (CBCT)

Introduction

The potential side effects of modern orthodontic treatment and its unfavorable impact on dentition and hard tissues have been extensively discussed in professional literature for decades. However, the existing data are not yet conclusive (Katarzyna et al., 2021).

One of the axioms in orthodontics holds that the bone follows the tooth during its movement through the alveolus. This is possible thanks to bone remodeling — a coupled process of bone resorption and apposition elicited by the mechanical force applied to the tooth by an orthodontic appliance (Krishnan V, et al., 2009), (Nouri M, et al., 2014).

The ratio between remodeling of the alveolar process and tooth movement is claimed to be 1:1. If this ratio is preserved, the root of the tooth is always supported by the alveolar bone, and no bone loss occurs during orthodontic treatment (Baloul S, et al., 2016).

External apical root resorption (EARR), a permanent loss of hard tissue on the root apex of a tooth, is one of the most undesirable side effects during orthodontic treatment. The prevalence of ARR varies from 20 to 100% among orthodontic patients (Baumrind S, et al., 1996).

Literature review

Severe External Apical Root Resorption (EARR) is rare, with an incidence between 1 and 5%, but the resorption can be more than 5 mm or one-fourth of the root length. EARR can cause an imbalanced ratio of crown and root in the affected teeth, and even tooth loss, affecting patients' quality of life and orthodontic treatment results (Brezniak N, et al., 2002).

Orthodontic tooth movements are possible due to both bone resorption and apposition resulting from the application of forces on the dental crown. A primordial factor for this movement is the presence of enough alveolar bone thickness surrounding the root of the tooth (Iwasaki LR, et al., 2000). Orthodontists use force to move teeth in a controlled fashion to facilitate the proper positioning of the teeth and achieve a uniform distribution of forces

during occlusion. Tooth movement through the alveolar bone envelope, triggered by orthodontic strain, is a phenomenon that depends directly on the coordinated activity of osteoblasts, osteocytes, and osteoclasts. External apical root resorption (EARR) is root resorption that can be seen on standard diagnostic radiographs caused by the undesirable activity of osteoclastic cells on the root surface (Weltman B, et al., 2010).

The presence of uncontrolled forces can result in pulp necrosis, radicular reabsorption, and/or loss of alveolar bone. Alveolar bone loss that results in a defect without a bony lining is called dehiscence. However, if some bone remains in the most coronary part, the defect is defined as fenestration. Dehiscence and fenestration are more commonly found in anterior than posterior teeth, where only the periodontal ligament and the mucosa protect the dental root (Lindhe J, et al., 2015). Although it can occur in the absence of orthodontic treatment, its incidence increases when concurrent with orthodontic treatment.

Regardless of whether or not EARR is facilitated by orthodontic mechanical factors, the process leading to EARR implicates specific molecular pathways that orchestrate non-physiological cellular activation for root demineralization and the creation of dental root resorption pits. Differing alveolar bone densities and bone modeling/remodeling processes affect the strain on the dental root, thus influencing the orthodontic tooth movement (OTM) process and the increased occurrence of EARR as a deleterious secondary effect (Hartsfield JK, et al., 2009).

However, EARR concurrent with orthodontic force is a complex trait, with multiple factors involving the reaction of the dental root, periodontal ligament, and alveolar bone to the force-induced strain on the root. It is clear that how all of these factors affect alveolar bone density has an effect on the degree and duration of strain on the dental root, leading to a cascade of resorption of the dental root. The combination of factors that may result in this complex trait appears to vary from sample to sample and likely varies from individual to individual, making a precise prediction of the occurrence of EARR unlikely. Although with sufficient study, a relatively qualitative high, medium, or low risk may someday be possible to determine, these would not be absolutes (Alejandro I-L, et al., 2016), (Januário AL, et al., 2008).

Bone density plays an important role in facilitating orthodontic tooth movement, such that reductions in bone density can significantly increase movement velocity. These types of localized density changes can affect the rate of OTM and may also influence the risk of unwanted outcomes, i.e., the occurrence of dental external apical root resorption (Alejandro I-L, et al., 2016).

Bone mass is a function of bone size and volumetric bone mineral density (BMD) and is a key determinant of bone strength. It is a measure of

the combined amount of bone matrix and mineral content within a segment of bone. Bone Mineral Density (BMD) is a clinical proxy for estimating bone mass that takes into account the concentration of calcium and other minerals and estimates bone strength (Alejandro I-L, et al., 2016).

Bone modeling changes the shape of bone resulting in changes in bone morphology. The ability to change bone morphology is due to bone resorption and formation occurring in an uncoupled manner and on separate surfaces. In contrast, bone remodeling is the mechanism based on the coupled and balanced activities of bone resorption and formation along specific sites on the same bone surface that ensures turnover while maintaining bone mass and gross morphology. This allows for adaptation to both mechanical loading and the requirements of calcium and phosphate metabolism (Baron R, et al., 2013), (Roberts WE, et al., 2006). While modeling along the periosteal surface is key for maintaining alveolar bone support during tooth movement, both bone modeling and remodeling are involved in the orthodontic response (Roberts WE, et al., 2006).

Alveolar bone density on root resorption is assessed controversially. A part of the studies has established that the denser the alveolar bone, the more root resorption occurs during orthodontic treatment. According to Reitan, a strong continuous force affecting alveolar bone of less density causes the same root resorption as a mild continuous force affecting alveolar bone of higher density (Brezniak N, et al., 1993). It is more difficult to resorb with orthodontic pressure than bundle bone. Wainwright has stated that bone density determines tooth movement rate but has no relation to the extent of root resorption (Brezniak N, et al., 1993). In 1985, Lekholm and Zarb listed four bone qualities found in the anterior regions of the jawbone (Fig.1) (Lekholm U, et al., 1985).
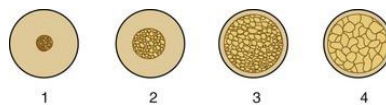
Figure 1. Lekholm & Zarb classification:
 Type I: The entire bone is composed of very thick cortical bone.
Type II: A thick layer of cortical bone surrounds a core of dense trabecular bone.
Type III: A thin layer of cortical bone surrounds a core of trabecular bone of good strength.
Type IV: A very thin layer of cortical bone with low-density trabecular bone of poor strength

In combination, these four macroscopic densities constitute the four bone categories described by Misch (D1, D2, D3, and D4). D1 bone is primarily dense cortical bone, D2 bone has dense to thick porous cortical bone on the crest and coarse trabecular bone underneath, D3 bone has a thinner porous cortical crest and fine trabecular bone within, and D4 bone has almost no crestal cortical bone. The fine trabecular bone composes almost all of the total volume of bone (Misch CE, Bidez MW, et al., 2005) (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Misch Bone Density Classification

Bone Density	Description	Tactile Analog	Typical Anatomical Location
D1	Dense cortical	Oak or maple wood	Anterior mandible
D2	Porous cortical and coarse trabecular	White pine or spruce wood	Anterior mandible Posteriormandible Anterior maxilla
D3	Porous cortical (thin) and fine trabecular	Balsa wood	Anterior maxilla Posteriormaxilla Posterior mandible
D4	Fine trabecular	Styrofoam	Posterior maxilla

D1   D2   D3   D4
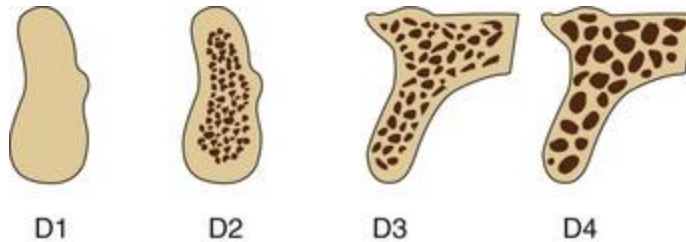
Cementum is harder than alveolar bone and more mineralized; more fibers of periodontal ligaments are inserted into cementum than in alveolar bone. Thus, osteoclasts have less possibility to injure the cementum layer and induce root resorption (Roberts-Harry D, et al; 2004).

Non-invasive Techniques for Bone Mass Measurement

The gingival phenotype, characterized by gingival thickness and keratinized tissue width, and bone morphotype, characterized by bone thickness and its morphology, are the main parameters used to categorize periodontal phenotype. Most studies investigating the effect of periodontal phenotype on gingival recession (GR) in orthodontic patients have primarily focused on soft tissues. However, due to the vulnerability of thin alveolar bone, the previous evaluation of orthodontic candidate patients may also include the analysis of hard tissues (Jaime A. et al; 2021).

Nowadays, the gold standard for the 3D study of bone morphotype is cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT).

The literature on the anatomy of the alveolar bone of the anterior teeth, utilizing high-resolution cone-beam computed tomography (HR-CBCT), is still lacking despite the significance of 3D evaluation of bone morphotypes. Our objectives were to identify apical root resorption in orthodontic patients and to evaluate alveolar bone thickness and bone density.

Materials and methods

The search for patient archives from the previous study at the Grigol Robakidze University Dental Center "Gruniverse" was conducted systematically. The required information was gathered by a team of trained professionals using the center's database and record-keeping system. The search was performed based on specific criteria, including the study timeframe from June 2022.

According to the data from our previous research related to the Impact of Orthodontic Forces on the Occurrence of Iatrogenic Tooth Root Resorption, the most commonly affected age group was 18-35, treated with non-removable orthodontic appliances (brace system). External apical root resorption (EARR) of tooth roots was mostly observed in women. The frequency of the abovementioned complication of orthodontic treatment was observed primarily in cases of the upper and lower incisors. Complications due to orthodontic forces occurred in only 12 patients in total.

The objectives of the recent research are as follows:

Assess the relationship between bone morphotype and density and tooth root resorption caused by orthodontic treatment.

Establish exclusion criteria: Patients with systemic diseases or the use of any prescription drugs that might have an impact on bone metabolism processes and patients with odontogenic acute or chronic apical periodontitis. This study comprised 56 patients, including 28 patients with non-removable orthodontic appliances of different age groups: 14 patients from Group A (12- to 17) and 14 patients from Group B (18- to 35), and 28 patients with removable orthodontic appliances of different age groups: 14 patients from Group A1 (12- to 17) and 14 patients from Group B1 (18- to 35). Regarding gender distribution, there were 14 males and 14 females in Groups A, and A1 (50%/50%), and the same pattern was observed in Groups B and B1.

To achieve the study goal, patients from both the research and control groups underwent cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT) studies, and statistical processing and comparative analysis of the obtained results were carried out. The HR-CBCT images were taken using a KAVO, Dental Excellence, OP 3D device (Finland).

The bone morphotype resulted in a mean buccal bone thickness of 0.343 (0.135) mm for the thin biotype and 0.754 (0.128) mm for the thick/average biotype. Bone morphotypes have been radiographically measured with cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT) (Pierpaolo Cortellini, et al., 2016).

The evaluation included 336 anterior teeth (canines (C), lateral incisors (LI), and central incisors (CI)) of the 56 patients from the 1st and 3rd quadrants. Each image was positioned along the main axis of the tooth, passing the sagittal plane over the root's longest buccal-lingual diameter. The thickness of the alveolar bone was measured in both the maxilla and mandible at three levels on the buccal surfaces: (1) Cervical level (CeL), at the level of a line perpendicular to the tooth's main axis, traced at 1 mm from the CEJ, (2) Apical level (ApL), at the level of a line perpendicular to the tooth's main axis, passing through the root apex, and (3) Middle level (MiL), at the level of an equal line between the previous two (Fig. 1, Fig. 2)).

The purpose of this study was to quantitatively evaluate the density of the alveolar bone at the incisors and canines of both the upper and lower jaw. Fifty-six sets of computed tomographic (CT) images were selected, and bone density was measured.

Figure. 1. The measurement of the bone morphotype by CBCT scan
(teeth 1.2, 3.1 with EARR)
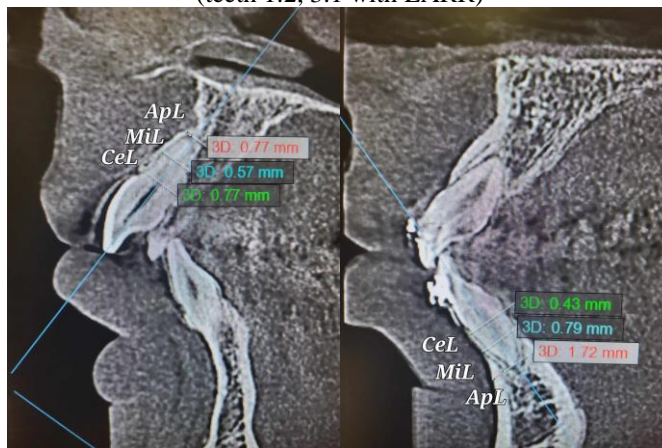
Figure. 2. The measurement of the bone morphotype by CBCT scan
(teeth 1.3, 3.2 without EARR)
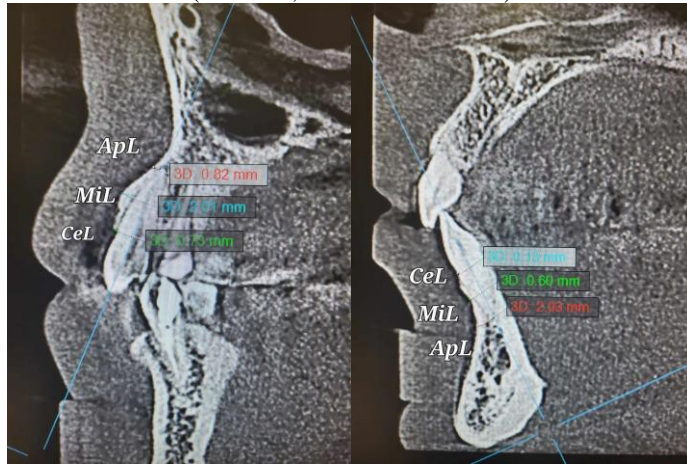
Statistical Analysis

The study results were processed statistically. First of all, was analyzed how much tooth resorption in the study groups is statistically significantly higher. was calculated relative risk (RR)

$$RR = \frac{a/(a+b)}{c/(c+d)}$$

$$SE\{\ln(RR)\} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{a} + \frac{1}{c} - \frac{1}{a+b} - \frac{1}{c+d}}$$

$$95\%\ CI = \exp\left(\ln(RR) - 1.96 \times SE\{\ln(RR)\}\right) \quad to \quad \exp\left(\ln(RR) + 1.96 \times SE\{\ln(RR)\}\right)$$

The relative risk (RR), its standard error, and 95% confidence interval were calculated according to Altman, 1991 (Altman DG, 1991). As a result, a statistically significant difference was observed between the study and control groups regarding the risk of tooth root resorption as a complication of exposure.

Bone morphotype and bone density were observed in all four groups of patients to establish statistical evidence of the correlation between morphotype and bone density with tooth root resorption. Predictors and standard deviation were determined for this segment. The relationship with the development of tooth root resorption in patients with different tooth morphotypes was determined by the t-test. Mean values of the morphotype data and standard deviation were calculated in the groups with and without resorption before conducting the t-test (Tab. 1)

Table 1:

Root Resorption	The bone morphotype Mean ± SD
Root Resorption-YES (n=11)	1.14 ± 0.58
Root Resorption-NO (n=45)	1.30 ± 0.28

t-test = 1.312, p=0.195 (Non-Significant)

Results

According to the research comparing the following three points (ApL, MiL, CeL) on the upper and lower jaw, the results are as follows: the point (CeL) is less than 1 mm in 98% in both jaws, the point (ApL) is more than 1 mm in 100% in both the maxilla and mandible, and the point (MiL) is less than 1 mm in 56% and more than 1 mm in 44% in the upper jaw, and less than 1 mm in 38% and more than 1 mm in 62% in the lower jaw.

The mean CBT for the maxillary canines and lateral and central incisors was 1.7 mm (range: 1.1 – 1.23 mm), 1.29 mm (range: 0.74 – 1.1 mm), and 0.88 mm (range: 0.56 – 1.21 mm), respectively. For the corresponding mandibular anterior teeth, it was 1.43 mm (range: 0.88 – 1.99 mm), 1.02 mm (range: 0.74 – 1.31 mm), and 1.22 mm (range: 0.82 – 1.63 mm), respectively.

From the studied 56 patients, the thick bone morphotype was observed in 39 patients, and 17 patients had the thin morphotype. As mentioned above, tooth root resorption due to orthodontic forces occurred only in 12 patients in total. Regarding age and sex, the bone morphotype was apportioned as follows: from the study group A, three patients had the thin morphotype, and one of them had the thick morphotype. From the study group A1, the thin morphotype was revealed in one patient and the thick morphotype in one patient as well. From the control group B, four patients with a thin morphotype and two of them with a thick one were observed. The average bone thickness was greater in the upper maxilla at the point (ApL). Similarly, the bone was significantly thicker at the same point in the mandible.

In patients with apical root resorption, the tendency toward thinning of the cortical bone is observed at the site of resorbed teeth; however, there is no susceptibility to thinning at the site of healthy teeth.

Figure. **3.** The bone morphotype
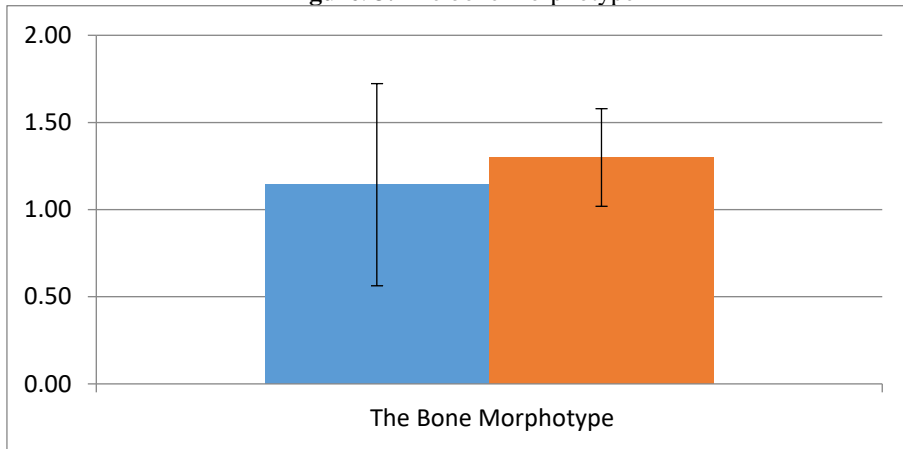
t-test = 1.312, p=0.195 (Non-Significant)

The statistically significant difference in tooth root resorption was observed among patients with different tooth morphotypes (Fig. 3, Fig. 5). The bone density of the maxilla ranged approximately between 899 and 1266 Hounsfield units (HU) at the alveolar bone. The bone density of the mandible ranged between 988 and 1548 HU at the alveolar bone. The highest bone density was observed in the lower canines. The density of the cortical bone was greater in the mandible than in the maxilla and showed a progressive increase from the incisor to the canines. In the maxilla, a lesser degree of regularity was observed.

The results of our study did not show any significant correlation between the bone morphotype and density and the rate of root resorption associated with orthodontic treatment. Despite the same bone morphotype and density, apical tooth root resorption is mostly revealed in females. No significant age difference was found (Table 2, 3, 4).

Figure 4. Measurement of the bone density by CBCT scan.
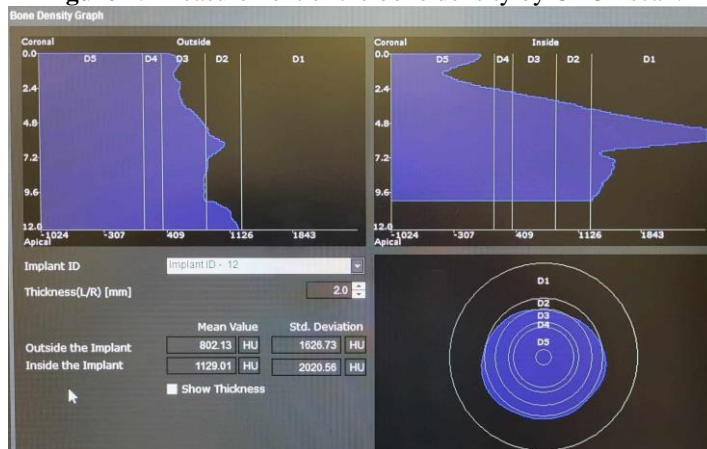
Figure 5. The average rate of bone density in the different tooth sites
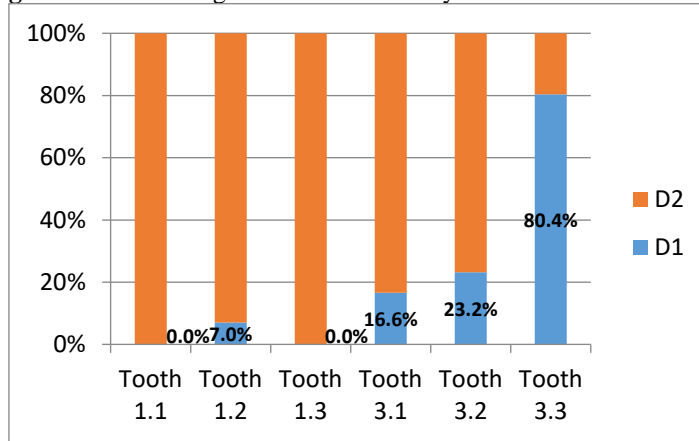
Table 2. The bone morphotype and density of the patients from study group A with EARR

Tooth number	Number of cases	The bone morphotype	The bone density	Fem.	Mal.
1.1	1	0.97	D2	1	0
1.2	1	1.2	D2	1	0
1.3	1	1.45	D2	1	0
3.1	4	1.12-1,2	D2	3	1
3.2	3	1,46-1.84	D2	2	1

Table 3. The bone morphotype and density of the patients from study group A1 with EARR

Tooth number	Number of cases	The bone morphotype	The bone density	Fem.	Mal.
1.1	1	0.11	D2	1	0
1.2	1	1.18	D2	1	0
3.1	1	1.76	D1	1	0

Table 4. The bone morphotype and density of the patients from study group B with EARR

Tooth number	Number of cases	The bone morphotype	The bone density	Fem.	Mal.
1.1	1	1,5	D2	1	0
1.2	3	0,93-1,02	D2	3	0
3.1	3	1.12-1,34	D2	1	2
3.2	3	1.1,46-1,57	D2	1	2
3.3	1	1,98	D2	0	1

Conclusion

Despite having the same bone morphotype and density, apical tooth root resorption of anterior teeth was mostly observed in females, with no significant age difference found. Out of the 56 studied patients, 39 had a thick bone morphotype, while 17 had a thin morphotype. The average bone thickness was greater in the upper maxilla at the point (ApL), and a similar pattern was observed in the mandible. In patients with apical root resorption, a tendency toward thinning of the cortical bone was observed at the site of resorbed teeth, with no susceptibility to thinning at the site of healthy teeth.

The highest bone density was observed in the lower canines. The density of the cortical bone in the anterior segment was greater in the mandible than in the maxilla and showed a progressive increase from the incisor to the canines. In the maxilla, a lesser degree of regularity was observed.

According to the results of the recent study, there was no significant correlation found between the occurrence of tooth root apical resorption of the anterior teeth due to orthodontic treatment and the bone morphotype and density of the patients.

Given the relevance of the problem, further research is required to determine the relationship between root hard tissue resorption caused by orthodontic forces and the shape of the apex, and the length of the root. Taking into account the patient's individual characteristics and choosing an orthodontic appliance to prevent complications caused by orthodontics, we believe that detailed studies will significantly simplify treatment planning. In addition to making treatment outcomes more predictable, they will also contribute to its stability and safety.

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The Issue of Podcast Effectiveness in Higher Education- A Case Study of the University of Georgia

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Abstract

The podcast, originating in 2001 in the U.S. and later expanding globally, challenges traditional media with its customizable content. Podcasts distinguish themselves by affording listeners the agency to curate content to their preferences, a departure from the prescriptive nature of conventional media. Comparable to having a bespoke show tailored to individual interests, podcasts have emerged as a sophisticated and customizable avenue for content consumption. This article explores the transformative role of podcasts in higher education in Georgia, investigating their developmental stages, diverse perspectives, and implications for the education system. With four main objectives, the research first examines divergent perspectives on podcast integration in higher education. It then presents qualitative and quantitative findings on podcast impact, focusing on comparative statistical research in Georgia and developed countries. Additionally, the study evaluates the effectiveness of podcasts as instructional tools and their contribution to the learning process. Lastly, it explores student preferences, seeking to understand why students favor podcasts over traditional courses and analyzing the implications of this shift. Revealing a prevalent interest among students, the study shows that they not only express interest but also independently integrate podcasts into their learning practices. The positive impact on student

knowledge levels, as indicated by the survey, adds valuable insights to the evolving relationship between podcasts and education in Georgia.

Keywords: Podcasts, podcasting, education, teaching, students, Georgia

Introduction

The greatest revolution and innovation of the 20th century is certainly the appearance and development of the Internet. It is currently a larger medium than television (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023).

It is obvious that the Internet plays an important role in their lives. And in the educational environment, its two greatest advantages are communication and information.

First known as an object of leisure, over time, the Internet has become one of the means of higher education. It has become a truly limitless and constantly evolving educational technology. During university courses, we see more and more computers or cell phones turned on and several professors promote them and do not oppose the technological development of our time. But there is still a question that arises – Is it really good that technologies start to invade all areas of our environment?

Is there a real risk that one day the Internet will play the role of teacher? To answer these questions which worry all of humanity today, we will try to analyze the qualities and defects of the use of the Internet in academia.

To better understand and explain this new phenomenon which has also penetrated the halls of Georgian universities, on the one hand, we studied international research on the subject, as well as we interviewed professors and students from Georgia. There are different approaches to the emergence of new technologies compared to traditional teaching methods. As it seems impossible to describe all points of view regarding learning techniques, we draw attention to two largest groups. As a result, two starkly opposing views were revealed.

Opposing opinions

As our subject of study concerns the methodology of podcasts in teaching, it seems reasonable to discuss the opinions of teachers who are against new technologies in general and those who consider the Internet revolution as a positive aspect of the learning and educating process. According to a group of scientists and students, technology has simplified and made study-related research more accessible. The Internet is described as 'the main source of information for young people for completing university assignments' (survey conducted in Georgia in September 2023). Research becomes more manageable as the Internet covers every area known to humanity. While young people can find a wealth of data on any subject, it is

crucial to visit reputable sites and check the sources. Additionally, research from Western countries indicates that information via the Internet is faster and easier to digest than reading an entire book (https://www.forbes.com/sites/robasghar/2021/02/01/why-the-smart-leaders-best-new-tool-is-the-old-fashioned-telephone/?sh=3aee41464d2b). Another positive aspect of the educational use of the Internet is online teaching, which is currently trendy in the educational sector. Young people can now learn remotely, take courses on the Internet, participate in online exams, and obtain diplomas.

People from all over the world can complete courses through online learning. The Internet, with its rapid and individualized communication, further simplifies the learning process. While the Internet will never fully replace traditional classroom lectures or books, it is undoubtedly the best way to gain in-depth knowledge on any subject. It seems interesting to review the educational aspects of podcasting, especially in higher education. Quality education is essential for students, whether in college or university. According to Western and Georgian scientists and professors, this learning is greatly appreciated when researchers have access to online files such as instructional videos, academic work samples, and advanced research materials. Teachers also play a crucial role in providing quality education to students (Richardson, W., 2006). They invest time in offering additional materials for student studies, such as creating websites for active learning. Students visit these sites to engage in interactive lessons and take essential academic quizzes for review.

However, it should be noted that another group of specialists in the same field finds that technological advancements have removed significant obstacles, making education more accessible to all. Many researchers faced limitations in their studies due to high costs, as highlighted by McFadden, A. (2008). Numerous individuals cannot afford to pay school fees or purchase books to facilitate quality learning. This is where the Internet has played a transformative role, allowing education to surpass imagination. Students can now access free educational videos on different sites and enjoy online courses at affordable prices. This inevitably raises questions about the evolving role and importance of teachers and the higher education system in general.

Massive insertion of new technologies into our daily lives
Particularly the widespread use of computers and cell phones has become even more pronounced following the pandemic. It's crucial to acknowledge that the health crisis and lockdowns have spurred a surge in distance education (Kay, Robin, 2012). In response to the challenging circumstances, teachers have displayed remarkable creativity and acquired

new technical skills to ensure educational continuity and enhance the available tools for students.

This period has witnessed a flourishing variety of podcasts across all disciplines, offering educational content that goes beyond traditional courses. These podcasts often blend educational elements with entertainment and explore innovative formats. Concurrently, young Georgians have actively embraced podcasting, recording, and broadcasting content on diverse subjects, including educational topics (https://www.trt.net.tr/georgian/podcasts).

Studies conducted by colleagues in the United States clearly highlight a substantial increase in the number of podcast listeners during the confinement period. For a comprehensive view, Hootsuite provides the following diagram:
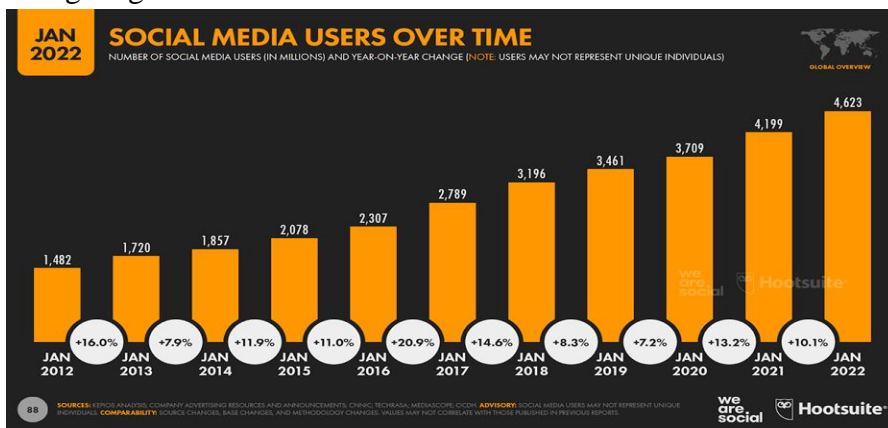
The latest report indicates a significant surge in the number of regular podcast listeners—those who listen daily—with an increase of more than 3.6 million. Simultaneously, the average number of episodes listened to per week has risen by 10%. It's noteworthy that podcast participation is not only increasing among heavy users; the overall podcast audience is growing at an average compound rate of 20%.

The American company Nelsen also offers us the following diagram:
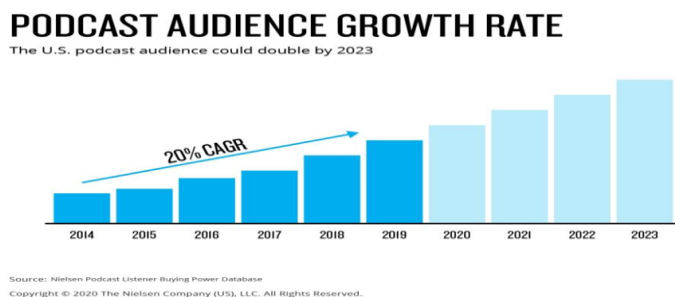
In this way, it becomes clear that the technique of podcasts is very current among the population of our time.

On January 18, 2023, the French newspaper Figaro published an article about the rise of podcasting in France among students from various faculties. According to the article, which highlights particularly high completion, listening, and subscription rates (8 out of 10 downloaded podcasts are listened to, according to the Harris Media 2022 study), podcasts are proving to be more than just a trend. They are achieving various communication objectives, including growth in notoriety, expansion of the community, and strengthening of the brand image. However, there are concerns about the potential negative impact on traditional or modern education in the long term. The article suggests that as students increasingly turn to podcasts, they may become less attentive in class, listen less carefully, and engage less with teachers compared to previous practices.

Due to these considerations, many higher education institutions in Western countries have recently made significant investments in media. The objective is to effectively convey their message to the youth, a particularly captive target audience. This has led to the emergence of numerous podcasts tailored for students, covering diverse topics such as orientation, student life, societal developments, career paths, and professional opportunities. Examples include 'Tomorrow is our Business' from HEC, 'Parcours d'entreprises' from ICAM, 'EDHEC Vox,' 'The Choice' by ESCP, and 'Imagine Your Future' by ISG.

However, in Georgia, as in many post-Soviet countries where the adoption of new technological advancements tends to be sluggish, the integration of new technologies has taken on a more widespread nature. Therefore, based on statistical data, the trajectory of Internet usage appears to be more straightforward (https://www.geostat.ge/en). Below, we provide statistical data on Internet usage for the years 2019 and 2023:
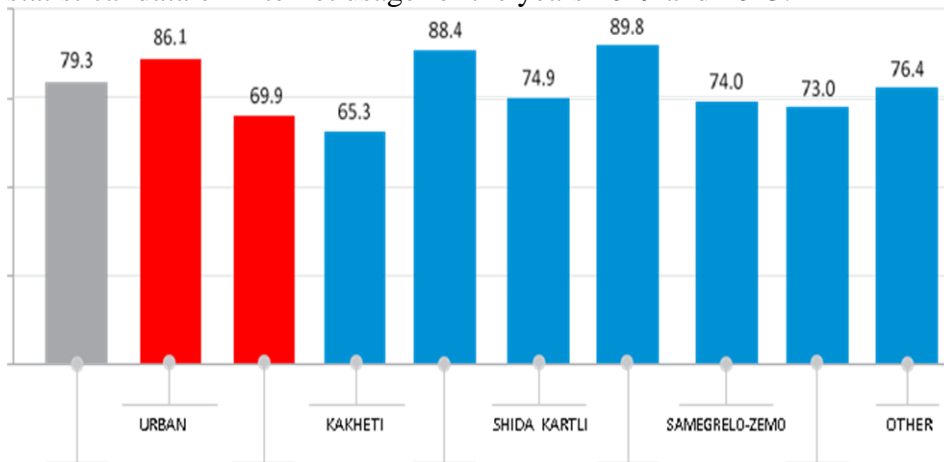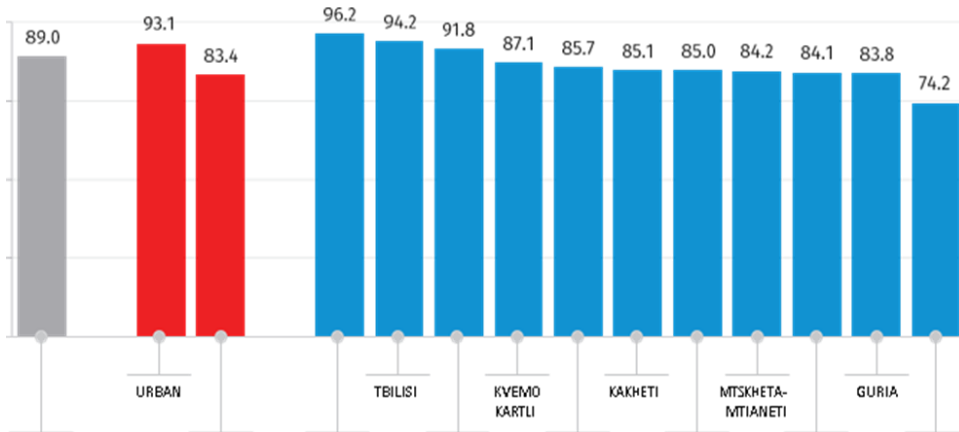
Like many other regions, Georgia and its teachers and students are no exception to these trends. Since 2020, podcasting has permeated the screens of young Georgians and has emerged as one of the preferred tools in the realm of higher education (https://www.geostat.ge/en).

The effectiveness and choice of podcasts for learning

It should be noted that university professors in Georgia do not yet incorporate podcasts into their teaching methods; rather, it is primarily students who choose this innovative approach to learning or general training. According to the majority of teachers in Georgia, 'the Internet and especially podcasts remain a leisure activity and not serious education' (survey conducted in Georgia in September 2023).

While the reasons for this popularization among students are diverse, this article focuses on highlighting the most widespread motivations among Georgian students. To gain a deeper understanding of what motivates today's students on this topic, we conducted a survey with more than 60 students in Georgia, exploring their interest in podcasts. The results are intriguing, as young people mainly discussed the phenomenon of enhanced learning or understanding of various subjects taught in universities. Furthermore, we observed variations in motivation based on the faculties surveyed (a study carried out in Georgia in September 2023).

Upon analyzing the responses of the students, distinct motivations emerged. Some expressed a desire to watch podcasts aligned with their center of interest, aiming to broaden their general knowledge (1). Others were motivated to delve deeper into humanitarian and sociological disciplines, demonstrating a keen interest in expanding their understanding of these fields (2). Additionally, there were students driven by the aspiration to learn foreign languages, recognizing the value of linguistic proficiency in today's interconnected world (3). For those enrolled in faculties associated with exact,

natural, and medical sciences, a noteworthy motivation was to use podcasts as a tool to better comprehend subjects that were inadequately explained by their professors (4).

Counting the percentage of goals, we can present the following table based on the reality of Georgian students:
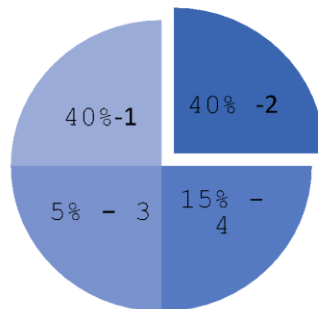
"When examining surveys conducted in the country, it becomes evident that students are still dissatisfied with the way teachers explain exact, natural, and medical sciences. Let's focus on the percentage of the fourth motivation, which unfortunately remains quite significant."

"According to researchers from around the world, this type of discipline has been traditionally explained in a strict manner for years, without incorporating stories or curious aspects of the cited subjects (https://www.lescoursduparnasse.com/specialite-physique-chemie-first).
Developed countries have launched campaigns aimed at making this group of disciplines more attractive to school or student audiences. While changes are evident in school textbooks, university programs have yet to reflect these modifications. It must be emphasized, however, that this concern does not apply to all teachers. Many are already making efforts to present their material in an interesting way. Nevertheless, some teachers resist new approaches and continue to focus on old methodologies of explanation."

Conclusion

Exploring the extensive research covering the historical, qualitative, and quantitative aspects of incorporating podcasts into education, along with specific statistical insights from Georgia, reveals a compelling narrative. It becomes evident that interest in podcasts is consistently growing, especially within the university sector.

Our aim is to examine both the positive and negative aspects of using podcasts. In Georgia, podcasts are vital tools for students to delve into their studies, but there is a challenge: a potential shift in the traditional role of teachers and a decrease in student interest in regular lectures. This challenge

is more apparent globally, where the fast-paced life, driven by heavy social media use, emphasizes the importance of visualization. This became especially evident during the Covid era when screens became crucial. Our exploration also considers the risks tied to heavy internet and artificial intelligence use in education, pointing out potential hazards with increased technology integration.

In drawing our conclusions, it is crucial to emphasize that Georgian university students are keenly aware of the current trends in the modern world. The incorporation of podcasting into their education is not just a departure from the norm; it is a smart adjustment to the changing dynamics of contemporary learning. It acknowledges that, in the pursuit of academic excellence, using podcasts brings several benefits. It caters to the fast pace of life, recognizes the preference for visual content, and reflects the flexibility needed in today's socio-technological environment. In essence, the ultimate aim remains unwavering: to study more effectively, delve into learning more profoundly, and grasp a deeper understanding in a world characterized by constant change.

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Enhancing the Adoption of Financial Innovations to Foster Socioeconomic Welfare

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Abstract

The integration of digital technologies has garnered global attention, with a primary focus on their potential to streamline the convergence of digital and non-digital economies. This trend is poised to generate self-employment opportunities and spur socio-economic development, transcending geographic boundaries. In the context of Georgia, where the number of digitally connected individuals is on the rise, it becomes imperative to ascertain the extent to which financial technologies deployed in the financial services industry contribute to the well-being of the population and business representatives. This research aims to assess the benefits of these technologies while acknowledging that their utilization does not impede the future implementation of novel financial innovations by institutions in the sector. While including both, qualitative and quantitative analysis, the study examines the significance of financial technologies in the country's economy in terms of financial resources and the impact on the well-being and growth of the population and companies. Emphasizing user-centricity, it underscores the need to prioritize the fulfillment of users' requirements. Notably, it is not solely traditional financial institutions that shape the landscape, but also technology firms offering innovative products and services, which exert a critical

influence on fostering a dynamic business environment. Furthermore, the evaluation of emerging technologies such as cloud computing, the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence, and blockchain elucidates their potential impact in enhancing the well-being of businesses and the general population. Nevertheless, given the current stage of their development, a comprehensive nationwide implementation of these technologies remains challenging.

Keywords: Financial innovation, digitalization, commercial bank, adoption, financial services, welfare, IoT

Introduction

Objective: The goal of the research is to study the impact of fintech on the activities of commercial banks and the overall growth of financial innovations, as well as to examine the transformation of the banking sector in the context of fintech integration. It also aims to simplify the cooperation between digital technologies and non-digital economies by assigning significant value in the current stage globally, to all components of the population, individual economic activities, and MSMEs representing the majority of Georgia, whose number is increasing, and the integration of fintech services with them. The recommendations were made based on the analysis of each mentioned aspect.

Literature Review:

The integration of financial technologies, diverse financial product offerings, and the establishment of accessible digital financial ecosystems are highly significant worldwide. These developments aim to facilitate alternative platforms for financial transactions, promote the practical utilization of extensive datasets, and harness the power of cloud technologies. Additionally, the creation of opportunities for fintech startups in the financial sector and the overall promotion of business development within the country is of utmost importance (Gamsakhurdia, T., & Kadagidze, L., 2022).

According to the Economic Freedom Index of 2021, Georgia ranked 7th among European countries, demonstrating a favorable outcome (Miller, T., Kim, A. B., & Roberts, J. M., 2021). This achievement can be attributed to the proactive adoption of new technologies in our country, showcasing the integration of advanced technologies on one hand, and the mandatory requirement for competitors to unveil their internal potential, facilitate business development, and adapt to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on the other hand.

The utilization of financial technologies signifies the integration of computer programs and technologies into the banking industry, enabling easier financial management and control for both micro and small businesses,

as well as large business representatives. The digitization of financial services creates an inclusive and efficient financial system, fostering sustainable economic growth as a result. Fintech initiates transformative changes in the financial sector, affecting financial companies, and the regulatory framework of the financial sector, as well as facilitating easier financial planning and control for businesses (Gamsakhurdia, T., & Kadagidze, L., 2022).

The digitalization of financial services signifies the creation of an inclusive and efficient financial system, which in turn promotes overall economic development. Financial technology's influence further extends to significant changes in financial products, payment systems, business models, active market participants, market structure, and even personal finance. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the prominence of fintech. Following the pandemic, the significance of fintech has become even more pronounced, as it contributes significantly to the implementation of key financial policies in countries, such as financial stability, governance, inclusivity, efficiency, innovation, competition, and the promotion of digital economy (International Monetary Fund., 2022).

Financially oriented business models and products initiated by financial technologies have the potential to significantly impact the development of a country's economy, which is especially relevant in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine (World Bank Group., 2022).

In this regard, it is necessary to establish a balanced political approach that addresses various risks associated with financial stability and consumer protection, as well as the confidentiality of user and investor data. Financial technologies have experienced significant growth in the functioning of financial institutions, necessitating changes in the sphere of banking services. It should be noted that the widespread adoption of fintech companies' services in countries is limited by certain restrictions and the continued importance of banking institutions in fulfilling their role in the economy, similar to traditional institutions.

Financial innovations and the institutional integration of the financial system reduce information asymmetry, strengthen the integrity of the database, facilitate operations for business representatives, and enhance their competitiveness (Wang, R., & Tan, J .2021). Additionally, there is a direct connection between financial innovations and the development of the financial sector, supporting the firm's overall well-being (Ndicu, N. D., 2018).

Innovation is crucial for societies as it is a three-part mechanism that combines innovation, investment, and competition to create wealth and distribute socio-economic benefits throughout the population. Innovation is particularly significant for the financial services sector, as it not only enhances sectoral efficiency but also contributes to the overall productivity of the

economy. This is evident not only in the early historical period but also in the post-World War II era (World Economic Forum., 2012).

It should be noted that the emergence of recent technologies and user demand has increased the importance of financial services that are secure and more accessible. Traditional and non-banking financial institutions have been reluctant to adopt financial technologies. Fintech companies have the potential to transform the landscape of the financial sector through the delivery of innovative products and services that address user needs, such as convenience, speed, simplicity, low costs, and security (Zeidy, I. A., 2022).

Financial innovation is not limited to financial inclusion but also has a strong connection to economic growth (Gul, F., Usman, M., & Majeed, M. T., (2018). The empirical evidence supports the positive relationship between financial inclusion and economic development. A global empirical study was conducted using data from 185 countries for the period 1996-2015. Financial inclusion was measured by indicators such as bank accounts, bank branches, ATMs, and life insurance premiums. Economic growth was evaluated based on overall domestic product per capita. The findings revealed a positive correlation between financial inclusion and economic growth (Gul, F., Usman, M., & Majeed, M. T., (2018).

Each of the above-mentioned findings highlights the fact that the banking sector is significant for the country's economic development, as it plays a vital role in utilizing economic resources efficiently and ensuring the well-being of its population

Research methodology:

The research includes both qualitative and quantitative analysis, examining the significance of financial technologies in the country's economy in terms of financial resources and the impact on the well-being and growth of the population and companies. The study is focused on a main research question, determining how important financial technologies are for the development of the country's economy and the welfare of the population and business representatives (Gamsakhurdia & Kadagidze., 2020). It also includes surveys to provide answers to the research question, covering both subjective and objective data. The implemented method allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

To answer the questions raised in the study regarding the evaluation of Georgian users' perception of financial innovations and their usage in daily operations, as well as the assessment of these products, a research study was conducted. The study encompassed a total of 500 individuals, consisting of 250 physical persons and 250 representatives connected solely to legal entities involved in banking operations. In the selection of legal entities, every sphere was covered, and consequently, interviews were conducted with 50

participants from the construction and real estate sector, 50 from the restaurant and food service sector, 50 from the hotel industry, 50 from the retail sector, and 50 representatives from beauty salons. The results, presented in Diagram 1 below, illustrate the distribution of opinions.

Diagram 1. Distribution of Legal Entities by Sectors

In order to provide an answer to the research question, it was necessary to examine respondents of different ages, considering both the presence of barriers related to age and the consideration of various social statuses. The analysis of pensioner respondents was conducted with the aim of investigating their banking behavior, particularly focusing on whether their pensions are deposited in a bank account and to what extent they frequently or generally use other banking services (see Diagram 2).
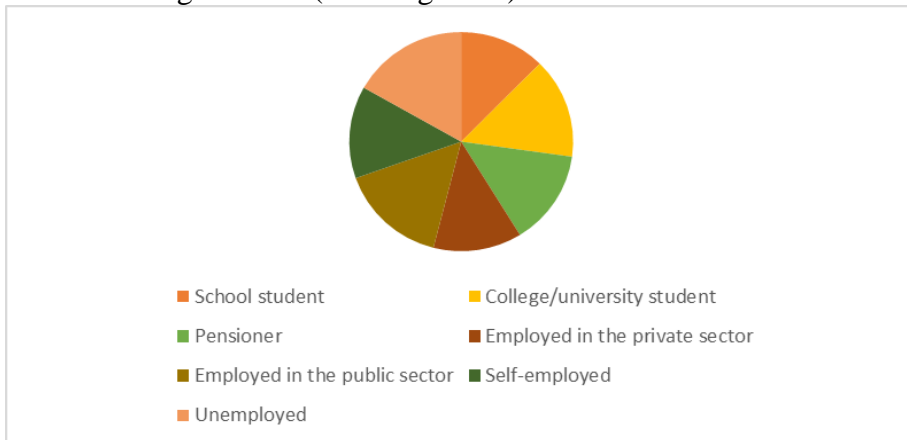
Diagram 2. Respondents' Social Status

Respondents were surveyed with the aim of examining their utilization of distance services, as financial innovations are increasingly employed in the provision of these services (refer to Diagram 3).
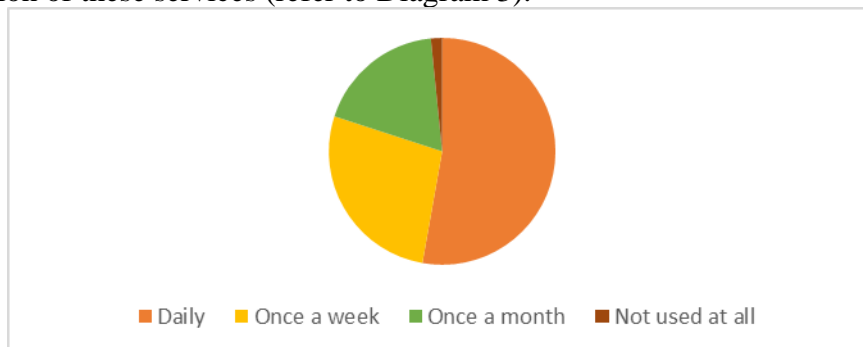
Diagram 3. Frequency of Using Distance Banking Services

As a result of the survey, it was determined that the majority of respondents use banking services on a daily or weekly basis, which indicates that financial technologies have become an integral part of these services in Georgia. It should also be noted that traditionally, it would have been more desirable for pensioners to receive banking services through branches, but the study yielded direct evidence that financial technologies are gaining credibility and popularity in our country.

The next question addressed the acceptance of distance products, which respondents can use independently. They had the option to choose one or more variants.
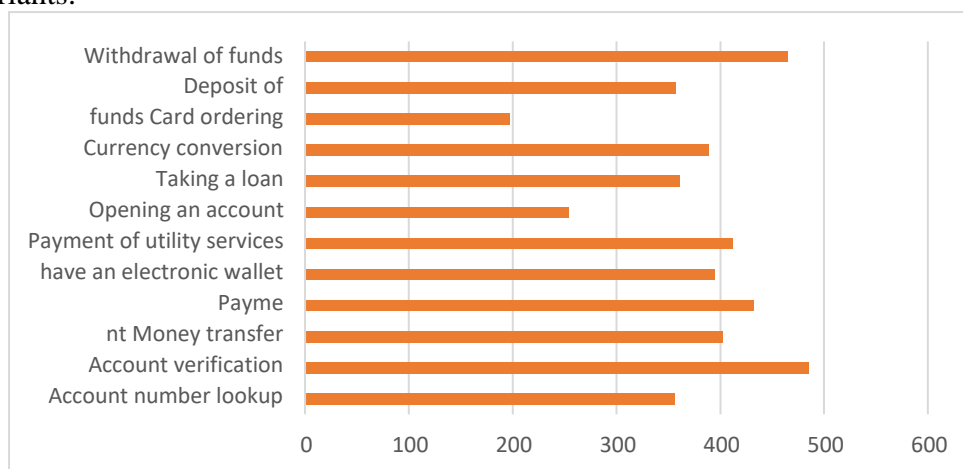
Diagram 4. Attitudes towards the Implementation of Distance Services

Based on the results presented in the diagram, it can be concluded that respondents are significantly interested in utilizing various remote banking services. In order to provide a response to the research question, it is noteworthy to consider the preferences towards the adoption of distance services.
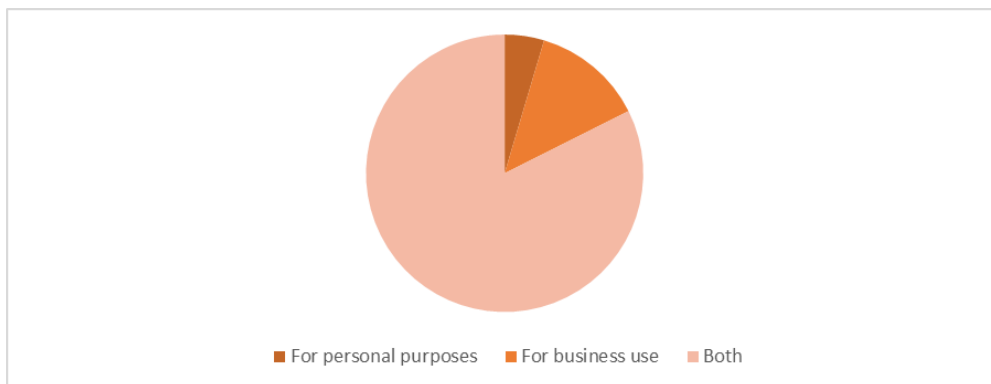
Diagram 5. Objectives of Remote Banking Services

The findings of the survey confirm that 85% of respondents utilize remote banking services for personal as well as professional purposes, which reflects the increasing importance of financial innovations in daily financial activities of the population.

The subsequent question aimed to determine to what extent users find it convenient to access remote banking services (refer to Diagram 6).
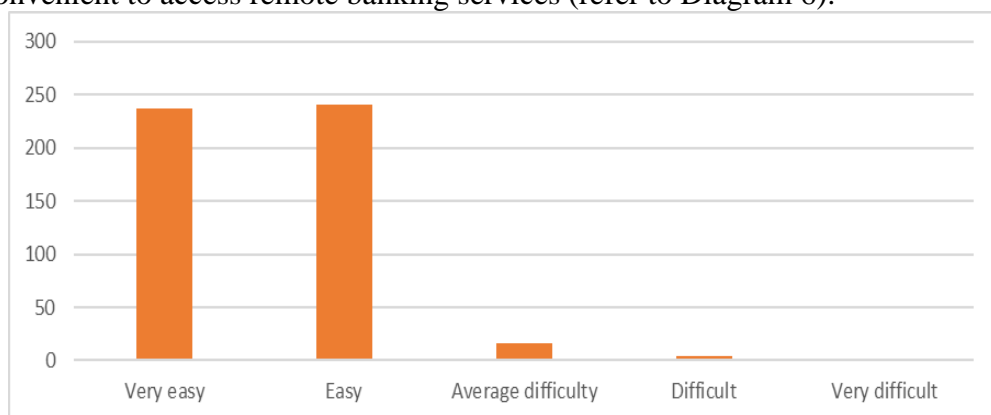
Diagram 6. Simplification of Distance Banking Services for Users

Based on these evaluations, it can be said that the use of financial technologies by respondents does not pose a problem. Consequently, we evaluated the process of delivering products defined by the bank for clients, using subjective research methods. Their acceptance is important in order for them to simplify the application process and provide non-discriminatory responses, which is an effective strategy. As we can see, the strategy of banks aligns financial innovations in an easy and understandable way until it brings remote services to users, which should be carried out in accordance with product quality requirements. This fact implies that technological progress facilitates people's lives and innovations are implemented easily and efficiently in our daily lives. Banks have the correct implementation strategy and adequately assess the demand, which can be considered a significant advantage of Georgia's banking system.

The next question was aimed at examining how many operations were conducted by users within the entire range of banking services they received.
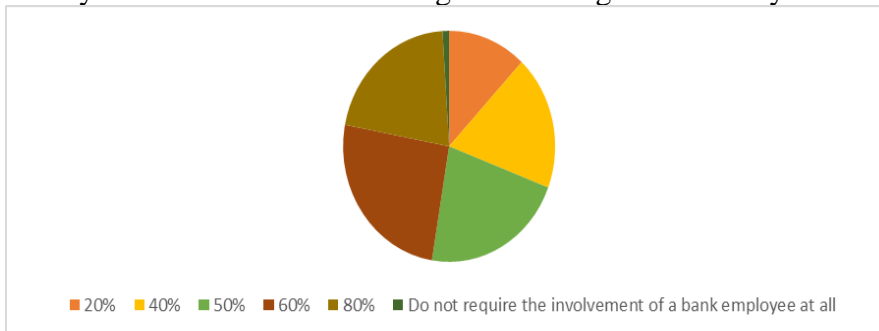
Diagram 7. Distribution of operations performed by users in the overall banking service

The analysis reveals that a significant portion, approximately 80%, of banking operations can be handled without the assistance of service personnel. This indicates that banks could potentially offer financial technology solutions to clients in the form of automated services. It is noteworthy that banks' strategy encompasses the implementation of automated tasks and templates, as routine procedures do not require additional expenses from users to be completed. This raises another intriguing question: whether there is a necessity for the presence of teller-operators in banks in the future. This category would include individuals who are unable or unwilling to perform operations independently, yet it is also important to note the decreasing trend in the number of teller operators. ProCredit Bank serves as an example, where a remote branch occupies significantly more space than other sections.

Of particular interest was identifying the constraints faced by users in the process of receiving banking services at the self-service stage (refer to Diagram 8).
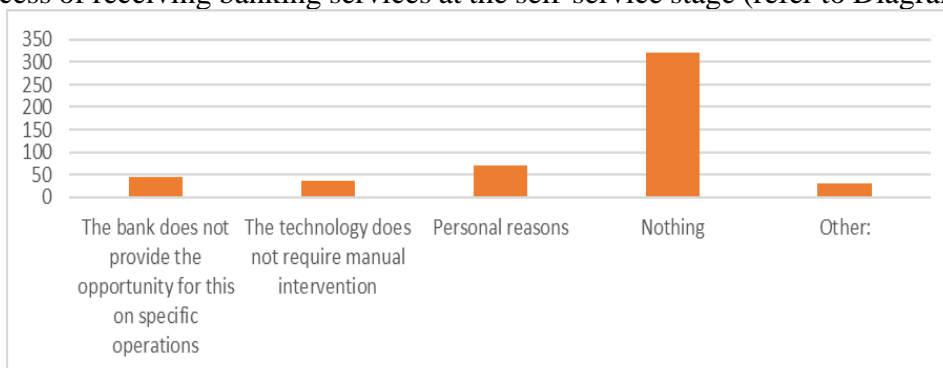
Diagram 8. Factors present in the process of receiving banking services for an independent user

Observations reveal that certain users, who belong to the category of physical persons, encounter difficulties in accessing banking services independently, resulting in a disadvantage for elderly pensioners. Moreover, individuals representing vulnerable groups experience challenges in obtaining certain types of services remotely. In connection with these issues, representatives of banks have declared that specific problems exist, which they are addressing.

To better understand the scope of financial technologies, we asked users what types of financial technologies they prefer most (see Diagram 9).
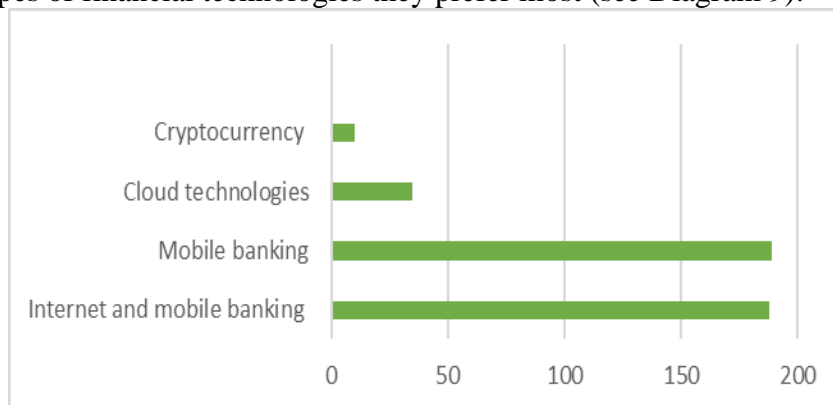
Diagram 9. Indicator of Financial Inclusion with Various Financial Technologies

The respondents' answers are based on the research conducted by a Georgian investment bank, which confirms that in Georgia, the usage of contactless payments with Visa cards surpasses the number of traditional cash payments. With one in ten transactions being contactless, Georgia ranks second globally in this regard. Furthermore, as the adoption of contactless technology continues to rise, transactions exceeding 10 GEL are now fully processed using contactless methods (Galt &Taggart., 2021.).

Digital payments dominate the banking sector in Georgia, with a total transaction value of 444 million US dollars in 2021. In the alternative lending segment, the average transaction value per user reached 7,760 US dollars by the end of 2021. Within the digital payments segment, it is projected that the number of users will reach 2.07 million by 2025. Additionally, the digital investment segment witnessed a significant 40.8% revenue growth in 2022 (Statista's Digital Market Outlook., 2023).

The subsequent question aimed to identify key indicators of emerging financial technologies, such as the economic benefits of users in terms of savings in both money and time (refer to Diagram 10 for further analysis).
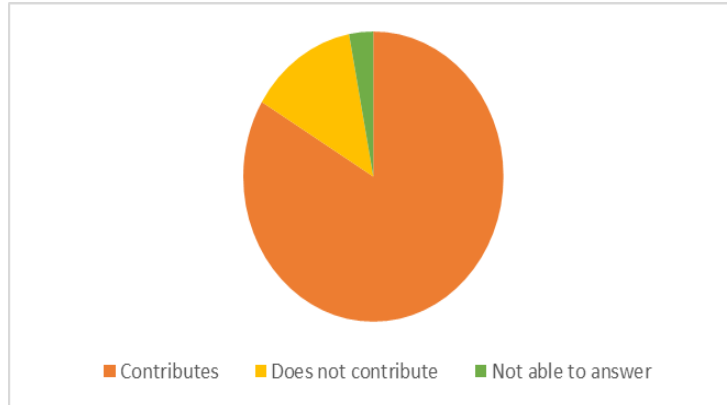
Diagram 10. Examining the Impact of Financial Technologies on Cost and Time Efficiency

Based on the opinions of the surveyed individuals, the adoption of financial technologies significantly contributes to cost and time efficiency. It should be noted that the same outcome is observed for financial technologies utilized intensively by institutions.

Findings:
- The financial system in Georgia is evolving due to the introduction of innovative products and services that address customer needs, including low cost, simplicity, convenience, and security.
- Traditional commercial banks in Georgia, predominantly high-fee financial institutions, contrast with fintech companies which offer innovative products at lower prices, significantly benefiting both businesses and the public.
- Promoting financial inclusion in the country requires measures such as enhancing the availability of financial services for the general population and small businesses. This includes raising awareness about technological advancements, reducing transaction fees for core services, and broadening the scope of online services.
- Financial technology integration in Georgia is still in its early stages, necessitating further expansion of cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence, and blockchain technologies.
- Ongoing development and enhancement of cybersecurity measures is also crucial.

Limitations:
Limited data for impact assessment: Our research has found that gauging the impact of financial technologies such as cloud computing, IoT, artificial intelligence, and blockchain proves challenging due to the lack of

comprehensive data. The scarcity of data on aspects such as cybersecurity, technical vulnerabilities, data management, and privacy is particularly noticeable. This makes it difficult to fully assess the potential risks and benefits associated with these technologies.

Lack of in-depth regulatory analysis: While the report underscores the need for additional regulation to tackle issues like cybersecurity and data management, it does not deliver a comprehensive analysis of existing regulations or their effectiveness in managing emerging financial technologies.

Focus on the specific context of Georgia: The research conducted is specifically aimed at the financial sector in Georgia. Consequently, the findings may not be directly applicable to other regions or countries. Addressing these limitations in future research may bolster the validity and reliability of the findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of financial technologies and the necessary regulatory responses.

Conclusion

Consequently, the above findings lead to the conclusion that the country's regulators must meet the challenges posed by financial innovation, particularly in regards to cybersecurity, data management, and privacy. Striking a balance between fostering innovation and implementing appropriate regulations is crucial to encourage the adoption of secure technologies. This ensures that businesses can flourish while citizens reap the benefits of fintech. Georgia stands on the brink of a transformative era in its financial sector, and proactive measures are needed to establish an inclusive and secure environment for innovative financial decision-making. In doing so, the country can unleash the full potential of fintech, enhancing the lives of its citizens and contributing to overall economic growth and development.

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Virtual Collaborative Learning as One of the Effective Strategies for Raising Cross-Cultural Awareness in Business English Classroom

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Abstract

Recently, Business English (BE) has become an integral part of teaching English due to its growing demand in the employment market and its power to facilitate cross-cultural communication and dialogue between speakers of all languages. Since BE serves as a Lingua Franca globally, a good mastery of the so-called Business English as Lingua Franca (BELF) is getting more and more attention among practitioners and researchers of Business English, who attempt to update their curriculum by cutting-edge developments for better occupational purposes.

With this in mind, the presented paper will attempt to showcase the merits of Virtual Collaborative Learning (VCL) as one of the effective strategic tools for raising cross-cultural communication in the Business English classroom which indeed fosters the development of a culturally intelligent generation through support and guidance.

To assess effectiveness, a survey was conducted among students enrolled in the Business English course offered through virtual learning at Grigol

Robakidze University and Azerbaijan Pedagogical University during the Spring 2021 semester. The survey included seven closed prompts using the Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" and "Always" to "Never," and one open-ended question requiring a written response based on personal opinions.

The responses verified the positive influence of VCL activities in promoting interaction among students from different cultures and heightened awareness of cultural understanding. The discovered insights will be integrated into the current curriculum at Grigol Robakidze University, which is scheduled for the upcoming academic year.

Keywords: Virtual Collaborative Learning, Business English; Cross-cultural communication; Cultural Intelligence; Effective strategies

Introduction

In today's globalized and socially distanced world, where working remotely has become the new normal, online collaboration that crosses borders has become increasingly popular. According to a recent survey involving employees from 90 countries, it was discovered that 89 percent of white-collar workers engage in projects within global virtual teams (GVTs) in which team members are spread across the globe and depend upon online communication tools. (Taras et al., 2021)

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that organizations worldwide engaging in cross-cultural and international business ventures are actively seeking talent that possesses global cultural competence. Furthermore, as reported by the International Labor Union, 70 percent of international ventures fail primarily because of cultural differences (Banerjee, 2015).

In nearly every classroom, the incorporation of cross-cultural communication fundamentals into the Business English curriculum is imperative, as it not only enriches students' learning experience but also enhances their employability in the professional world.

Undoubtedly, the importance of this issue cannot be overstated; however, the key lies in finding the most effective means to achieve it. The most effective approach to address this challenge is leveraging real-life tools that bridge cultural gaps. Having said that, Virtual Collaborative Learning (VCL) has proved to be one of the most efficient strategies for improving cross-cultural communication in the Business English classroom. While VCL might not consistently enhance the overall student learning experience in a typical setting, its implementation has demonstrated notable success in fostering the growth of students' Cultural Intelligence.

The paper examines how the integration of VCL creates unique opportunities to raise awareness of cross-cultural sensitivity within the

Business English classroom. Its primary goal is to empower the emerging generation, ultimately fostering a deep sense of Cultural Intelligence. Firstly, the Concepts of Cultural Intelligence and Virtual Collaborative Learning will be defined. To underscore these notions, the included study will exemplify a case of Virtual Exchange within a Business English classroom involving a collaboration between Grigol Robakidze University (Tbilisi and Batumi Campus) and Azerbaijan Pedagogical University.

Concept of Cultural Intelligence

At this point, the terms IQ and EQ have entered the everyday lexicon. However, in today's increasingly fast-paced, complicated, and competitive world, a new term has emerged known as CQ (Cultural Intelligence). CQ refers to the capacity to comprehend and navigate various cultures with effectiveness (Madhusudan, 2017).

Cultural Intelligence goes beyond mere awareness of different cultures. It empowers individuals to not only understand diverse cultural contexts but to also adapt and interact effectively with people from various backgrounds. This ability enables them to work harmoniously and build meaningful relationships across cultures (Farrell, 2023).

Consequently, the process of acquiring CQ extends beyond the limited scope of reading newspapers, exploring literature, art, music, or watching films from various cultural backgrounds. Instead, one must actively engage in a diverse range of experiences, interact with individuals from different cultures, and immerse oneself in global diversity to truly grasp its essence.

Cultural Intelligence is closely related to Emotional Intelligence, but it extends beyond that point. Emotional Intelligence allows individuals to sense the emotions, desires, and needs of others. Meanwhile, Cultural Intelligence allows individuals to be finely attuned to the beliefs, communication styles, and values of diverse cultures. Armed with this knowledge, one can foster empathetic and understanding interactions with people from various backgrounds (Farrell, 2023) Both Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence share a critical element, as stated by psychologist Daniel Goleman, "a propensity to suspend judgment—to think before acting" (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). To better understand the concept, let us discuss three sources of Cultural Intelligence: head, body, and heart.

The term "head" pertains to possessing knowledge about the customs and beliefs of diverse cultures. However, having this knowledge does not necessarily ensure that an individual will readily recognize the clues to a culture's shared understanding (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). Teaching BE students about cross-cultural intelligence in class could be a first step, yet it alone falls short of fostering a robust level of Cultural Intelligence.

Body encompasses the ability to translate cultural knowledge into observable behaviors, reflected in gestures, body language, and how culturally significant tasks are performed. "Your actions and demeanor must prove that you have already to some extent entered their world." (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004) This is where Virtual Collaborative Learning can emerge as a significant player, providing students with a great opportunity to navigate through diverse cultures.

Even if one applies "head" and "body" to cultural situations, one may not be fully prepared without the third component, which is the "heart". Mastering the process of cultural adaptation involves facing and overcoming a range of challenges and setbacks. High levels of motivation and confidence gained from prior experiences in similar situations can greatly aid in navigating through these challenges. If one does not believe in himself that he will not handle the situation, it is highly unlikely he will succeed. The absence of self-belief in one's capabilities to handle a situation greatly reduces the chances of success (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). In moments of unsuccessful interactions, reflecting on the factors that led to the outcome and being attentive to the most effective strategies are crucial for growth and improvement. The Business English Lecturers could play a pivotal role in building this confidence.

Acknowledging the significance of CQ, which is further amplified by globalization and the heightened interactions among individuals from varied backgrounds where Cultural Intelligence is not just an advantage but a vital skill, the importance of Cultural Intelligence is poised to reach unparalleled levels.

Concept of Virtual Collaborative Learning

Before exploring Virtual Collaborative Learning (VCL), Collaborative Learning (CL) must first be discussed. The term was first coined in the 1970 book Collaborative Learning by Edwin Mason, but interest and implementation really took off in the mid-1980s (Yang, 2023). To this day, as evidenced by the continued publication of articles in scholarly journals on this topic, CL is still widely accepted to be an effective teaching strategy and is regarded as an important area of research.

While variations in definitions exist among researchers, the essence of CL instruction is fairly straightforward, "it is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together" (Dillenbourg, 1999, p. 1). More specifically, CL is an umbrella term that is widely accepted to be grounded in a set of tenets: 1) Two or more learners are working together to complete a goal; 2) Learners help each other to share knowledge and negotiate meaning; 3) All group members share in the work; 4) Skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, communication, and conflict management are

developed; and 5) The pair or group reflects on the work process and the final product upon completion of the goal (Laal, 2013). In addition to the core tenets, the philosophy of less structured lessons, student agency, and teacher as facilitator is generally accepted (Bruffee, 1999).

Virtual Collaborative Learning, as the name suggests, takes CL out of the physical space, harnesses the power of the internet, and allows learners to connect and work cooperatively through their computers, laptops, tablets, or any other capable electronic device at their disposal. These electronic devices are then connected to other learners through commonly used programs such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, and the like. The primary advantage of VCL is two-fold. First, it allows for students learning from home to engage in real-time, back-and-forth communication (Stacy, 1999). Second, and most related to this study, it allows for learners from different cultures and far away communities to engage with each other in ways that would be time and cost-prohibitive otherwise (Clauss, Lenk, & Schoop, 2019).

Literature Review

Our world is more interconnected than ever before. It offers diversity at the workplaces often with remote teams, making cross-cultural communication a vital part of organizational success. Every culture has its own set of challenges when it comes to face-to-face interactions. Cross-cultural communication allows people to avoid miscommunication and misinterpretation even when a language barrier does not exist. Embracing cultural differences among diverse groups and effectively interacting within a given context are required to work cohesively and understand each other on a human level. Patty Goodman believes that efficient cross-cultural communication plays a crucial role in mitigating conflicts and fostering a harmonious work environment that accommodates everyone. A fundamental aspect lies in gaining a proper grasp of cultural elements, traditions, and behaviors divergent from the dominant national culture, which necessitates a receptive and adaptable approach (Goodman, 2019).

The Society for Human Resource Management reports that culture has a significant impact on productivity. As such, it is important to be aware of the fact that employees with diverse backgrounds are driven by varying motivations and respond differently to distinct management and communication approaches (SHRM, 2015)

After gaining an understanding of how cultural elements influence communication between individuals and groups in the workplace, educators faced a need of developing strategies that promote effective cross-cultural communication skills. One of the offered approaches was to make those strategies an inseparable part of language learning. This concept was agreed upon by the researchers in the 1950s at the symposium held by the American

Foreign Language Education Association. The researchers declared that the cultural knowledge of the country should be taught along with foreign language teaching. Discussing the important role of culture in people's social lives, Chinese researcher Qiong Yue, proves that fostering cross-cultural competence in English education promotes an impartial cultural perspective, strengthens students' capacity for empathy, tolerance, and effective negotiation, and additionally enhances their proficiency in accurately and fluently conveying local cultural nuances (Qiong Y., 2022).

Developing students' cross-cultural communication competence in the Business English classroom demands not only providing students with cultural knowledge but also an in-depth and application-oriented teaching approach. Ulla Lundgren proposes four perspectives model in teaching business English:

- Communication skills in a foreign language;
- Cultural competences specific to the foreign language;
- Intercultural competences facilitating the natural behavior in the cultural environment of the foreign language;
- Organizational communication competences, that develop the ability to interact efficiently in a new organizational culture, where the foreign language learned is the formal language of the organization (Lundgren U., 2004; 2005):

Based on this model, Professor Violeta Lilians Negrea offers Cross-cultural Business English framework which combines the specific competences of foreign language, cultural knowledge and organizational culture knowledge, all of them serving to facilitate the development of a natural behavior in a different professional culture environment.

- Communication (L1 and L2) – targeting the development of reading, listening, writing and speaking skills.
- Culture (student's and target language) - General cultural behavior, ideas, perceptions, art, belief, literature, history, music etc.
- Cross culture (intercultural communication competences) - adaptability, tolerance, empathy, flexibility, cultural identity, social constructivism;
- Organizational culture (organizational communication competence) - recognition and use of organizational culture patterns, communication stereotypes and procedures (Nigrea, V. 2012)

To achieve the goals listed in the framework, Violeta Negrea suggests an innovative pedagogical approach of the Cross-cultural Business English which stimulates students' capacity to adapt and react adequately to the otherness of a new cultural and organizational environment

through a content-based environment and the active pedagogy. She underlines Collaborative Learning as one of the effective pedagogical approaches to develop cross culture competence in the business English classroom.

Collaborative Learning has been proven to be one of the prominent approaches to enhance cross-cultural communication skills by other researchers as well. They speak about the benefits of Collaborative Learning, which can be applied while teaching business language both during face to face or virtual learning.

- Collaborative learning offers a unique platform to enhance interaction among students from diverse cultural backgrounds and promote cross-cultural communication in the English classroom.
- Enhanced Language Proficiency: Engaging in discussions, presentations, and group activities in a virtual environment can improve students' English language skills, aiding them in effective cross-cultural communication.
- Increases Cultural Awareness, Sensitivity and respect: Collaborative interactions enable students to develop a deeper understanding of cultural norms, values, and practices, thereby fostering cultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Develops empathy for others - When individuals are able to collaborate effectively, they can work together towards common goals, share ideas, and support one another. On the other hand, it helps to develop empathy. Empathy allows individuals to understand and relate to the feelings and experiences of others, leading to increased understanding and connection. It contributes to positive social interactions and healthy relationships.
- Celebrates differences - Students learn to work with all types of people. During interactions, they find many opportunities to reflect upon and reply to the diverse responses fellow learners bring to the questions raised. It also allows students to add their perspectives to an issue based on their cultural differences. This exchange inevitably helps students to better understand other cultures and points of view.

Virtual Collaborative Learning tends to be a promising strategy for promoting cross-cultural communication in the Business English classroom. When coupled with well-designed activities and effective facilitation, it can lead to significant improvements in students' cross-cultural competence and language skills.

Method

With the purpose of evaluating effectiveness, the enrolled students of Grigol Robakidze University and Azerbaijan Pedagogical University's Virtual

Learning Experience of Business English course in the Spring 2021 semester participated in an online questionnaire. The designed questionnaire consisted of 7 closed prompts (based on the Likert scale, i.e., Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree and one from Always to Never) and 1 open-ended (which required producing a small piece of writing based on the opinion) question. The following link was shared among former beneficiaries of VCL who were asked to respond: https://forms.gle/GQiZa48VYbHfn52n7. The empirical data obtained from the online questionnaire was used to analyze the effects of their VCL experience and to consider it as an integral part of the existing BE curriculum at GRUNI, which will be put into practice in the coming academic year.

Results
The online questionnaire was completed and returned by 67 respondents from Azerbaijan and Georgia; in particular, 52.5% of the respondents were students of Business English from Azerbaijan Pedagogical University, whereas 47.5% were represented by the Students of Business English from Grigol Robakidze University (Tbilisi Campus and Batumi Branch).

Country of Origin
61 responses
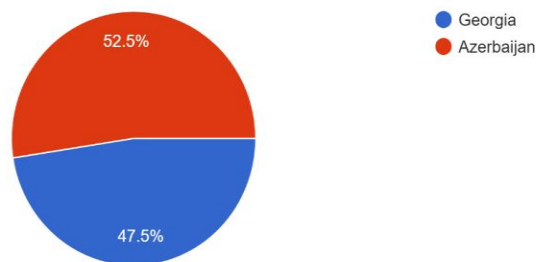
94.1% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (43.4% agreed; 50.7% strongly agreed) with Statement 1 "*The virtual collaborative learning activities from the Georgian-Azerbaijan BE Classroom encouraged me to interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds*," which indeed illustrates that VCL indeed supported interaction among the representatives of different cultures which was one of the major Goals of the project.
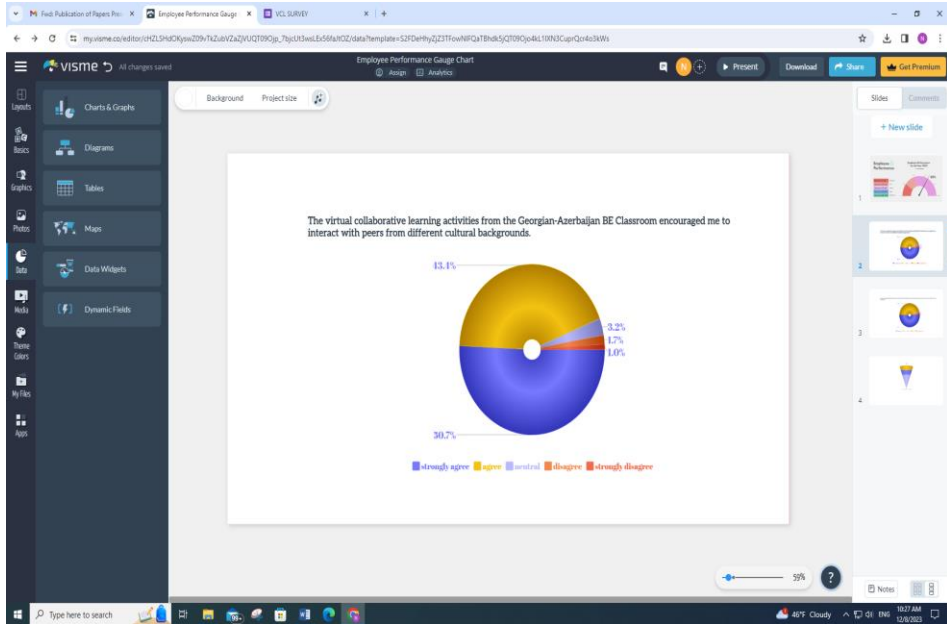
Similarly, 90.9% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (34.8% agreed; 56.1% strongly agreed) with **Statement 2** "***The virtual exchange program helped me to understand and appreciate cultural differences***." As can be seen from the students' feedback, the program was extremely helpful for them in order to become aware of cultural differences.

2. The virtual exchange program helped me to understand and appreciate cultural differences.
66 responses
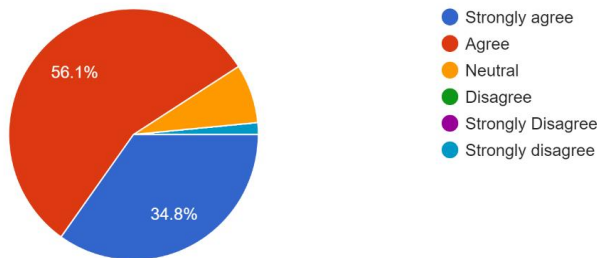
Statement 3 "I actively participated in cross-cultural discussions during the virtual exchange program" required answers placed on a 1 to 5 scale *from Always to Never*. In this case, 30.3% of the respondents replied that they Always actively participated in cross-cultural discussions during the virtual exchange program; 48.5% answered with 'Often', whereas only 15.2% of former students were active only 'sometimes.' This, overall, shows not only very good attendance but at the same active participation from the students of

target countries which would not have been possible without instructors' efforts and a strong selection of topics in Business English relevant to learners' language competence needs.

3. I actively participated in cross-cultural discussions during the virtual exchange program.
66 responses
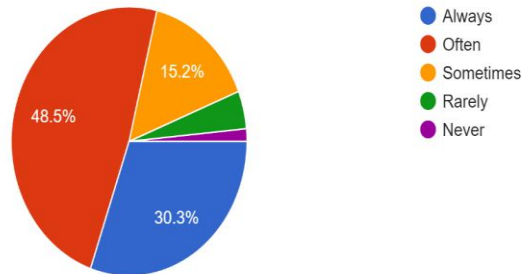
92.5% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (41.8% agreed; 50.7% strongly agreed), with Statement 4 "*The virtual collaborative learning activities improved my ability to communicate effectively with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds.*" This is considered to be one of the biggest achievements of the project, since the top priority was to improve BE learners' ability for intercultural communication. Only 6% of the students showed a neutral position. This could be attributed to less effort and/or passive engagement as well as other factors, i.e. stress, language competence, etc.

4. The virtual collaborative learning activities improved my ability to communicate effectively with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds.
67 responses
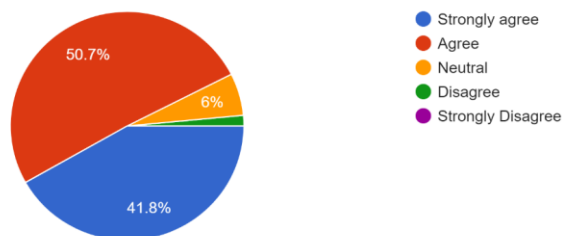
89% either agreed or strongly agreed (35.9% agreed; 53.1 % strongly agreed), with Statement 5 that "*I found specific virtual collaborative learning exercises particularly beneficial for enhancing cross-cultural communication*", which is encouraging as it can be interpreted that students benefited from tasks and exercises offered during CV and further contributed to developing their cross-cultural communication.

5. I found specific virtual collaborative learning exercises particularly beneficial for enhancing cross-cultural communication.

64 responses

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
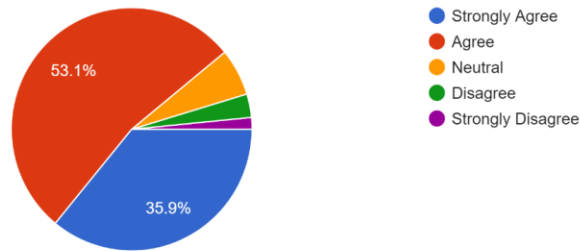
Following the same trend, 84.8% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (51..5 % agreed; 33.3% strongly agreed) and only 12.1 % of the students showed a neutral position with Statement 6 '*The virtual exchange program provided me with opportunities to apply cross-cultural communication skills in real-world scenarios'.* This could be due to the fact that either not all of the beneficiaries of the VCL project have had an opportunity to put gained expertise into practice, or the program may not be equally sufficient for all participants in terms of applying knowledge in real-life situations due to its nature of being fully online.

6. The virtual exchange program provided me with opportunities to apply cross-cultural communication skills in real-world scenarios.

66 responses

Legend:
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Strongly disagree
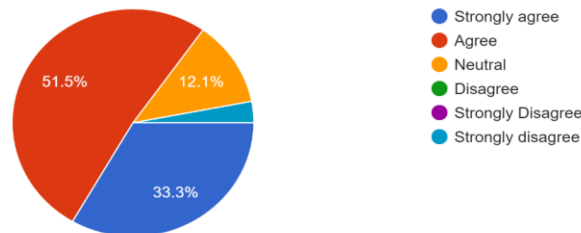
An absolute majority consisting of 94% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (35.8% agreed; 58.2% strongly agreed) with Statement 7 '*I found the virtual collaborative learning experience enjoyable and engagin*g.' 'This represents promising results for all the engaged instructors and initiators of the project since they managed to create an enjoyable and engaging learning atmosphere during the times of the pandemic and raised students' cross-cultural communication skills in tandem with teaching Business English.

7. I found the virtual collaborative learning experience enjoyable and engaging.
67 responses
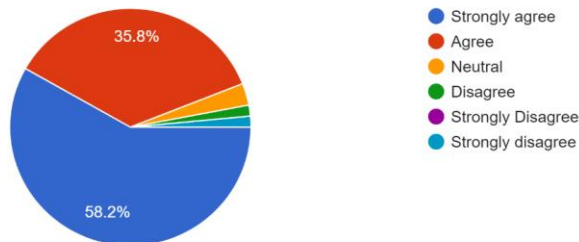
On the open-ended question of the online questionnaires which asked students to '*share a specific example during the virtual exchange program where you experienced a positive cross-cultural communication interaction*' we received myriad responses which are particularly interesting and worth taking into account for course developers, instructors from both institutions in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and beyond, as it demonstrates extremely productive lessons learned from Virtual Exchanges. It also shows gained knowledge about the peculiarities of cross-cultural communications and its pivotal role when doing Business international by using Business English as Lingua Franca (BELF). Please see appendix 1

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the findings, VCL helped students to understand and learn what cultural differences a person can have and still have the ability to talk and share their experiences on board.

It is also noteworthy that Georgian students communicated a positive experience in meeting students from Azerbaijan and communicating with them about different topics, i.e. brand awareness, and promotion, and learned about their perspective on getting luxury items in contrast to Georgian students where we are not much keen on brands.

Referring to the response, "*I really remember that Virtual Learning of Business English and lectures given by Lecturers from Georgia and Azerbaijan was a different experience but on the whole, it was interesting and useful to communicate using only English and also make new contacts. VCL really helped me to use more English, improve my Business English, and learn how to effectively solve problems in groups and work with new team members. We often worked in pairs and groups in Zoom breakout rooms and I remember that we had to use only English to answer discussion questions so this was really good for us,*" we infer that students engaged with this 'new' experience, as well as activities offered by the instructors, i.e. group work in zoom

breakout rooms which helped them to use English and improved on the whole 21st century skills, including communication and problem-solving.

Based on the response, "*Business English is my favorite subject and when our teacher asked us to learn it with peers from Georgia, GRUNI I was first surprised but after the first meeting which was of course on Zoom because of the pandemic I realized that it was very beneficial and we tried to understand different problems from different perspectives. I also remember that once I disagreed with my Georgian pair about brand awareness - Is it a good idea to be obsessed with brands and then I realized that we all have some obsession and that's why we negotiated and were happy,*" the program resulted in raising cross-cultural awareness around different topics, i.e., brands based on the discussion techniques and opinion development which is one more indicator for success of the project.

It is also noteworthy that apart from gaining knowledge about Cross-Cultural Communication, the program assisted the students in overcoming the tedium and monotony commonly associated with the pandemic and virtual learning. The experience encouraged students to meet new people, build new relationships, and also learn from each other, as evidenced in several students' responses:

'*The program was helpful and also successful because we were all very bored during the pandemic, without traveling and this helped us to discover each other's cultures more;*'

'*I really enjoyed meeting students from Azerbaijan and communicating with them about different topics, i.e., brand awareness, promotion and learned about their perspective about getting luxury items in contrast to Georgian students where we are not much keen on brands;*'

'*Pandemic was a very stressful period for us all and we missed meeting new people and making new friends. VCL helped us to support each other and talk about new normal, paused businesses and find joint solutions for a better future. So, Group activities during the program made us once again realize that Pandemic was a global problem and English was the most powerful tool for us to fight for a better future.*'

'*During virtual Business English Classes, I met students from Georgia and we discussed common problems in global business, problems of misunderstanding between different cultures and shared our own experiences of dealing with similar challenges. Instructors from Georgia and Azerbaijan as well as foreign lectures encouraged us to minimize barriers by using Business English.*'

Based on the provided feedback, VCL on the whole was a very positive experience for the surveyed beneficiaries from GRUNI and ASPU. They were united under one global challenge and did their best to learn from each other about common problems in global business, discuss problems of

misunderstanding resulting from low awareness in cross-cultural communication, share their own experiences for coping with existing challenges, and--in their own words--'to fight for [a] better future'.

The results of the questionnaire are very helpful for all target groups to analyze the progression of the Virtual Collaborative Learning, its effects on students' virtual performance, obtained knowledge together with different experiences, and to update the Business English curriculum with best practices and lessons learned from the pandemic.

Conclusion

In the context of today's world where cross-cultural communication plays a key role, integration of effective strategies for raising intercultural awareness is critical.

This paper has examined the benefits of using Virtual Collaborative Learning (VCL) as one of the effective tools to nurture students' Cultural Intelligence within the Business English classroom.

A comprehensive survey revealed the impact of VCL on enhancing cross-cultural communication in the Business English classroom. This case revolves around a virtual exchange program between Grigol Robakidze University (Tbilisi and Batumi Campus) and Azerbaijan Pedagogical University.

The responses verified the positive influence of VCL activities in promoting interaction among students from different cultures and heightened awareness of cultural understanding. The open-ended answers further illustrate the benefits of VCL.

One crucial point to emphasize is that guidance and support are great contributors of VCL activities which should be supplemented with feedback, effective discussions, and providing the students with needed resources. This approach equips students with essential skills to thrive in a globalized business environment regardless of their areas.

In the broader perspective, VCL could be referred to as one of the effective strategies in the Business English classroom in empowering future generations to practice effective cross-cultural communication and shaping culturally intelligent individuals. It is evident that by utilizing the potential of Virtual Collaborative Learning, BE educators can contribute significantly to the development of cross-cultural communicators in their BE classrooms.

With all data considered, we are planning to incorporate this approach into our Business English class curriculum and reintroduce it in future curriculums.

Human Studies: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional

and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

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Appendix

Responses on the open-ended question "Please share a specific example during the virtual exchange program where you experienced a positive cross-cultural communication interaction":

Specific example during the virtual exchange (methods/strategies)	Positive experience
I remember that our teachers and Azerbaijani teachers did their best and helped us to participate actively in group work. They provided us with necessary vocabulary, prompts and knowledge and prepared very interesting and useful topics which we can use in our career.	During VCL, I learned that Azerbaijanis are a bit conservative and decision making process goes through huge bureaucracy and multiple, lengthy, useless meetings. On the contrary, Georgian managers seem to more flexible and risky than Azerbaijanis. So, I was happy to learn about such differences. But VCL can help us all to understand each others differences and plan businesses more effectively.
I really liked virtual communication especially with foreigners especially when we discussed global problems with English. It improved my business English and knowledge about different business culture and I can use it in my real life.	Before this class I had difficulty in communicating in English with foreigners but this online class helped me to see that most important is to communicate and understand each other.
I remember online lessons well, but these were absolutely different from regular classes. We had to use white board, also breakout rooms and find common solutions to various questions and problems. It made us discover cultural things as well.	One of the most positive moments of virtual BE Classes with Azerbaijani students was learning language in a foreign environment where we field like being abroad. I liked this moment of meeting foreigners and learning their cultures directly from them.
It is difficult to name one specific example because I think that all classes in BE were positive for us as we learned about each other's cultures and communicated effectively virtually.	I enjoyed online classes in Business English and had a very positive memory from them. Especially interaction with foreigners and using English for communication. It was very good for our group.
During Business English Classes I remember group discussion on Business Etiquette in Georgia and Azerbaijan which caused a great interest between group members. We discovered lots of similarities and differences and were very please with it.	For me a positive experience was interaction with Azerbaijani students especially during group work when we used English which helped us to improve our cross-cultural communication and better understand each other's habits, traditions, attitude to work, life and so on.
During Business English classes we enjoyed funny and interesting activities in zoom breakout rooms. We introduced ourselves and found that we had many things in common as we are good neighbors. Besides, we realized that for us Business English is very important and helpful for employment. The VCL was very positive experience and great memory from the pandemic.	Cross-cultural communication with students from Azerbaijan was a positive experience because we were all non-native speakers and for us Business English was most powerful strategy to overcome barriers and avoid miscommunication.
I remember well that it was a new experience for us, at the first time it was a bit stressful to talk in a new situation but our instructors and also experts helped us to overcome barrier and become more engaged in the activities and use Business English.	Business English helped me to solve real-life problems and better communicate with people from different cultures. I remember that students from Azerbaijan liked different brands and had different interests of spending free time. It will not be so hard to communicated with them in real life now.
I really liked virtual learning of Business English with foreign lecturers and students from Baku but I	Virtual classes in Business English with students from Baku helped me to gain new skills, improved my

was not able to be very active because of zoom and also language barrier. But I think that Business English is very necessary for cross-cultural communication .	Business English and also made me understand different communication styles. I really loved new way of learning BE and it was really very engaging especially during the pandemic when we were locked and could not travel at all.
I loved working with Georgian students since we discussed intercultural accidents(cases?) related to the topic of religion, also we analyzed our traditions and role of English as International Language in doing global business. I was not very active participant but I really liked this experience and would like to have it in the future as well.	The program was a very useful which increased my understanding about cross-cultural communication and in general raised my knowledge about different cultures with the help of English which was a medium in our case.
During virtual Business English Classes I met students from Georgia and we discussed common problems in global business, problems of misunderstanding between different cultures and were shared our own experiences of dealing with similar challenges. Instructors from Georgia and Azerbaijan as well as Foreign lectures encouraged us to minimize barriers by using Business English.	On the whole, virtual learning was really worth because it gathered students from two countries and helped them to understand differences. In this case the role of English was crucially important and it helped us to improve BE.
Pandemic was very stressful period for us all and we missed meeting new people and making new friends. VCL helped us to support each other and talk about new normal, paused businesses and find joint solution for the better future. So Group activities during the program made us once again realize that Pandemic was a global problem and English was most powerful tool for us to fight for the better future.	The program was helpful and also successful because we were all very bored during the pandemic, without traveling and this helped us to discover each other's cultures more.
I had cross-cultural discussions about different topics with my foreign colleagues during the virtual exchange program.	The whole experience was very positive and engaging because we had foreign lectures and they helped us to develop our Business English with cross-cultural understanding of each other's cultures.
It is always a great idea to discuss about different cultural backgrounds by doing group works.	Virtual classes in Business English was helpful because I started to more appreciate differences between our cultures. But I think we need more experiences with other cultures as well.
I can show many interesting examples.	Business English is my favorite subject because it is very useful for employment. I think that Virtual classes helped me to improve business communications skills and made me understand people from different cultures.
İ don't want to give a specific example.	I was not very active during virtual Business English classes but whenever I attended it gave me positive emotions and also students from Baku loved Georgians which made it easy to communicate without any problems.
It was a topic related the proper official communication rules. We discussed some examples that are popular in our countries.	İ found Virtual Collaborative Learning very interesting, entertaining, involving. İt helped ne to improve my cross-cultural communicative skills. İt encouraged me to

	communicate to my peers from different cultural backgrounds.
Business English is my favorite subject and when our teacher asked us to learn it with peers from Georgia, GRUNI I was first surprised but after first meeting which was of course on zoom because of pandemic I realized that It was very beneficial and we tried to understand different problems from different perspectives. I also remember that once I disagreed with my Georgian pair about brand awareness - Is it a good idea to be obsessed with brands and then i realized that we all have some obsession and that's why we negotiated and were happy.	I understood the culture of foreigners.
I was very happy to be a part of VCL project and meeting new friends from Georgia as well as new Lecturers who gave us a great experience. I remember from the very beginning we were shy and a bit passive but after breakout room and group tasks we had to solve various problems and find group solution on Business English topics which was not easy but we managed and that's why it was a great project.	We were respectful of each other's cultures. We were open-minded and willing to learn about each other's cultures.
I really remember that Virtua Learning of Business English and lectures given by Lecturers from Georgia and Azerbaijan was a different experience but on the whole it was interesting and useful to communicate using only English and also make new contacts. VCL really helped me to use more English, improve my Business English and learn how to effectively solve problems in groups works with new team members. We often worked in pairs and groups in Zoom breakout rooms and I remember that we had to use only English to answer discussion questions so this was really good for us.	I really enjoyed meeting students from Azerbaijan and communicating with them about different topics, i.e. brand awareness, promotion and learned about their perspective about getting luxury items in contrast to Georgian students where we are not much keen on brands.
During VCL, we participated in breakout room session where we decided to show each other and turn cameras on which showed that Georgian students were a bit ashamed speaking in English during big audience but in smaller groups they were more open and we made friends and we really would like to meet them in person. Hope University will support us in finding them!	virtual exchange program helped me to understand and learn what cultural differences we can have and still have ability to talk and share out experiences on board. it was really joyful for me to talk with strangers from different countries about their cultures, traditionds mindset and education
During a virtual exchange program, I had the opportunity to observe a positive cross-cultural communication interaction between two students from different countries.	
For me VCL was very positive experience because it was stress-free and very funny way of learning Business English. I think that it must be not only during the pandemic but also now.	

Other comments
!!!!!
USA high institution program
I agree with all above sayings
Good
VCL
It was very interesting and fruitful, thanks a lot for everything
ASPU
ERASMUS
We shared our experiences
The virtual exchange program provided me.
l did not have so experience
Nothing
Baku
Firstly, I express my deepest gratitude to organizers of this project, and feel honored to be part of this team, and I enjoyed every session of it.
İt was very amazing to see Georgian Colleagues virtually during the pandemic
We spend time with Chinese students and see their relax behaviors. Further more, we see Dutch people's punctual attitudes to their job
For me VCL was very enjoyable experience as I loved meeting young people from GRUNI, also it was engaging to communicate with them through different tasks and activities. This experience was fully positive as it was pandemic and wanted communication and different learning. But I hope that we will continue cooperation.
Some new communication interaction clubs

Sustainable Marketing as a Buyer's Motivating Factor in the Retail Business: Example of Georgia

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Abstract
    In recent years, sustainability has emerged as a significant challenge for the business sector, particularly in the retail industry. Business owners continue to harbor doubts about producing sustainable products, as it requires adjustments to their product segment and marketing strategies. The paper highlights the importance of sustainable marketing in the retail sector and discusses it as a motivating factor from the customers' perspective. This study focuses on examining the role of sustainable marketing and creating the profile of "sustainable buyers" by utilizing a case study of Georgia. In accordance with the quantitative research method, the paper identifies how sustainable marketing influences buyers' choice and provides evidence for the hypothesis that sustainable marketing serves as a motivational factor in the retail sector, exerting significant influence on the decision-making process.

Keywords: Sustainable Marketing, Buyer's motivation, Motivating Factors

1.   Introduction
    In recent years, sustainability has become a critical concern in various sectors, prompting businesses to rethink their practices and adapt to changing

consumer preferences. As environmental awareness grows, consumers are increasingly seeking products and brands that align with their values and promote a sustainable future. In response, organizations are employing sustainable marketing strategies to encourage consumers to make environmentally responsible choices.

The theoretical basis for understanding the impact of sustainable marketing on buyer motivation includes key concepts such as consumer values, attitudes toward sustainability, and ethical consumption. Understanding these concepts is critical for businesses aiming to develop effective marketing strategies that resonate with environmentally conscious consumers.

A variety of measures are used in sustainable marketing, such as corporate social responsibility and green advertising. These methods not only encourage sustainability, but they also serve as strong inducements for customers looking for ecologically responsible substitutes. The effectiveness of these measures in influencing customer motivation and forming sustainable purchasing decisions can be understood by examining recent studies on them.

Customers' perceptions of and attitudes toward sustainable marketing are important factors in their decision-making and motivation. It is critical for marketing to comprehend how long-lasting marketing messages, product features, and brand reputation impact consumer perceptions in order to generate long-term sales growth.

As the world struggles with environmental issues, the phrase "sustainability" has become increasingly popular. Due to consumer demand for sustainable products and business methods, the retail sector is undergoing a significant change. This paradigm shift is particularly apparent in places like Georgia, where consumers are becoming increasingly aware of their impact on the environment. The intersection of sustainable marketing and buyer motivation in the retail industry is one of the most important fields of research in this regard, providing insights into how consumer behavior is changing dynamically.

In recent years, Georgia has made impressive economic progress at the intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia. As a result of this change, old marketplaces have become contemporary shopping malls and e-commerce has grown. Georgian consumers are simultaneously becoming more selective, knowledgeable, and environmentally conscious. As customers pay more attention to ethical and ecological implications of the things they buy, this pattern is consistent with global trends toward sustainability. As a result, Georgian retailers struggle to adjust to the new consumer scenario, where sustainable marketing tactics are essential.

In the retail industry, it is essential to understand consumers' motivations. In today's world, consumers actively seek products and brands

that align with their values and worldviews, rather than just being passive recipients of marketing messages. This value set can be appealed to by sustainable marketing through a variety of motivational factors, such as environmental concerns, social impact, ethical consumption, health and well-being, and long-term value.

Furthermore sustainable marketing has evolved into a crucial factor in customer motivation in the retail industry, influencing consumer preferences and buying behavior. Understanding this dynamic, especially in the context of Georgia, can provide invaluable insights for businesses seeking to adjust to changing consumer expectations and contribute to a more sustainable future. By examining how sustainable marketing and consumer motivation interact in Georgia's retail sector, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of this changing environment.

The acceptance of green initiatives in the retail industry has notably increased in recent years. Several connected elements might be credited for this expanding trend. First and foremost, consumers are seeking for more sustainable and eco-friendly products due to increased awareness of environmental challenges, including climate change and resource depletion. Customers are demanding greener solutions as they become more aware of how their purchases affect the environment.

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important to retail companies as a result of these changes in consumer behavior. A number of environmentally friendly practices are being implemented, including reducing energy use, establishing recycling programs and procuring products made with environmentally friendly materials and manufacturing processes. These environmentally friendly strategies help retailers cut expenses and improve the perception of their brands while also aligning with consumer values.

Government incentives and legislation have also contributed to the development of green practices in retail. Rules encouraging sustainability and imposing environmental norms are compelling retailers to alter their business practices. With changing consumer tastes, green practices are becoming increasingly popular in the retail industry. Instead of simply buying items, consumers want to make wise decisions that are consistent with their values. Consumers prefer green practices because they foster a sense of empowerment and conformity to moral and environmental standards.

One of the most important factors influencing the adoption of green practices is transparency. In order to foster trust and equip customers to make wise choices, retailers are becoming more transparent about their sustainability initiatives. They communicate to customers the environmental impact of their goods and services and outline the measures taken to mitigate it. In other words, transparency fosters trust.

By using eco-friendly labels, certifications, and marketing strategies, retailers emphasize their commitment to sustainability in their advertising and promote it constantly. In addition to bringing in environmentally conscientious customers, these marketing techniques help inform and increase awareness among a wider audience.

Sustainable buyer–supplier relationship (SBSR) capability is a dynamic or relational skill that is considered as the key condition for achieving sustainable competitive advantage. This involves both the buyer and its suppliers investing their heterogeneous resources (Bai et al., 2021).

As a result, green practices in retail are becoming increasingly important due to consumer demand, corporate social responsibility, and legislative actions. Green and environmental practices are considered critical to enhancing firm innovation and performance (Yen, 2018). As consumers become more environmentally conscious, retailers are altering their business practices and marketing plans to respond to changing consumer preferences, ultimately redefining the retail environment to be more sustainable.

Figure 1. Some of the most successful green marketing techniques
Note. Trung and Thanh, 2022, p.1

2. State on knowledge

The research on the influence of green marketing on consumer behavior in the retail industry is quite prevalent, and many authors have conducted research in this area. Kianpour et al. (2014) have reviewed the most significant consumer-related research to pinpoint motivating variables and derive conclusions regarding their influence on purchasing green products. In order to determine which factors drive customer decisions to buy eco-friendly products, the data was analyzed using factor analysis. Results indicate that consumer knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness, and environmental concern were significant motivators. Machová et al. (2022) sought to

investigate how green marketing influences customer choices in the market for goods, specifically those using palm oil. Although the H1 (There is a significant relationship between the consumer's willingness to refuse the purchase of certain products if it has a negative impact on the environment and the generational group the consumer belongs to) and the H2 (There is a relationship between the consumer's willingness to refuse the purchase of certain products if it has a negative impact on the environment and the knowledge that the product contains palm oil) hypotheses were accepted, the relationship in both cases turned out to be weak. The study demonstrates that most consumers do not take the time to read product packaging information.

Several authors have studied country specific cases on how green marketing affects green purchase decisions. Based on the research conducted in Tehran by Delafrooz, Taleghani, and Nouri (2014), eco-brands had the least impact on customer purchasing behavior whereas environmental advertisements had the most impact. The research conducted in Istanbul by Boztepe (2016) indicates that environmental consciousness, green product attributes, green advertising campaigns, and green prices positively influence customers' green purchasing decisions. Demographic factors have a negligible impact on models. The research study conducted by Bukhari (2011) in the Udhampur district of the Jammu and Kashmir region shows that businesses need to communicate more with consumers about being environmentally friendly. It suggests that factors such as pricing and quality are more significant than "environmental responsibility." According to the findings of Govender and Govender (2016), South Africans are highly knowledgeable about environmental issues. The promotion of green initiatives, in particular, has been shown to enhance consumer awareness and encourage healthier changes in consumption habits. Many of the respondents said they preferred to shop at socially conscious stores. Additionally, respondents picked green products above conventional options. They were, however, price conscious, which had an impact on their purchase choices. It was stated that there was no discernible difference in price sensitivity between people with low and high incomes. Additionally, there was no discernible difference in knowledge and awareness of environmental degradation and green marketing between respondents with lower and higher qualifications. In the study by Xara-Brasil (2023), local consumers and retailers in Setubal (Portugal) were both highly green-oriented, while local producers were less so. In light of these conclusions, it is vital to strengthen marketing efforts and implement specific training programs for different stakeholders, including local producers focused on sustainability. This will help reinforce green "values" in local communities. In a study conducted in Turkey, Alatas (2015) demonstrated that only green marketing exerts an impact on green purchasing among customers with income levels between 0-1000TL. Meanwhile, environmental awareness

and green values influence green purchasing for customers with income levels between 1001-2000TL. Additionally, awareness of the environment and green marketing collectively impact green purchasing among customers with financial gains of 2001TL and above. This research demonstrates that consumers with low financial gain levels are more likely to be impacted by promotional activities than perceived value. On the other hand, the middle-income cluster is a unit that is more conscious of its surroundings and may also take value into account. Furthermore, promotion and environmental awareness are crucial for the cluster with financial gain levels of 2001TL and above. As a result, in environmentally friendly products where high value is required, the environmental aspect of the product should be heavily emphasized.

Impact of eco-branding and eco-labeling on consumer behavior was also studied by various authors. According to Chan, Sekarsari, and Alexandri (2019), there is no correlation between green marketing and green consumer behavior. Green marketing initiatives by Re-Knken are superior to the Eco-Brand dimension. Re-Knken is a product that employs green marketing techniques in its advertising. This study recommends that Re-Knken collaborate with stores selling environmentally friendly items and partner with fashion influencers who are passionate about environmental conservation to enhance environmental advertising. Re-Knken can launch a campaign emphasizing the value of environmental protection to increase the community's inclination towards eco-friendly shopping. Joseph et al. (2023) investigate the impact of green marketing on customer behavior. In order to accurately forecast consumers' green service attitudes about goods and services, it is essential to analyze independent models like eco-branding, eco-labeling, eco-packaging, and eco-friendly advertising. The data was subjected to the Garret ranking method, which revealed that the highest price was the main obstacle preventing customers from making green goods purchases. Lack of sufficient understanding was another factor that discouraged consumers from purchasing green goods, indicating that lack of awareness is a barrier to such intentions. In Bagheri's (2014) study, it was shown that consumer green behavior is significantly influenced by green product features, green promotion, green pricing, and green distribution. Additionally, education, income, and age were identified as factors with a moderate impact on consumer behavior, whereas marital status and gender were found to have no significant influence. According to Sharma (2021), environmental concern, eco-labelling, past experiences, and perceived usefulness have been identified as major factors influencing green consumer behavior. As a result, consumers' attitude toward green products differs from their actual purchase behavior. This is primarily due to a lack of environmental knowledge, price, perceived risks, organizational image, trust, and willingness to pay.

3.   Material and method

The research approach selected in the paper is quantitative in nature. It aims to collect empirical data and numerical information to study the relationship between sustainable marketing and buyer motivation. Questionnaires have been used to obtain the data required for the study.

The target population of this study consists of retail market consumers. A random sampling technique was used to ensure a diverse representation of customer's across different demographic categories (e.g., age, gender, income level, etc.). 106 respondents filled the questionnaire in total.

The questionnaire includes questions in a Likert scale format. The collected data were analyzed using statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and responses to the various survey items. Regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between sustainable marketing and buyer motivation. MS Excel software and SPSS were used for complete data analysis.

The research adheres to ethical guidelines and ensures that the rights of participants are protected. Informed consent was obtained from all survey participants, their responses are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Variables selected for the regression analysis are as follows:

- Considering social, economic, and ecological aspects of goods and services before buying - Y
- Motivation for buying ecologically clean products - X1
- Attitude that sustainable products have a positive impact on environment - X2
- I will probably buy the products that position as ecologically clean or sustainable - X3
- I feel motivated to buy products due to their positive impact on environment - X4
- Energy efficiency associated with the sustainable practice motivates me to buy sustainable products - X5
- Green advertisement will affect my decision to buy certain products - X6
- Marketing that shows how selling certain goods will solve social problems will make me motivated - X7
- Eco-labelling will affect my decision - X8
- Ready to pay more for the product that does not affect environment negatively - X9
- CSR activities conducted by the company makes me motivated to buy its product - X10

After performing auto-correlation tests, X4 and X6 variables were removed from the model and the regression analysis was performed on the remaining variables.

The dependent variable is the buying decision, reflecting the consumer's willingness to purchase sustainable product. Accordingly, regression formula was defined as follows:

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{motivation}) + \beta_2(\text{attitude}) + \beta_3(\text{ecological safety}) + \beta_4(\text{environmental concern}) + \beta_5(\text{energy efficiency}) + \beta_6(\text{green advertisement}) + \beta_7(\text{social problems}) + \beta_8(\text{eco-labeling}) + \beta_9(\text{negative environmental impact}) + \beta_{10}(\text{CSR}) + \varepsilon$$

ε represents the error term or residual, which accounts for the unexplained variation in consumers' attitudes towards green marketing. It captures any factors not accounted for by the independent variables and the regression equation.

4.   Results and discussions

To summarize the results of the research, 110 people participated in the study (106 valid responses). Among these participants, 67% were females and 39% were males (refer to Table 1 for gender distribution).

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	67	63.2	63.2	63.2
	Male	39	36.8	36.8	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

According to the age distribution statistics, the percentages for various age groups are as follows: 18 to 24 years - 10.4%; 25 to 34 years - 14.2%; 35 to 44 years - 32.10%; 45 to 54 years - 36.8%; and those aged 55 years and above - 6.6% (refer to Table 2: Age).

Table 2. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24	11	10.4	10.4	10.4
	25-34	15	14.2	14.2	24.5
	35-44	34	32.1	32.1	56.6
	45-54	39	36.8	36.8	93.4
	55+	7	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

In terms of education, the majority of respondents held master's degree (69.8%), followed by those with bachelor's degree (24.5%), PhDs (4.7%), and

only 0.9% with secondary education (refer to Table 3: Education). Regarding occupation, the majority of interviewees (85.8%) were employed full-time (refer to Table 4: Occupation).

Table 3. Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor	26	24.5	24.5	24.5
	Master	74	69.8	69.8	94.3
	PhD	5	4.7	4.7	99.1
	Secondary education	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

Table 4. Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Full time	91	85.8	85.8	85.8
	Part time	3	2.8	2.8	88.7
	Self employed	6	5.7	5.7	94.3
	Unemployed	6	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

In terms of income, the research indicated that 2000+ individuals had more than 51.9%, and 48 of them held master's degree (refer to Table 6 for monthly income and education crosstabulation). Regarding gender, 35 were females with 2000+ income, and 20 were males. Additionally, the research revealed that high income is correlated with full-time jobs and master's degree (see Table 6 for monthly income and education crosstabulation and Table 7 for monthly income and gender crosstabulation)

Table 5. Monthly Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 – 500	7	6.6	6.6	6.6
	1001 – 1500	10	9.4	9.4	16.0
	1501 – 2000	27	25.5	25.5	41.5
	2000 +	55	51.9	51.9	93.4
	501 – 1000	7	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

Table 6. Monthly income and education (crosstabulation)

		5. Monthly Income					Total
		0 – 500	1001 – 1500	1501 – 2000	2000 +	501 – 1000	
Education	Bachelor	5	4	9	2	6	26
	Master	1	6	18	48	1	74
	PhD	0	0	0	5	0	5
	Secondary education	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		7	10	27	55	7	106

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

Table 7. Monthly income and gender (crosstabulation)

		Monthly Income					
		0 – 500	1001 – 1500	1501 – 2000	2000 +	501 – 1000	Total
Gender	Female	5	6	15	35	6	67
	Male	2	4	12	20	1	39
Total		7	10	27	55	7	106

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

In the context of sustainable development, the research revealed that 47.20% had partial knowledge, and 56% were fluent in it. Interestingly, the option "no" was not selected by any respondents (refer to Table 8 for an overview of understanding sustainable development).

Table 8. Understanding Sustainable Development

Do you know what sustainable development means?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Partially know	50	47.2	47.2	47.2
	Yes	56	52.8	52.8	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

According to the research (refer to Table 9: "Motivation Level to Buy the Product Done with Sustainable Practice/Eco-friendly Product or Having Eco-labeling"), the highest percentage, 59.4%, was attributed to option 2. This indicates that respondents were "Motivated" to buy eco-friendly products, with 36.8% being "Completely Motivated," 2.8% indicating they "Did Not Know," and only 0.90% stating they "Were Not Motivated."

Table 9. Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly product or having eco-labeling

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-completely motivated; 2-Motivated; 3-I do not know; 4-I am not motivated; 5-I am not motivated at all					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	39	36.8	36.8	36.8
	2	63	59.4	59.4	96.2
	3	3	2.8	2.8	99.1
	4	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

In response to the question regarding the perception of "Sustainable Products and Services having a positive impact on the environment," 47.2% expressed being "completely motivated," 50.0% indicated they were "motivated," 1.9% responded with "did not know," and only 0.90% stated they "were not motivated" (refer to Table 10 for opinion about "Sustainable Products and Services having positive impact on the environment").

Table 10. Opinion about "Sustainable Products and Services having positive impact on the environment"

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-completely motivated; 2-Motivated; 3-I do not know; 4-I am not motivated; 5-I am not motivated at all					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	50	47.2	47.2	47.2
	2	53	50.0	50.0	97.2
	3	2	1.9	1.9	99.1
	4	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The desire to prioritize eco-friendly products yielded interesting results: 47.2% "Completely agreed," 48.1% "Agreed," 3.8% "Did not know," and 0.90% "Did not agree" (refer to Table 11: The desire to buy products or services marketed as eco-friendly or sustainable).

Table 11. The desire to buy products or services that are marketed as eco-friendly or sustainable

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	50	47.2	47.2	47.2
	2	51	48.1	48.1	95.3
	3	4	3.8	3.8	99.1
	4	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The findings regarding motivation to buy sustainable products are promising. The breakdown is as follows: 49.1% - "completely motivated," 46.2% - "motivated," 2.8% - "I do not know," 0.90% - "I am not motivated," and 0.90% - "I am not motivated at all" (see Table 12: Motivation to Buy Sustainable Products because of their positive impact on the environment).

Table 12. Motivation to buy sustainable products because of their positive influence on the environment

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-completely motivated; 2-Motivated; 3-I do not know; 4-I am not motivated; 5-I am not motivated at all					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	52	49.1	49.1	49.1
	2	49	46.2	46.2	95.3
	3	3	2.8	2.8	98.1
	4	1	.9	.9	99.1
	5	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

According to Table 13, before making a purchase, 49.1% "Completely agreed" and 45.30% "Agreed" with considering the social, economic, and ecological aspects of the products. This indicates that, when selecting a desirable product, sustainability is their priority.

Table 13. Before buying, I consider the social, economic, and ecological aspects of the products

Scale from 1 to 5: - 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	52	49.1	49.1	49.1
	2	48	45.3	45.3	94.3
	3	3	2.8	2.8	97.2
	4	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

41.50% of the respondents agreed that economic incentives, such as cost savings through energy-efficient products, motivate them to make decision in favor of sustainable products, while making purchasing decisions (see Table 14: Motivation and economic incentives, such as cost savings through energy-efficient products, motivate me to make sustainable product purchasing decisions).

Table 14. Motivation and economic incentives, such as cost savings through energy-efficient products, motivate me to make sustainable product purchasing decisions

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	44	41.5	41.5	41.5
	2	57	53.8	53.8	95.3
	3	3	2.8	2.8	98.1
	5	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The research revealed that green advertising, which emphasizes the product's positive impact on the environment, influences 32.1% of buyers' purchase decisions as "completely." Additionally, 61.30% "agreed" with it, 5.70% "did not know," and 0.90% "completely disagreed" (refer to Table 15: Green Advertising and Decision Making).

Table 15. Green advertising and decision making

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	34	32.1	32.1	32.1
	2	65	61.3	61.3	93.4
	3	6	5.7	5.7	99.1
	5	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The statement regarding "Cause-related marketing showing that product sales contribute to environmental or social issues leads to purchase" was endorsed by 36.8% as "Completely agreed," 58.5% as "Agreed," 3.8% as "did not know," and 0.90% as "Completely disagreed" (refer to Table 16: Cause-related marketing showing that product sales contribute to environmental or social issues lead to purchase).

Table 16. Cause-related marketing showing that product sales contribute to environmental or social issues lead to purchase

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	39	36.8	36.8	36.8
	2	62	58.5	58.5	95.3
	3	4	3.8	3.8	99.1
	5	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

Eco-labeling and/or certification, which provides information about the ecological benefits of a product, had a positive effect on the decision-making process, as "Completely agreed" by 51.9%, "Agreed" by 44.30%, and 3.8% indicated they did not know (refer to Table 17: Eco-labeling and/or certification providing information about the ecological benefits of a product and its impact on decision-making).

Table 17. Eco labeling and/or certification that provides information about the ecological benefits of a product and its effect on decision-making process

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	55	51.9	51.9	51.9
	2	47	44.3	44.3	96.2
	3	4	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The respondents were also asked about their willingness to pay more for the product, considering its positive impact on the environment (refer to Table 18: Desire to pay more for a product if it does not have a negative impact on the environment). The results showed that 51.9% "Completely agreed," 41.5% "Agreed," 5.7% "did not know," and 0.9% "did not agree."

Table 18. Desire to pay more for a product if it does not have a negative impact on the environment

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	55	51.9	51.9	51.9
	2	44	41.5	41.5	93.4
	3	6	5.7	5.7	99.1
	4	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

As revealed by the research, the implementation of corporate social responsibility has a positive impact on the buyer's decision-making process. Specifically, 47.2% "Completely agreed," 45.3% "Agreed," 6.6% "did not know," and 0.9% "did not agree" (see Table 19: The company's implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and desire to buy products).

Table 19. The company's implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and desire to buy product

Scale from 1 to 5: 1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	50	47.2	47.2	47.2
	2	48	45.3	45.3	92.5
	3	7	6.6	6.6	99.1
	5	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The research revealed that females exhibit higher motivation to buy eco-friendly products, with 26 of them marked as "completely motivated" and 39 as "Motivated." In contrast, among males, 13 were labeled as "completely motivated" and 24 as "Motivated" (refer to Table 20: Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practices/eco-friendly product – By Gender Crosstabulation).

Table 20. Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly product – By Gender Crosstabulation

		Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly product				Total
		1	2	3	4	
Gender	Female	26	39	1	1	67
	Male	13	24	2	0	39
Total		39	63	3	1	106
Scale from 1 to 5 – (1) completely motivated (2) Motivated (3) I do not know (4) I am not motivated (5) I am not motivated at all						

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The discussion also covered motivation levels based on income, revealing that individuals with an income of 2000+ are more motivated to buy products done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly products. Specifically, 20 respondents marked themselves as 'completely motivated,' while 35 indicated they were 'motivated' (refer to Table 21: Motivation level to buy products done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly products - By Income Cross Tabulation).

Table 21. Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly product - By Income (Cross Tabulation)

		Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly product				Total
		1	2	3	4	
Monthly Income	0 – 500	6	0	0	1	7
	501 – 1000	5	1	1	0	7
	1001 – 1500	3	7	0	0	10
	1501 – 2000	5	20	2	0	27
	2000 +	20	35	0	0	55
Total		39	63	3	1	106
Scale from 1 to 5 – (1) completely motivated (2) Motivated (3) I do not know (4) I am not motivated (5) I am not motivated at all						

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

According to the crosstabulation, information about sustainable development indicated that there were 38 people with master's degrees (refer to Table 22: Knowledge of Sustainable Development - By Education Cross Tabulation).

Table 22. Knowledge of Sustainable Development - By Education (Cross Tabulation)

		Do you know what sustainable development means?		Total
		Partially know	Yes	
Education	Bachelor	12	14	26
	Master	36	38	74
	PhD	1	4	5
	Secondary education	1	0	1
Total		50	56	106

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The crosstabulation of knowledge and age revealed that individuals aged 35-44, totaling 20 people, exhibit a better understanding of the meaning of sustainable development. Following this age group, the 45-54 category consists of 17 individuals (refer to Table 23: Knowledge of Sustainable Development - By Age Cross Tabulation). Consequently, emphasizing awareness is more crucial within the younger generation.

Table 23. Knowledge of Sustainable Development - By Age (Crosstabulation)

		Do you know what sustainable development means?		Total
		Partially know	Yes	
Age	18-24	2	9	11
	25-34	9	6	15
	35-44	14	20	34
	45-54	22	17	39
	55+	3	4	7
Total		50	56	106

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

The regression analysis conducted in the study yielded the following results (refer to Table 24: Regression Analysis).

Table 24. Regression analysis

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.640443
R Square	0.410168
Adjusted R	0.361522
Standard E	0.548945
Observatio	106

ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	ignificance F
Regression	8	20.32651	2.540814	8.431686	1.23E-08
Residual	97	29.23009	0.301341		
Total	105	49.5566			

	Coefficients	andard Err	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	ower 95.0%	pper 95.0%
Intercept	-0.23517	0.250803	-0.93766	0.35075	-0.73294	0.262607	-0.73294	0.262607
x1	0.137716	0.111475	1.235402	0.219665	-0.08353	0.358963	-0.08353	0.358963
x2	0.122898	0.109872	1.118557	0.266092	-0.09517	0.340965	-0.09517	0.340965
x3	0.301021	0.10731	2.805154	0.006077	0.088041	0.514002	0.088041	0.514002
x5	0.100639	0.095398	1.054941	0.294073	-0.0887	0.289978	-0.0887	0.289978
x7	0.2181	0.105636	2.064641	0.041626	0.008442	0.427759	0.008442	0.427759
x8	0.231147	0.112051	2.062862	0.041798	0.008756	0.453538	0.008756	0.453538
x9	0.004527	0.118065	0.038342	0.969494	-0.2298	0.238853	-0.2298	0.238853
x10	0.019818	0.099515	0.199142	0.842569	-0.17769	0.217327	-0.17769	0.217327

Note. *Authors' according to the research*

According to the regression analysis, p value for X3 variable is less than 0.01. This shows that the perceptions of people towards ecologically clean and sustainable products is an important factor for buying decision, having significant and positive impact. Also, if individuals believe that purchasing specific goods and services can address certain societal problems, they are likely to buy those products. This is a significant finding that demonstrates retailers' opportunity to link their sales to the actual problem in society when considering social responsibility policy and measures. In addition, eco-labelling seems to be a significant variable affecting consumers' buying decisions. This implies that consumers trust labels and are ready to pay for products with eco-labels.

These findings are in line with those in the studied literature. Therefore, it is important for Georgian retailers to understand the growing concerns towards sustainability and to actively expand the chain of their products with environmentally friendly goods and services.

This outcome fits well with a more general global trend where people are becoming more aware of the effects of their choices on the environment. It represents a developing consumer group that is concerned with the product and its environmental impact. This finding presents potential for shops to offer more eco-friendly products to appeal to the consumer who is concerned about sustainability. Beyond marketing tactics, it necessitates a dedication to promoting and procuring eco-friendly goods. Retailers can take into account sustainable sourcing methods, energy-efficient supply chains, and packaging that is environmentally beneficial.

Additionally, this outcome suggests a possibility for businesses to coordinate their sales with societal challenges. Customers are more inclined to buy a certain product if they believe that doing so helps address environmental issues. This conclusion emphasizes the significance of ethical and transparent marketing practices. Retailers should promote their sustainability efforts and explain how customer purchases support larger societal and environmental objectives. This increases the brand's reputation as a socially conscious company while simultaneously boosting revenues.

Retailers seeking to appeal to consumers who are ecologically sensitive can use eco-labeling effectively. For consumers, it serves as a sign of reliability and assurance. An eco-label on a product indicates that it has passed testing and complies with environmental regulations. This not only builds trust but also facilitates decision-making for customers who might not have the time or knowledge to thoroughly investigate the sustainability of a product.

This data provides a chance for Georgian shops to adopt and develop eco-labeling techniques. Retailers can set their items apart from the competition in the market by collaborating with reputable eco-certification organizations or using eco-labeling requirements. However, it is crucial that the eco-labels accurately reflect the sustainability features of the product. The reputation of a brand and consumer trust can be damaged by misleading ecolabeling.

According to the research, the profile of a "Georgian sustainable buyer" has been established. It is presented in Table 25 (The profile of a "Georgian sustainable buyer") and Figure 2 (The motivating factors of a sustainable buyer).

Table 25. The profile of a "Georgian sustainable buyer"

Gender	Female
Age	35-44
Education	Master's degree
Income	2000 +
Occupation	Working Full time
Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly, eco-labeled product	Motivated
Purchasing goods motivating factors	Ecologically clean products Sustainable products Having eco-labeling Solving societal problems Paying attention to economic incentives

Note. *Authors' according to the research*
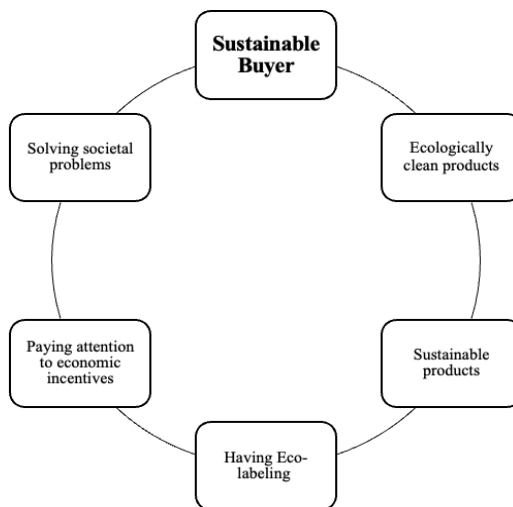
Figure 2. The motivating factors of a sustainable buyer
Note. *Authors' according to the research*

These results highlight crucial findings. Firstly, they demonstrate that buyers of sustainable goods typically have high incomes. Since eco-labeled products are known to be relatively expensive, they are not easily accessible for individuals with lower incomes. Regarding motivation, the increase in awareness and education appears to be a prerequisite for motivating people to buy eco-friendly goods. Gender differences were also examined, revealing that females tend to pay more attention to eco-friendly products. The research indicates that people are motivated to buy ecologically clean and sustainable products when these items carry eco-labeling and certification logos.

Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from the regression research has important ramifications for enterprises, not only in Georgia but also around the world. The results highlight the significant influence that sustainability factors have on customers' purchasing choices. Examining these findings more closely, several important lessons become evident.

The data confirms that consumer awareness of environmentally friendly and sustainable products is no longer a specialized issue but rather a major influence on consumer buying habits. Customers are seeking for goods that not only satisfy their requirements, but also take into account their moral and environmental concerns. Retailers must adjust to this new reality as the retail landscape is being changed by this trend.

A key finding is the relationship between consumer choices and the belief that specific products and services may solve societal problems. Retailers have the chance to use this knowledge to develop marketing plans that not only highlight their goods but also the positive effects they can have on important social concerns such as environmental preservation, social justice, or other causes.

Eco-labeling is a strategy for fostering trust, not just a sticker on a product. These marks are becoming increasingly important to consumers, as they provide confidence that their purchases align with their environmental objectives. Retailers must also ensure that eco-labels are genuine and supported by reliable standards while also not underestimating the influence of such labels. Sustainable buyers appear to be a trend nowadays, and companies are trying their best to provide the suitable products for them.

In conclusion, the results of this regression study confirm the significant impact of sustainability factors on customer purchasing decisions. Retailers have a unique opportunity to align their products with these ideals as consumers increasingly prioritize eco-friendliness and socially conscious products. By doing this, companies not only satisfy customer expectations but also position themselves for long-term success and growth in a retail environment undergoing rapid change. Sustainability is no longer just a fad; it is a key aspect of how retail will develop in the future.

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Appendix

1. Gender
   Male
   Female
2. Age
   18-24
   25-34
   35-44
   45-54
   55+
3. Education
   Secondary education
   Bachelor
   Master
   PhD
4. Occupation
   Full time
   Part time
   Self employed
5. Monthly income
   0 – 500
   501 – 1000
   1001 – 1500
   1501 – 2000
   2000 +
6. Do you know what sustainable development means?
   Yes, partially know, No
7. Motivation level to buy the product done with sustainable practice/eco-friendly, eco-labeled product. (1-compelety motivated; 2-Motivated; 3-I do not know; 4-I am not motivated; 5-I am not motivated at all).
8. Opinion about "Sustainable Products and Services have positive impact on the environment". (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).
9. I am more likely to buy products or services that are marketed as ecofriendly or sustainable. (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).
10. Motivation to buy sustainable products because of their positive influence on environment.
    (1-compelety motivated; 2-Motivated; 3-I do not know; 4-I am not motivated; 5-I am not motivated at all).
11. Before buying, I consider the social, economic, and ecological aspects of the products.

(1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

12. Economic incentives, such as cost savings through energy-efficient products, motivate me to make sustainable product purchasing decisions.

13. Green advertising that emphasizes the product's positive impact on the environment influences my purchase decision. (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

14. Cause-related marketing showing that product sales contribute to environmental or social issues leads to purchase. (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

15. Eco labeling and/or certification that provides information about the ecological benefits of a product has a positive effect on my decision to buy a product. (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

16. I am willing to pay more for a product if it does not have a negative impact on the environment.

(1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

17. A company's implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities will make me buy its product. (1-Completely agree; 2-Agree; 3-I do not know; 4-I do not agree; 5 - Completely disagree).

The Impact of Unemployment on Economic Development: Georgia's Example

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Abstract

This study explores the intricate relationship between unemployment and economic development, with a specific focus on the case of Georgia. High unemployment rates often signal economic challenges within a nation, and their consequences can extend far beyond the labor market. By examining Georgia's experience, this research aims to shed light on the multifaceted impact of unemployment on various facets of economic growth.

Drawing from statistical data and regression analysis, this study investigates the causal links between unemployment levels and key economic indicators. It delves into how unemployment rates influence factors such as GDP growth, income inequality, social welfare programs, and overall societal well-being.

Furthermore, the study delves into the policy measures implemented in Georgia to combat unemployment and foster sustainable economic development. It scrutinizes the effectiveness of these policies, identifying successes and areas requiring improvement.

The insights gained from this analysis not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between unemployment and economic development but also provide valuable lessons for policymakers and stakeholders in Georgia and other regions grappling with similar challenges. As nations worldwide seek to navigate the complex terrain of labor market dynamics and economic prosperity, the case of Georgia serves as an instructive example, highlighting the significance of addressing

unemployment as a critical component of a nation's economic growth strategy.

Keywords: Unemployment, Economic Development, GDP growth

Introduction

Naturally, the existence of such a complex and important problem as unemployment does not remain unnoticed by any state, and it fights with the latter with different levers - by implementing appropriate policies or various measures. Georgia is no exception. However, before reviewing the measures taken directly in Georgia to address the unemployment problem, let's first familiarize ourselves with the classification of the Economic Cooperation and Development Organization (OECD) regarding state employment policy[1]. This is divided into two directions: active and passive policies. More specifically, each includes the following:

- Professional training programs;
- Public employment services;
- Encouraging employment;
- Creation of new jobs;
- Encouraging startups;
- Support and rehabilitation of the labor force lacking the necessary skills.

The above instruments belong to the active employment policy, while passive policies include:

1. early retirement;
2. Unemployment insurance.

Back in 2013, the World Bank conducted research analyzing Georgia's statistical data and identified three main challenges:

- The country has working resources that cannot be used;
- Incomes are unevenly distributed;
- It is not possible to establish a balance between the demand and supply of different professions.

We should also mention the 2014 research conducted by the National Statistics Service of Georgia and the vocational school graduates. This research became the basis for the active employment policy strategy approved

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[1] COVERAGE AND CLASSIFICATION OF OECD DATA FOR PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND PARTICIPANTS IN LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES;

https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/Coverage-and-classification-of-OECD-data-2015.pdf

in 2016, which was endorsed by the Government of Georgia on April 4, 2016. The objectives of this policy[2] were as follows:

- Creation of the conceptual, legal and operational framework necessary for the implementation of an active labor market policy;
- Development/adoption of legal acts to implement the strategy;
- Improving the quality of employment services;
- Eliminating the labor force demand/supply imbalance through training and retraining programs;
- Establishing a connection between public investment projects and the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection of Georgia;
- Implementation of an effective system through which it would be possible to implement and monitor the active policy of the labor market.

On July 14, 2020, the Law of Georgia 'On Promotion of Employment'[3] was adopted, with the purpose of implementing an active labor market policy, facilitating the employment of Georgian citizens, promoting free competition and entrepreneurship, and ensuring equal access to employment promotion programs for Georgian citizens. We also find in the mentioned law that its aim is to establish an employment system where:

- Implementation of intermediary activities for employment in the labor market to achieve a demand/supply balance;
- Matching job seekers with employers;
- Stimulating job seekers;
- Adapting the labor force to the existing structural changes in Georgia's economy.

Some of the normative acts adopted by the Georgian government in the last decade (Tsartsidze, 2019) include:

1. Resolution of the Government of Georgia No. 199 "On Approving the State Strategy for the Formation of the Labor Market of Georgia and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the State Strategy for the Formation of the Labor Market of Georgia for 2015-2018" August 2, 2013.
2. Resolution of the Government of Georgia No. 733 "On approval of the concept of introduction and development of the labor market information system and the action plan for its implementation" December 26, 2014

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[2] Approval of the Active Labor Market Policy Strategy and its 2016-2018 Action Plan. https://www.gov.ge/files/439_55453_143263_167.pdf
[3] Law of Georgia "On Promotion of Employment"
https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4924109?publication=2

3. Resolution of the Government of Georgia No. 333 "On Approval of the State Program for the Development of Employment Promotion Services" July 18, 2016
4. Resolution of the Government of Georgia 12 "On the approval of the 2018 state program for the introduction and development of the labor market analysis and information system", January 15, 2018
5. Resolution of the Government of Georgia 7177 on amending the Organic Law of Georgia "Labor Code of Georgia". September 29, 2020
6. On December 28, 2020, the International Labor Organization will introduce new labor standards for statistical registration of the workforce, etc.

Naturally, this list represents only a subset of the measures the state has taken to address unemployment in Georgia and promote employment. Given that this issue remains a prominent concern, we believe that the mentioned policies alone are insufficient, and more significant effort, along with time, is needed.

Literature Review

The correlation between unemployment and economic growth is well-documented in both local and foreign literature. Unemployment, often regarded as a negative phenomenon, encompasses various economic and social dimensions within a country. Economic issues stemming from unemployment include the denial of tax revenue to the population in the form of income tax and the loss of productive hours. On the other hand, social issues of unemployment are related to depression, lack of self-respect, and other vices such as robbery, prostitution, and more (Adarkwa, Donkor, & Kyei, 2017). Moreover, scholars also assert that unemployment is a multidimensional phenomenon that combines economic and social aspects, manifesting as both an economic activity and a social structure in society (Al-Habees & Rumman 2012). Therefore, the economic and social dimensions resulting from unemployment make it a complex issue that requires investigation into various factors to understand its nature and impact on economic growth.

The nature of unemployment depends on a country's structure and its classification as developed, developing, or underdeveloped (Soylu, Çakmak, & Okur, 2017). Unemployment, as a macroeconomic indicator, reflects a country's inability to fully utilize its abundant labor resources (Anghel, Anghelache, & Manole 2017). This highlights the presence of many active individuals seeking work who could potentially increase productivity but cannot secure employment. The International Labor Organization (ILO)

defines unemployment based on three crucial conditions that must be met simultaneously: not working, being ready for employment, and actively seeking work (ILO, 2019). According to the researchers Al-Hamdi Mohanedi and Alavin Mohamed, the theoretical analysis of unemployment represent the level of employment as a labor force associated with the degree of success, which in turn is related to economic growth (Mohanedi and Mohamed, 2016). Unemployment is classified as one of the most serious barriers preventing economic progress. The scientific literature notes that apart from being a source of livelihood on the street where people tend to commit criminal offenses against the law, unemployment is a great loss of labor to the country and it produces poverty in the sense that the lower the production, the lower There will be income and poorer will be the country and lower will be social welfare (Akinboyo, 1987; Raheem & Mufutau Iyiola, 1993). The problem of unemployment is not only intensifying in the conditions of globalization, but there are many opportunities to fight it even for such a small country as Georgia. Upon assessing the impact of foreign direct investment on the unemployment rate in Georgia since 2012, it was determined that the level of foreign direct investment significantly contributed to economic growth (Zhorzholiani, 2022). The researcher analyzed various macroeconomic variables and concluded that an increase in foreign direct investment leads to a higher employment rate, which, in turn, results in increased output and a subsequent rise in the country's gross domestic product (Zhorzholiani, 2022). A number of studies have presented conflicting findings on the relationship between the unemployment rate and economic progress. While there is limited literature on unemployment in Georgia, it is essential to investigate the impact of unemployment on the development of the modern Georgian economy. This research will contribute to the existing literature on the subject.

Data and Methodology

Unemployment has been one of Georgia's significant and enduring issues for years (Figure 2 illustrates the unemployment level in Georgia from 1998 to 2022). Figure 1. displays labor force indicators in Georgia.

The unemployment rate has shown a notable increase since 2009, attributable to at least two factors:

- **Global Financial Crisis**: The crisis, stemming from the collapse of substandard mortgage lending in the US real estate market in the summer of 2007, had a cascading negative impact on other countries. In developed nations, unemployment levels surged from 5% to 9%, the world economy contracted by 3.3%, and stock and real estate prices plummeted. From the latter half of 2008, a slowdown in economic growth rates was observed across the globe.

● **Political Destabilization in Georgia:** The "August War" of 2008 between Georgia, the Russian Federation, and Ossetian separatists further exacerbated the situation.

Consequently, Georgia endured challenging years. During this period, FDI and remittances to Georgia decreased significantly, inflation levels dropped, and a current account balance deficit emerged. All of these factors substantially worsened Georgia's economic situation, consequently affecting the standard of living. Specifically, in 2009, a negative economic growth rate of -3.65% was recorded, with the unemployment rate peaking at 18.3%, a substantial figure. To overcome the crisis, medium-term plans were developed in Georgia between 2010 and 2013, playing a crucial role in addressing the prevailing difficulties. This is corroborated by the provided statistical data (Figure 1), where we observe a decline in the unemployment rate starting from 2013.

Figure 1. Labor Force Indicators in Georgia from 1998-2022

Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia. https://www.geostat.ge/en
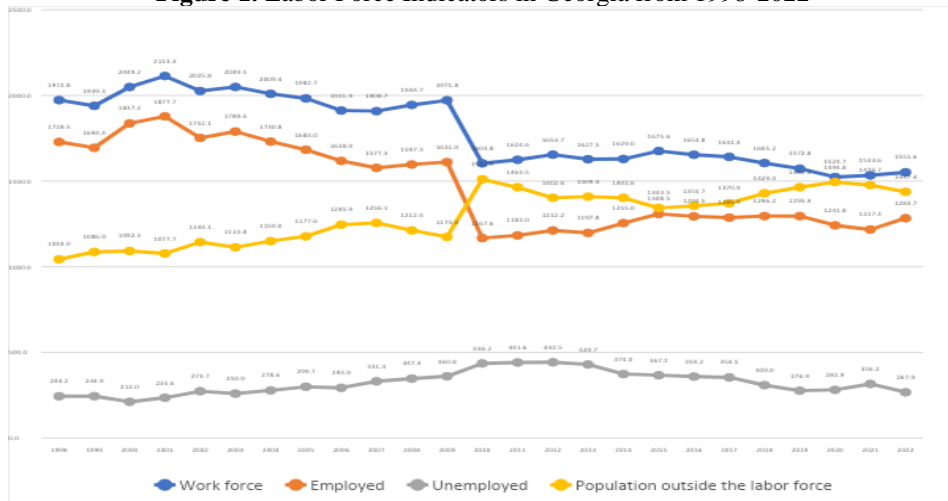
Figure 2. Unemployment level in Georgia from 1998-2022

Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia. https://www.geostat.ge/en
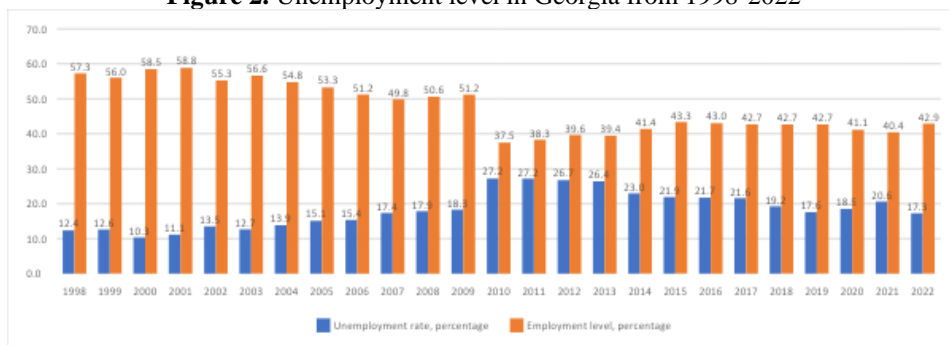
Another notable surge in the unemployment rate has been witnessed since 2021, attributed to one of the key events of this period - the emergence of the new virus, COVID-19. The virus originated in Wuhan at the end of 2019 and quickly escalated into a global pandemic, inflicting significant damage on national economies and individuals alike.

Methodology and results

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) is a vital indicator that reflects the state, growth, and development of the economy. By examining Georgia's GDP over the years, we can demonstrate the impact of changes in the unemployment rate through regression analysis.

Table 1 displays the GDP growth rate and unemployment rate data from 2008 to 2022.

Table 1. GDP growth rate and unemployment rate data from 2008 to 2022.

Years	GDP growth rate	Unemployment rate
T	**Dependent Variable**	**Independent Variable**
2008	**2,7**	**17,9**
2009	**-4,1**	**18,3**
2010	**7,2**	**27,2**
2011	**7,4**	**27,2**
2012	**6,4**	**26,7**
2013	**3,6**	**26,4**
2014	**4,4**	**23**
2015	**3**	**21,9**
2016	**2,9**	**21,7**
2017	**4,8**	**21,6**
2018	**4,9**	**19,2**
2019	**5,1**	**17,6**
2020	**-6,8**	**18,5**
2021	**10,5**	**20,6**
2022	**10,1**	**17,3**

Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia. https://www.geostat.ge/en

Constructing a regression equation will reveal the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Based on our data, the equation is as follows:

$$GDPDV = 11.94776422 - (-0.2543 UNIV)$$

Where: GDPDV is GDP growth rate (Dependent Variable) and UNIV is Unemployment rate Independent Variable.

Based on the provided equation, we can conclude that unemployment and GDP growth are inversely proportional. Specifically, a 1% increase in the

unemployment rate corresponds to a 0.25% decrease in GDP growth. This relationship is consistent with the findings presented in this study.

Rising unemployment signifies a growing number of jobless individuals, resulting in reduced individual incomes. In response, the population curtails consumption expenditures, leading to decreased demand. This reduction in demand subsequently impacts output, causing a decline in the country's total domestic product and a slowdown in the GDP growth rate. This relationship is visually evident in the graph depicting changes in GDP and unemployment levels from 2008 to 2022 (Figure 3).

If we examine the curves, we can draw a similar conclusion. As the unemployment level in Georgia increases (the upper curve on the graph), the GDP growth rate decreases (the lower curve on the graph).

Figure 3. GDP and unemployment levels from 2008 to 2022

Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia. https://www.geostat.ge/en
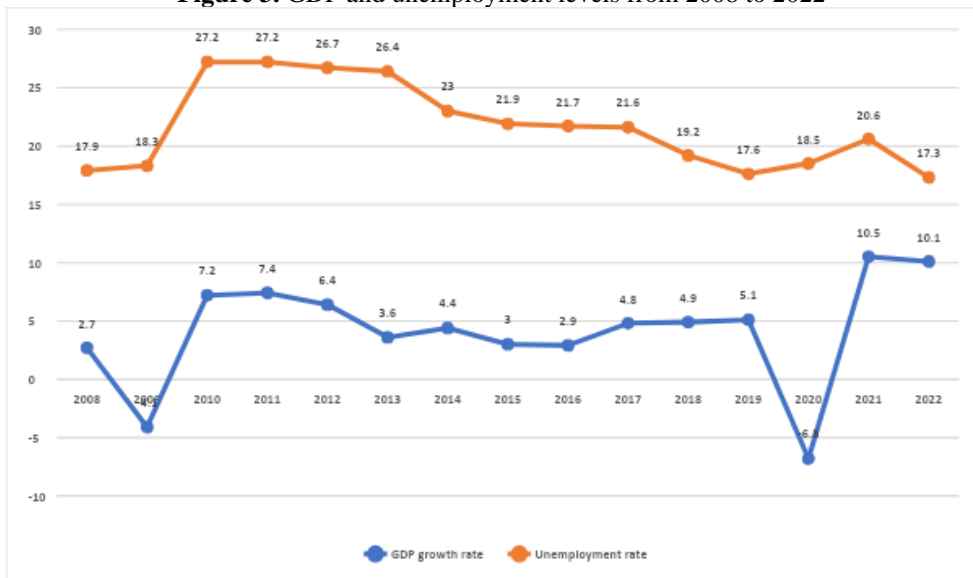
Oaken's Law[4] is a valuable method for assessing the impact of unemployment on the economy. It helps estimate the absolute production losses resulting from unemployment. According to this law, a 1% increase in actual unemployment compared to the natural level reduces potential unemployment by 2.0-2.5 times. Specifically, Oaken's Law is expressed as follows:

$$\frac{Y-Y^*}{Y^*} = -\beta(U - U^*) \text{ or } Y^* = \frac{Y}{[1-\beta(U-U^*)}] \tag{1}$$

___

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okun%27s_law

Where:

Y^*- Gross domestic product is the volume at full employment;

Y- Nominal GDP the volume in the reporting period;

U- The actual level of unemployment during the reporting period;

U^*- Natural level of unemployment in the reporting period.

Let's illustrate this with relevant data, using 2021 as an example. This year is particularly significant due to the pandemic's impact and the noticeable increase in the unemployment rate. Plugging this data into the provided formula (1), we obtain the following result:

In 2021, Y^*= 76,16 and the absolute loss of production caused by unemployment amounted to 21.35 billion GEL, a significant issue that cannot be overlooked for a small country like Georgia. This is a problem that must be addressed.

Conclusion

To summarize the issues discussed in this paper, we can conclude that unemployment in Georgia has a detrimental impact on the country's economic development. Recent statistical data indicate that these efforts are insufficient, and we must acknowledge that combatting such a problem requires a significant amount of time. Unfortunately, time is a precious and costly resource in cases like these.

The regression equation presented in this paper confirms that an increase in the unemployment rate negatively affects the economy, with a 1% rise in the unemployment level resulting in a 0.2543% decrease in the GDP growth rate.

Several key issues should be prioritized by the state in light of the current reality. For example, stimulating the demand for labor, ensuring labor safety and rights, and enhancing the competitiveness of the labor force are areas that deserve immediate attention.

Furthermore, we believe that promoting globalization can be one of the solutions to address this issue. Despite the arguments that globalization can lead to complex problems and negatively impact the labor market, we assert that it provides an opportunity to combat global issues like unemployment. Through globalization, we gain access not only to resources, experiences, and knowledge within Georgia's borders but also to opportunities on a global scale. This broader perspective can be a significant step toward tackling such challenging problems.

Also, the Georgian government can further invest in human capital development since higher skills lead to increased productivity, which, in turn, is linked to lower unemployment.

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Nakae Chomin's World of Thought and Ideology of the Meiji Period through the "Gentleman" Character in "A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government (Sansuijin Keirin Mondo)"

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Abstract

From the second half of the 19th century, many intellectuals of the Meiji Japan serve as a referance for us in order to understand the roadmap of Japan which has revealed an important modernization story under the name of the Meiji Restoration. One of the enlightened thinkers we come across at this point is Nakae Chōmin. Nakae Chōmin, (1847-1901) contributed to the establishment of concepts such as freedom, equality, democracy and constitutionalism in the political memory of Japan through his articles. At the same time, he created a concept memory in the Japanese political thought and brought new concepts to the Japanese language.

In this study, ideology analysis was made in "Sansuijin Keirin Mondō (A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government)" which is called Nakae Chōmin's masterpiece and conveys the ideas of the Meiji period to the reader through different characters. In this work, written with the Socratic dialogue method, the understanding of modernism, idealism, pacifism, freedom, equality, democracy etc. was examined by focusing on the "Gentleman", one of the characters described as Nakae Chōmin's alter ego. At the conclusion of the study, we have determined that a great majority of the ideas put forward by the character of "Gentleman" are also included in Nakae Chōmin's

intellectual framework, especially in the liberal views before 1891.

Keywords: Nakae Chōmin, Liberalism in Japan, Freedom and People Rights Movement, Meiji Period, Meiji ideology

Introduction

Although we encounter various answers to the question of what ideology is, we can express it as 'a set of political, legal, scientific, philosophical, religious, moral, aesthetic thoughts that constitute a political or social doctrine, shaping the actions of a government, a party, or a group.'[1] According to another view the value judgements, existing in societies, are element of the culture, lifestyle and ideology of that society. Therefore, these elements shape the ideology of the society in time (Dalyan, 2016). Therefore, we would like to emphasize that the question of whether all cultural elements, including literature, have an ideological dimension, led us to this study. In this regard, we are faced with the fact that when analyzing a literary work, elements such as the author's world of thought, values and the social and political structure of the period cannot be ignored. For this reason, it is essential that we consider the ideological-historical background of the period in which the work, we consider as the main sample in our study, was written.

The first years of the Meiji era, known as the Japan's modernization period, focused on the research and discussion of Western ideas and theories. Japanese intellectuals tried to understand the content of the restoration through their researchs and readings and also tried to create intellectual infrastructure of modernization. In fact, when we look at the Edo Period for the origins of the Meiji modernization, ideologists such as Ōtsuki Gentaku (1757-1827) and Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863) who believed that Japan was one of the world's most important "empires" thanks to its own culture were among the important thinkers on the road to modernization (Erkin, 2001). One of the factors affecting Japanese modernization is geography. While its proximity to the continent facilitates cultural interaction, being an island country enabled the development of a homogeneous social structure and sense of identitiy (Scalapino, 1970). Japan's modernization was built on key concepts: "wa-和" in preserving national identity and "yō - 洋" in terms of Western culture, known as "wakonyōsai - 和魂洋才" which signifies the Japanese spirit and Western techniques. Another concept that indicate the phenomenon of Westernisation is "bunmei kaika - 文明開化 civilisation and enlightment" (Yazıcı, 2022). Compared to the Chinese and Ottoman modernization programs, it involves more radical changes despite the preservation of traditional values (Esenbel, 2015). Japanese political modernization which

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[1] https://sozluk.gov.tr/ (16. 10. 2023).

focused on discussion issues such as the constitution, parliament and political parties was especially nourished by the ideology of Nationalism. At this point, the main goal of the modernization pioneers is to struggle with Western hegemony, defend national rights and be among the great powers in the political arena (Hackett, 1972). At the same time, liberal thought movements such as freedom, equality, human rights and democracy have remained in the people's memory through the delegations and experts sent to the West. When we look at the political modernization process within the scope of our study, we see that the intellectual and political figures of the period desired development and change, not a revolution. While at first, Western concepts and ideas were taken as they were, gradually with the critical perspective of the thinkers of Meiji Period, concepts such as "sovereignty" and "constitution" were derived in their own language to correspond to the Japanese thought, and also political thoughts began to be examined according tot he social structure (Scalapino, 1970). Nakae Chōmin, one of the important thinkers who came to the fore in creating Japan's political road map and concepts memory in this period,is the focus of this study.

Nakae Chomin, who lived between 1847 and 1901, was a prominent thinker, journalist, politician, writer, and was also acknowledged as a literary figure in some works. He left significant traces in the memory of the Japanese people through his writings during the period when Japan transitioned from about 250 years of seclusion policy to the modernization process. He wrote about subjects such as freedom, equality, democracy, and individual rights, presenting an important political conceptual map in Japan. Having received education in France for four years, Nakae Chōmin was heavily influenced by Rousseau, and translated Rousseau's work "The Social Contract" into Japanese. Hence, he is referred to as the "Rousseau of the East." In addition, thinkers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Mirabeau are some of the names that influenced Chōmin's thoughts. Upon his return from France, he supported the Freedom and Human Rights Movement in Japan through his writings. Particularly within the scope of this movement, there are studies showing that the intellectual infrastructure acquired in France paved the way for popular sovereignty in Japan (Shimizu, 2019). We have also determined that these ideas intersected with nationalist thoughts and organizations in the following years. For this reason, Nakae Chōmin made an East-West comparison that emphasized Eastern morality against the logical and theoretical West, and revealed his own political parameters by displaying a nationalist view nourished by liberal values. Therefore, he has characteristic discourses and thoughts in Japan's political history. An important point that should not be overlooked when analyzing Nakae Chōmin's ideology is his commitment to Confucian thought. With the idea that there was a moral superiority in Japanese society based on Confucian values, he argued that true democracy

could be achieved with freedom and morality. At this point in Chōmin's writings, the discourse that Japan should act as the leader of the East against the West due to its moral superiority draws attention (Yazıcı, 2022).

Within this framework, the subject of our study is the ideology analysis in Nakae Chomin's seminal work "A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government (Sansuijin Keirin Mondō) ". Our research focuses on the concepts of freedom, equality, democracy, pacifism, and Westernisation as presented through the character "Gentleman" one of the three characters in the work. The most important point here is that the ideologies present in "Gentleman", also defined as Nakae Chōmin's alter ego, are intensely present both in Nakae Chōmin and among the thinkers of the Meiji Period. In addition, when we start from the fact that discourse is essential in ideology analysis and the concepts in the work guide us to understand the ideology put forward by the author. Therefore, the main problematics of the study are:

- Which ideologies did Nakae Chomin try to convey to society through the "Gentleman" character in the work?
- What is the reflection of these ideologies in society?
- What are the basic concepts that reflect the social ideology of the author and the period?
- What are the similarities and differences in the use of the basic ideological concepts discussed in the study in Japan and the West?

In the literature review, some of the studies that examine the Meiji Period mentality in detail are as follows:

"Political Modenization in Japan and Turkey" (Ward, Rustow, 1970), "Changing Japanese Attitudes toward Modernization" (Jansen, 1972), "Modern Japan: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture and Nationalism" (Huffman, 2013), "Japanese Culture in Meiji Era Vol. IX Thoght" (Masaaki, 1958), "The Rise of Modern Nationalism in Japan" (Murthy, 1973).

Some of the important studies examining Nakae Chōmin's ideology are:

"Rousseau in Kimono: Nakae Chōmin and Japanese Enlightenment"(Kaufman-Osborn, 1992), "Nakae Chōmin and Confucianism" (Matsumoto, 1984), "Nakae Chōmin and Buddism Reconsidering the Controversy between Nakae Chōmin and Inoue Enryo" (Duffourmont, 2013), "Nihon Kindai Shisō to Nakae Chōmin" (Yonehara, 1986), "Nakae Chōmin no Kenkyū" (Takeo, 1966), "Nakae Chōmin'in Eserlerinde Asya Algısı ve Pan-Asyacılık" (Yazıcı, 2022). All these studies deal with Nakae Chomin's place and importance in the political thought of the Meiji Period. The study, especially written by Yazıcı, deals with the idea of Pan-Asianism in Nakae Chōmin as the main problematic using the micro-history method and explains that Nakae Chomin is a Pan-Asianist and

nationalist thinker. The difference of this study from the studies mentioned in the literature review is that it uses mentality analysis as a method, focuses on concept analysis, and touches on the differences between these concepts in Japan and the West. One of the important aims of our study is to understand whether political concepts with Western memory are used in Japan, which put forward a modernization program under the influence of Western thought.

Methods

In our study, the mentality analysis method, which also includes ideology, was used. The concept of mentality, which we encounter with definitions such as "beliefs that individuals carry in common with their groups" and "the sum of the values and beliefs that the person maintains in his actual behavior", was first used by Lucien Lévy Bruhl in the meaning of "la mentalité primitive – primitive mentality". However, today, the concepts of "zeitgeist, way of thinking, belief systems, world of meanings, cognitive maps" are also used in the fields of sociology and anthropology (Göçer, 2019). Aktaş (Aktaş, 2007) states that Foucault's "discourse" and Althusser's "ideology" concepts can be met with "mentality". Ülgener divides his mentality studies into two parts: In the first one, the historical background of the period in question is discussed (Dalyan, 2016). When we look at the relationship between literature and mentality analysis, literary texts are means of expression that conveys human behavior, the social and ideological structure of the period, and human relations through language. Various questions asked to the text pave the way for basic ideologies in societies, mentality analysis and reaching the people of the period. Because the method, followed in mentality studies, is understanding and interpretation. Sabri Ülgener and Besim F. Dellaloğlu can be given as examples of important names who do mentality studies in Turkey through literature (Göçer, 2019).

The purpose of mentality analysis in literature is to understand the period in which the text was written, through the structure and expression in the text. Thus, the mentality of the period it represents can be understood through the text. In the mentality analysis method, the elements we pay attention in the text are structure and narrative elements such as people, time, plot, concepts and discourses.

Discussion

The basic example of our study is A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government (Sansuijin Keirin Mondō), which is considered Nakae Chomin's masterpiece and conveys the ideologies of the Meiji period to the reader through different characters. This work, written in 1887, corresponds to the period when Japan was in great change and transformation. Additionally, Nobuko (Nobuko, 1984) stated that this work attracted attention even during

World War II due to its pacifist and national defense approach. Another importance of this work is that it is not known through which character Nakae Chōmin conveys his thoughts. With the method he applied, the author mirrored the social ideologies of the Meiji Period as well as his own ideas.

Before analyzing the ideology, we need to clearly define some of the concepts that will be included in our study. Because, revealing the similarities and differences between the concepts of politics in Japan and the West will eliminate the complexity in understanding ideologies. For this reason, we have discussed concept analysis under an additional heading.

Definitions of Key Concepts

In Japan, the years 1868-1912 were a period in which the country transformed from a traditional feudal system into a modern nation-state. During this period, political ideologies in Japan changed with influence from the West. Liberal and democratic concepts such as individual rights and representative government had no equivalent in Japan until Western ideas were expressed by intellectuals during the Meiji Period. Explaining the following basic concepts when compared to political ideologies in the West will help us understand the ideology we deal with in our study:

1. Meiji Restoration and Modernization: For Japan, the "Restoration" represents the transformation from a weak and isolated society to a modern, strong, centralized, social state.[2] With the Meiji Restoration, Japan transitioned to a strong central government system and focused on a modernization program, taking the industrial and military institutions of the West as a model. The concept of modernization, which etymologically expresses a long-term change, has included economics, science, technical politics, cultural fields as well as in the field of thought (Ward, Rustow,1970). The transition from tradition to modernity in Japan, compared to the West, took centuries in the West and was completed in a few generations in Japan (Passin, 1972).

2. Liberalism: It is a political thought that attaches importance to individual rights by emphasizing liberal values such as individual freedom, private property, and representative democracy. While the basic concepts of political liberalism represented by Lock are constitutionalism, freedom, rights, democracy and equality; the most basic understanding of economic liberalism led by Smith is free economy.

3. Democracy: Democracy, which includes concepts such as general will and public interest, can be briefly defined as a political system based on the principles of public participation in government, equality and

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[2] https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/democratic-trends-in-meiji-japan/ (19. 12. 2023).

representative government. When we look at the history of democracy in Japan, we see three stages: the Freedom and Human Rights Movement, Taisho democracy, and the democratization process after the Pacific War.

4. Nationalism: Nationalism, which centers on the concept of nation and includes principles such as the right to self-determination, protecting national borders, and the principle of international equality, has influenced many political thoughts. Nationalism, which emerged in the West with the French Revolution, influenced the drawing of geographical borders in Europe and paved the way for the formation of social consciousness and identities. When we look at Japanese nationalism, we see that nationalism is getting stronger along with the efforts to create a national identity, and in this way, the focus is on policies that emphasize the unity and independence of the country. In the ongoing process, we see that the idea of nationalism in Japan evolved into the idea of liberating all Asian peoples from Western hegemony under the leadership of Japan, and subsequently into an imperialist fascist nationalism ideology.

5. Individual and Social Transformation: Meiji ideology promoted transformation at the individual and societal levels. The effort to create a modern society by emphasizing individual rights instead of the traditional feudal system is one of the main characteristics of the Meiji period. Therefore, the idea of Liberalism has become a reference in defending individual rights in the political arena.

6. National Unity and Identity: The most important point we encounter in creating national unity and national identity in Japan is the idea of nationalism, nourished by liberal values. Namely, in the Meji modernization process, we encounter a structure of thought that progresses from individual rights to national rights, from individual freedom to the freedom of nations. The concept of nationalism, which emerged with the discourse of national unity during the French Revolution, found its response in Japan with the concept of kokutai (国体 -national polity). At this point, when we examine the typologies of nationalism, we also see the understanding of Eastern type nationalism put forward by Plamenatz, which advocates national unity. The common ground between the understanding of nationalism in Japan and the theory of Eastern-style nationalism is the preservation of self-identity along with the effort of modernization and Westernization (Akıncı, 2014). In short, in the ideology of the Meiji period, it was essential to ensure national unity and create a national identity in order for Japan to compete with the contemporary world. Just as the idea of liberalism affected individual and social transformation, the ideology of nationalism also affected the understanding of national unity and identity.

7. Transition to Central Government: During the transition from the feudal system to a national state in Japan, it was aimed to establish a strong

central government and ensure national unity. This approach is similar to the national state understanding in the West. With the Meiji Restoration, the old feudal system was abolished and the emperor became a real political power. In this process, the samurai class, especially the Satsuma and Chōshū clans, and the intellectual class equipped with western education were influential. Between 1868 and 1881, a merit system was first introduced in government, a cabinet system was established, and eventually a constitution was declared and a parliament consisting of the house of commons and the assembly of nobles was established. The opening of the parliament is seen as the first step in the transition to constitutionalism in Japan and is based on the aim of modernizing the central government (Inoki, 1970).

8. Equality: The discourses of many thinkers such as Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau and Condorcet on the concept of equality, which is basically defined as "having the same value", attract attention. Locke emphasized natural freedoms, Rousseau defended that laws should always protect equality and most importantly, an equality that only exists in the state of nature, while Condorcet emphasized universal equality (Ağaoğulları, 2016), (Cevizci, 2017). In Japan, where liberal values resonated with the Freedom and Human Rights Movement, thinkers influenced by Western concepts gave particular importance to the principle of equality. Meiji period intellectuals highlighted the principle of equality in many areas, from the defense of popular sovereignty to education. For example, Mori Arinori, the education minister of the Meiji period, particularly emphasized equality in society and supported a secular and moral education.[3] In addition, the idea of equality between men and women was expressed by translating Mill's work The Subjection of Woman (Kiguchi).

9. Freedom and People's Rights: Although freedom, one of the basic concepts of liberalism, is fundamentally linked to individualism, it has been given a political meaning by names such as Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke (Ağaoğulları, 2016). Rousseau also emphasized the freedom of man in the state of nature in his work, The Social Contract (Rousseau, 2018). Isaiah Berlin touched upon the distinction between negative and positive freedom[4]; Montesquieu, on the other hand, associated freedom with the principle of separation of powers (Cevizci, 2017). In addition, thinkers discussed the concepts of freedom and rights together and primarily emphasized fundamental rights. Then, the distinction between fundamental human rights and civil rights draws attention. Although these concepts seem intertwined with each other, while fundamental human rights do not change, real freedoms emerge when these rights are protected by law (Yazıcı, 2022).

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[3] https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/democratic-trends-in-meiji-japan/ (19. 12. 2023).

[4] https://faculty.www.umb.edu/steven.levine/Courses/Action/Berlin.pdf (19. 12. 2023).

When the concept of freedom（自由 – jiyū）is examined in Japan, we go back to classical Chinese texts. In the Meiji Period, this word was used as the equivalent of the word "liberty". Later, under the influence of Western thinkers, the foundations of the Freedom and Human Rights movement in Japan were laid, which was one of the most important steps in obtaining political rights and freedoms. The most important names that influenced Japanese thinkers on freedom and rights in this period can be listed as Rousseau, Mill, Hobbes, Edmund Burke and Spencer (Yazıcı, 2022).

10. Asian Morality: The area where the concept of "Asian ethics" is most emphasized among Japanese thinkers is the point of defense in the struggle against Western hegemony. The moral framework required for the formation of the ideology of nationalism was based on the teachings of Confucius, and it was emphasized that the people of Japan and Asia have these superior moral principles.

Analysis of the Text

When we look at the Japanese writing of the names of the characters in Chomin's work, we see the ideologies of the Meiji period in their names: Gentleman（Yōgaku-shinshi - 洋学紳士）Westernisation; Hero（Gōketsu-kun - 豪傑君）Nationalism; Mr. Nankai（Nankai Sensei 南海先生）Southern Expansion Doctrine. There are opinions that the ideologies of these three characters were present in the defenders of the Freedom and Human Rights Movement of the period and were also Nakae Chōmin's alter ego (Hiromichi, 1993). Because the ideas of idealism and expansionism are blended in human rights defenders of samurai origin, and interestingly, the name that combines all these ideologies in a single person is Nakae Chōmin (Yazıcı, 2022). At the same time, Nakae Chōmin also offered self-criticism in a sense by writing his own ideas directly in the upper notes used as a literary writing method in the work (Yamada, 2015). This work, which is considered one of Chōmin's best-known works in the world, discussed the political ideology in Japan as well as how international relations should be. In this work, written with the Socratic dialogue method, the understanding of modernism, idealism, pacifism, freedom, equality, democracy etc. was examined by focusing on the "Gentleman", one of the characters described as Nakae Chōmin's alter ego. The Socratic dialogue method includes long monologues rather than mutual question-answers, and this type of discussion is also seen as a philosophical discussion method among priests in Japan. In this method, there are two applications: "Irony stage" and "midwifery stage". Initially, while the discussion method is followed in the irony stage, induction is provided in the thoughts in the second stage. The advantages of this method are that the ideas can be conveyed clearly with their pros and cons, the speaker can express

his/her ideas convincingly through rhetoric, and different ideas can be put forward freely and equally because they can be discussed in the same environment (Yazıcı, 2022).

The focus of our research is the ideas of freedom, equality, democracy, pacifism and the understanding of Westernisation presented through the "Gentleman" character in the work. The "Gentleman" character is described as a Western-style dressed, long-nosed, articulate, moral, and rational individual. Reflections of Rousseau's philosophy, much like in Nakae Chomin, can be observed in this character. This character, which is completely pro-democracy, has put forward the ideal of absolute pacifism with the idea of demobilizing the armies and disarmament, and the defense of brotherhood of the Asian peoples within the framework of the ideal of freedom and equality in the struggle with the West. One of the clear statements in the work that shows this is as follows:

"Is there a reason why disregarding moral principles, weakening the country's economy by gathering thousands of armies and killing innocent people for empty ambitions. I wonder that civilized Europeans will be truly ashamed when a small country advancing on the path of civilization suddenly leaps from Asia and is placed on the borders of freedom and philanthropy, when it destroys castles, melts down its weapons and turns its military ships into merchant ships, reaches the teachings of civilization by demilitarising its soldiers, studies the techniques of its factories and becomes the children of pure philosophy ? " (Chōmin, 1984, p. 182).

On the other hand, he describes the "so-called barbarism" of the East, expressed by the West, as the real civilization. Here, we are of the opinion that the "Gentleman" character does not actually advocate strictly Westernisation and does not have pure Western admiration discourses. In support of this, he described the peoples of Europe as "countries that have gone crazy", boasting of their military power, pursuing a policy of aggression, and trying to dominate the world. In line with the idea of Asianism, we see that Asian people base their way of liberation from Western hegemony on freedom, equality and moral progress to be learned from the West. In particular, the idea of brotherhood and equality of Asian people leads us to the idea we call "Asianism based on the sense of we" in Nakae Chōmin. Regarding freedom and equality, the idea that freedom cannot be fully realized unless the principle of equality is established in constitutionalist systems is in line with the views of Rousseau and the liberal thinkers of the Enlightenment period. "Gentleman", who attaches importance to science along with politics, argues that when science and political progress are achieved, the principle of freedom will become the purpose of all actions. While emphasizing basic political and human rights in the constitutionalism system, he intersects with Rousseau in the idea of general will and with Montesquieu in the idea of separation of

powers. He also underlined that when a constitutionalist system is adopted, people will gain various freedoms such as the right of participate in government, the right of property, the right of publication, belief and speech. At this point, he reiterated his emphasis that the principle of equality is the most important element that completes freedom and also rights and freedoms are directly proportionate to each other. The most important emphasis on the principle of equality in the work is in the following sentence: *"Everyone with soul and body is equal. Where is the difference between Europe and Asia? "* (Chōmin, 1984, p. 207).

The understanding of freedom, which is intensely revealed through the character of "Gentleman" in the work, is reflected both as a principle of basic human rights and as the basis for the development of the Western great powers in fields such as industry, commerce, military, science, art and literature. We see that he describes the principle of freedom with the metaphor of "ferment" as follows:

" All activities in society are like yeast. No matter how good the ingredients are in sake or beer, if the ferment is bad, the ingredients will sink to the bottom and it will not be possible to obtain alcohol. In countries governed by despotism, the situation is like sake without ferment" (Chōmin, 1984, p. 192). Expressing the slogan of "enrich the country, strengthen the army" along with the spirit of freedom and progress, "Gentleman" thinks that with these principles, a spiral development will come in many fields such as economy, science, political thought, art, agriculture, industry and social welfare. Here we see the reflection of the ideology that guided the Meiji modernization program. While defending this idea in the work, references to Enlightenment thinkers such as Condorcet and Diderot reflect the sources from which Nakae Chōmin's ideology is nourished. Reaching the principle of political progress from here, the author expressed the ideal of returning the "king-slave" understanding to the "government-people" system and explained the relationship between the ruler and the ruled with Confucian principles. At this point, although the importance of Western teachings is emphasized through the character, a commitment to Confucius-based Asian roots can be seen. However, an East-West comparison has been made here regarding the fact that although Asian nations have these values, they remain behind due to their lack of progress in terms of freedom.

As in Nakae Chōmin's thoughts, we see an emphasis on moral Asian superiority in the character of "Gentleman". With the expression *"Why shouldn't abstract morality be our weapon?"* (Chōmin, 1984, p. 182), it is stated that the sense of morality, inherent in civilization, is the most important power for Asian nations. In addition to the sense of morality, the view that politicians should not lose the spirit of progress towards freedom and equality was also emphasized. With the examples given from world history, the way to

protect societies from uprisings and revolutions was found in politicians with a spirit of progress and political foresight.

Regarding pacifism, he stated that small and weak countries should produce self-protection and self-sufficiency policies in response to the Western great powers using their economic development to obtain colonies in Asia and Africa. He defined this policy as follows:

"This policy is to establish a system of equality, give people their rights, demolish castles and destroy ammunition, not commit murder against other countries, and turn the whole country into a garden of morality and a field of knowledge" (Chōmin, 1984, p. 211-212).

This idea, conveyed through the character in the work, is compatible with Chōmin's understanding of foreign policy based on morality, faith and freedom. The most important point he emphasizes about pacifism is his reference to Abbe de-Saint Pierre's theory of peace and Kant's book "Perpetual Peace". He attributes the support and development of Saint Pierre's theory by important figures such as Kant and Rousseau due to the fact that they are people with pure reason suitable for philosophy. Although he supported the theory of world peace, he found Saint Pierre's thought incomplete in that it was an extreme theory that all countries in the world should stop war and transition to democracy for peace. Another important point of our research is the identification of concepts that reflect the ideology in the work. The concepts that reflect the liberal thoughts seen in both Nakae Chōmin and the thinkers and politicians of the Meiji period through the character of "Gentleman" are as follows:

Liberal thoughts scheme
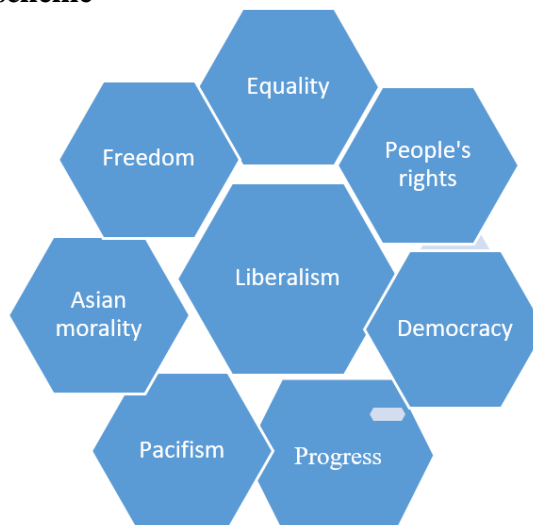
Figure. 1

Conclusion

At the conclusion of the study, we have determined that a great majority of the ideas put forward by the character of "Gentleman" are also included in Nakae Chōmin's intellectual framework, especially in the liberal views before 1891. In addition, we see that Chōmin places political concepts such as freedom, equality, democracy, human rights and progress in the reader's mind through the Gentleman character. Finally, the discourses of unity and brotherhood put forward by Nakae Chōmin in line with the ideology of Liberal Nationalism and the ideal of freedom of Asian people, built on pacifist and liberal concepts, are also detected in the "Gentleman" character. For this reason, through the character in the work, we are faced with an ideology scheme that starts with Liberal discourses and then intersects with Nationalist ideology.

Ideology scheme
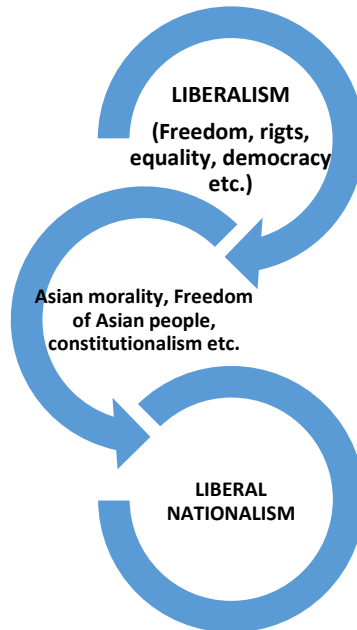
Figure 2

In addition, in our study, we need to explain how the concepts explained in the discussion section take place in the author's memory through the character in the work. It is also clear in the diagram above that the author drew a Liberal Nationalist road map in Japan, inspired by the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment period. Key concepts that are important to us here can be listed as national unity, national identity, emphasis on Asian morality, commitment to Confucian values and freedom. When we look at these

concepts from Nakae Chomin's perspective, the difference from the West is that Japan considers these concepts as the basic elements in its struggle with the West. The author's emphasis on "Asian morality", which is particularly important among these concepts, differs from Western thought because it is based on Confucian moral principles. Moreover, the basis is to reinforce the sense of morality with patriotism. The concepts of national identity and national unity serve as "seed" in the formation of Japanese nationalism. The emphasis on morality mentioned above also appears as a national identity code. In conclusion, within the political conceptual framework of the Meiji era, we can assert that elements of an ideology emerged through the synthesis of Western ideas and concepts with traditional Japanese thought. This ideology rejected foreign domination, emphasized progress and gradually elevated nationalism over time. Therefore, although the political concept map of the Meiji Period was created on Western concepts, it is seen that Japan created its own political memory by adhering to its own mentality. In case of Nakae Chōmin, it can be asserted that, while Meiji intellectuals drew upon Western thoughts and concepts to construct a future for Japan, the distinctive nature of Meiji ideology lies in their simultaneous adherence to their own indigenous culture, thoughts and identities.

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Participation of Georgian Local Authorities in the Process of Hospital Care Reforms

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Abstract
       The article addresses power distribution issues within the context of scientific discourse and explores potential solutions to be implemented by local authorities in the realm of Hospital Care reforms in Georgia, particularly in the conditions of authority decentralization. The significance of addressing this scientific issue stems from the financial challenges faced by many communities, especially in economically depressed Georgian regions. Prior to the reform, the network of hospital facilities relied on subsidies from higher-level budgets.

The methodological approach involves the use of desk research, secondary analysis of literary, research, and analytical sources, along with regulatory methods. The research spans from 1991 to 2022, focusing on the power of local self-governments, both their inherent powers and those delegated to them, given that almost 60% of medical services are provided at the territorial community level.

The article presents empirical analysis results regarding the distribution of financial power in the new model of Hospital care management. It demonstrates that, fundamentally, the new model remains budget-funded, consistent with the pre-reform structure. The research empirically and theoretically supports the assertion that the overall direction of reforms has been appropriately chosen, a sentiment echoed by positive assessments from international experts.

The findings of the research can be valuable for local authorities representing the interests of territorial communities and for local executive authorities involved in the implementation of these reforms. Additionally, the research aligns with Georgia's commitment to the path towards European integration changes.

This process is developing very slowly in Georgia. This is a loss of opportunity to raise the standard of living of local communities.

Keywords: Local self-government, Hospital care reform, powers, Georgia

1. Introduction

In the conditions of the state of Georgia implementing the selected course towards European integration changes, the Hospital care reform is one of the most complicated, as its implementation does not involve the transformation of the archaic Hospital care management model dating back to the USSR. Instead, it envisions the complete dismantling of this model and the construction of a new model of social relations in the field of Hospital care.

The management model currently under development in Georgia is based on the foundations of a new European policy in the field of Hospital care, involving the implementation of completely new public management subjects at all levels. Moreover, the implementation of this sectoral reform is occurring simultaneously with the implementation of the local self-government reform, complicating the process of double reformation that includes both local self-government and medical reforms. This process requires a detailed analysis, examination of successful reformation expertise in EU countries, the development of a state change strategy, and efficient managerial decisions.

When transferring powers in the field of Hospital care from the national level to the local self-government level, a number of economic, property, social, and legal issues arise that require immediate attention from local self-governments. Delaying the resolution of these issues threatens to slow down the reformation process and limit citizens' access to quality medical services.

However, considering that the Hospital care reform in the history of independent Georgia is taking place for the first time, research work on management issues in the reformation of the medical field in Georgia is extremely limited. Some authors believe that for countries that were once part of the USSR and are in the stage of transitional economy (Georgia was part of the USSR until 1991), the most efficient approach to the reformation of the national Hospital care system would be a state and insurance Hospital care model with priority given to the development of primary medical care institutions.

It's worth noting that the reformation of national Hospital care systems in most highly developed countries began at the end of the 20th century. Reform scenarios aimed to limit increasing expenses for the medical sphere and had certain differences in the implementation of reformation organizational policy. For instance, Germany and Great Britain had officially approved Hospital care reformation programs; other countries implemented limited reform strategies for solving specific tasks (Blank, R. 2004).

Researchers Richard B. Saltman and Josep Figueras, having conducted a thorough research on reformation strategies for national Hospital care systems in Eastern and Western European countries, concluded that, in essence, medical reform is a coordinated set of government activities providing changes in legislative, economic, and organizational securement of providing medical services to the population (Saltman R. et al., 1998). The most successful step of governmental programs in the reformation of the medical services sector in EU countries was decentralization of responsibility for state Hospital care facilities, passing their management on to regional and municipal authorities. This also included implementing autonomous hospital management during the decentralization process through self-governing foundations and civic companies.

Researchers Robert Baldwin and Martin Cave, considering theories and practices for state regulation in various spheres of social life, note that in the field of social policy, which includes

Analyzing successful Hospital care reformation practices in foreign countries, it is possible to note that reforms took place according to both the revolutionary scenario (short-term changes) and the evolutionary scenario (gradual changes). Evolutionary development of the Hospital care reform is inherent in most national Hospital care systems in EU countries. This scenario is characterized by the gradual attenuation of state functions in providing medical services and the emergence of social institutions that carry out the organization and management of medical services consumption. Thus, the evolutionary way of the medical field reformation is implemented within public transformation and the transfer of state management to public governance, which stipulates the extension of powers for local self-government in the organization of providing medical aid. Taking into account everything mentioned above, we come to the conclusion that it is vital to examine more thoroughly management issues and perspectives for Hospital care decentralization at the local self-government level.

The aim of this work is to define the powers of local self-governments in the field of Hospital care at the basic, district, and regional levels, and their compliance with the tasks of power decentralization and Hospital care system decentralization.

3.   Methodology

The methodological foundation of the study relies on the scientific works of both domestic and foreign scientists, as well as insights from leading experts. Additionally, statistical and analytical materials from state authorities, along with orders from the Georgian Ministry of Health, constitute essential sources.

The theoretical underpinning of the study employs an interdisciplinary synthesis toolkit, incorporating social and philosophical methods, methodological approaches, and concepts and hypotheses from classical science. Another methodological approach applied involves the comparison of statutory regulations.

Results are derived through various methods, including abstract-logical methods for theoretical generalization and formulation of conclusions. These methods aid in identifying key areas of interaction between local government and the state in the field of medicine.

Content analysis - for studying and comparing new functions of local government in providing medical services.

SWOT analysis -to identify the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of medical reform and the decentralization of power in Georgia.

To fulfill the study's objectives, desk research was conducted, involving the analysis of information on managerial functions of local self-government in the field of health services in Georgia during the medical reform. The study covers the period from 1991 to 2022 in Georgia.

The search process involved using the most frequently used words associated with the topic, such as managerial functions, local self-government, medical reform, power, decentralization, and state. Dialectic analysis and synthesis, generalization, comparative analysis, complex analysis, and system analysis were employed to analyze issues related to the research subject. This included exploring characteristics of providing medical services at various management levels (basic, district, and regional). The research comprehensively investigates the managerial aspects of exercising powers by local self-governments during both administrative and sectoral reforms.

A graphical presentation method is employed to illustrate the main contents of the research and facilitate the preparation of conclusions.

4.   Results of the research and discussion

Furthermore, alongside systemic issues in Hospital care management, Georgia is undergoing an administrative-territorial reform, introducing new challenges and problems that necessitate consideration and solutions for local self-governments. All of the above emphasizes the relevance of research on this subject.

According to Georgian legislation, most powers of local self-governments in the Hospital care field are vested in the executive authorities of village, town, and city councils. These powers encompass both councils' own authorities and those delegated to them. Within their own power, executive city councils can manage Hospital care and wellness institutions belonging to territorial communities or transferred to them. They also organize the material and financial infrastructure of these institutions and provide support to non-governmental and non-profit organizations operating in the field of Hospital care.

Delegated powers include submitting proposals to relevant authorities concerning the licensing of individual entrepreneurial activities in the field of Hospital care. Additionally, the delegated powers of executive authorities of local councils in the field of population welfare encompass providing benefits as stipulated by Georgian laws, offering additional funding, and providing housing and transportation to Hospital care professionals residing in rural areas.

Therefore, the management of Hospital care facilities emerges as a crucial issue at the basic level of local self-government, influencing the efficiency of various functions and the implementation of power in managing communal property objects. Consequently, this issue establishes a significant measure of social responsibility for local self-government authorities as owners of Hospital care institutions, impacting decisions related to their closure, optimization, and repurposing.

According to the Constitution of Georgia, territorial communities, either directly or through bodies of local self-government established by them, possess the authority to manage communal property, reorganize and close down communal enterprises, as well as oversee organizations and establishments. They also have the ability to unite communal facilities on contractual terms, combine budget funding for joint projects, and create bodies and services for these purposes. Additionally, objects jointly owned by territorial communities are managed by district and regional councils, as per the Constitution of Georgia.

As of 2022, the network of Hospital care institutions in Georgia comprises 269 hospitals with 17,948 beds and 2,284 outpatient clinics (excluding the temporarily occupied territory of Abkhazia and Samatshablo). The financial capacity to support such a vast network of Hospital care institutions becomes a crucial consideration.

In line with Georgian legislation, territorial communities serve as the main bearers of functions and powers of local self-government. Considerable changes in providing medical services to citizens are occurring at the territorial community level. Some experts recommend providing support on the subnational level, based on an analysis of state funding of Hospital care in

other countries. The approaches to the distribution of power in Hospital care in various countries include transferring powers to regional and municipal authorities, delegating self-regulating powers to private organizations (licensing, insurance), and creating national bodies independent from the government.

Some researchers propose the creation of a special executive body within unified territorial communities, authorized to manage funding, including medical subsidies. However, this approach raises questions about administrative decentralization and its alignment with local self-government and territorial authority organization reforms.

The new Georgian model of Hospital care management lacks structural subjects of public management like independent insurance funds seen in European countries. Insurance funds act as independent players in the medical services market, accumulating funds and contracting service providers without owning their property, ensuring transparency and minimizing corruption risks.

Cooperation among territorial communities could be a significant mechanism to strengthen the funding abilities of communal Hospital care institutions. However, this mechanism has not seen significant use in the field of Hospital care.

In areas that have not undergone unification, the old system of operation and funding for basic local self-government authorities persists, leading to non-compliance between decentralization and medical reform. The formation of city agglomerations could serve as a joint interaction mechanism for both territorial communities and unified territorial communities.

At the district and regional levels, the absence of executive authorities in district and regional councils hampers the effectiveness of local self-government in providing Hospital care development. This underscores the need for creating executive authorities at the district and regional council levels as part of local self-government and territorial power organization reforms.

Simultaneously, the reform results have revealed new problematic issues, including challenges related to the overlay of management levels, derogation of district self-government, and uncertainty and inconsistency in power decentralization implementation. Intensification of hospital district introduction under such conditions threatens to render them inadequate to the final administrative structure, complicating the designation of central district hospitals.

As per the local self-government reform, the distribution of powers in the Hospital care field on various levels includes providing emergency services and disease prevention at the basic level, offering secondary medical services at the district level, and providing highly specialized medical aid at the regional level.

In the concept of the Hospital care funding reform, chief managers of budget funding, i.e., relevant state authorities and local self-government authorities, continue to be the general contractors for medical services in the beginner and middle reform levels. The procurement of services through a single national contractor is envisioned as the final result of the new management system, although the legal basis for budget funding (by category) for Hospital care institutions is yet to be established.

Hospital care, state decentralization regulation can be most successful and can ensure a positive outcome of the changes provided it follows the following scenarios:

- Replacement of state control with audit by state authorities (inspections, services, agencies) reduction of "self-regulating" activity format.
- Introduction of stimulating tools for financial regulation (taxes, subsidies).
- Implementation of market mechanisms for the regulation of subjects' activities (legislation, contracts, etc.).
- Implementation of measures to ensure openness and transparency.
- Direct activities of the government.
- Legal rights and responsibilities.
- Programs of state compensation and welfare insurance (Baldwin, R. et al., 1999).

Conclusion

Key conclusions drawn from the research include:

Georgia grapples with challenges and inconsistencies between the local self-government reform and medical reform, particularly concerning the decentralization of funding for the basic level of local self-government and inconsistencies in creating hospital districts and altering administrative territorial divisions at the district level.

The new model of Hospital care management in Georgia retains a state-funded structure, a fundamental departure from European models that involve a combination of state and insurance funding.

The Georgian government is implementing Hospital Care reforms through an evolutionary scenario, progressing through three stages: pilot planning, active reforms, and integration into a unified national model.

Local authorities, serving as facility owners and funding agents, play a crucial role. However, further political dialogue is necessary to reconcile decentralized roles and align priorities with the national policy in the field of Hospital care.

To stabilize the transformation of the Hospital care system, it is imperative to establish divided ownership for reform implementation among key stakeholders, including local self-governments, service providers, and citizens. United territorial communities have the opportunity to enhance the quality of medical services through the conclusion of cooperation agreements.

Challenges and Inconsistencies: Georgia faces challenges and inconsistencies between the local self-government reform and medical reform. This is particularly evident in the decentralization of funding for the basic level of local self-government and the inconsistencies in creating hospital districts and changes in administrative territorial divisions at the district level.

State-Funded Model: The new model of Hospital care management in Georgia remains state-funded, resembling the structure during the USSR times. This stands as a fundamental difference between the Georgian model and European models that involve a combination of state and insurance funding.

Evolutionary Scenario: The Georgian government is implementing Hospital Care reforms through an evolutionary scenario, which involves three stages: pilot planning, active reforms, and integration into a unified national model.

Role of Local Authorities: Local authorities play a crucial role as facility owners and funding agents. However, further political dialogue is necessary to reconcile decentralized roles and align priorities with the national policy in the field of Hospital care.

Importance of Divided Ownership: To stabilize the transformation of the Hospital care system, it is essential to establish divided ownership for reform implementation among key stakeholders, including local self-governments, service providers, and citizens.

Opportunity for United Territorial Communities: United territorial communities have the opportunity to enhance the quality of medical services through the conclusion of cooperation agreements. However, the slow development of this process in Georgia represents a missed opportunity to improve the standard of living in local communities.

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Communication Gaps in Georgian Palliative Medicine: Ethical and Legal Review

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Abstract

Introduction: Difficulties in communication, decision-making, and end-of-life management have emerged in the implementation of palliative care in recent decades. The imperfection of ethical issues was also highlighted. This fact is confirmed once again by a study conducted by the oncology department of the Batumi High-technology Hospital, which aimed to study the adequate perception of existing oral pathologies by patients under palliative care and their impact on the quality of life.

Aim: We aimed to discuss the mentioned problem within the framework of bioethics and Georgian legislation.

Methods: Despite the few amount of literary sources, we tried to discuss the mentioned issue based on Georgian legislation and also existing literature.

Conclusion: Thus, as we mention in medical activities there are cases when the real diagnosis is not told to the patient for ,,his favor", also there are cases when an inappropriate diagnosis is made, which can lead the patient to a fatal condition. In this case, the patient can civilly protect his rights.

The best option is to provide the patient with information in the correct form so that it does not mean the end of the world and does not cause depression in him. The patient should be able to pass the last stage of life peacefully and

with dignity.

Introduction

Palliative care is one of the main directions of modern medicine. Among the healthcare and social systems, it is practically the only one that, unlike other directions of the mentioned systems, focuses not on "disease" and "cure", but on "patient" and "quality of life". (Clark D. et al., 2007; Portenoy R.K. et al., 2013).

Difficulties in communication, decision-making, and end-of-life management have emerged in the implementation of palliative care in recent decades. The imperfection of ethical issues was also highlighted (Carter B.S. et al., 2012; Scho eld G. et al., 2021).

Efforts for the implementation of a modern model of palliative care in Georgia began in 2000. Despite many efforts, it is still far from European standards. The country's coverage of palliative care, as well as its quality, is poor (Kordzaia D., 2011).

This fact is confirmed once again by a study conducted by the oncology department of the Batumi High-technology Hospital, which aimed to study the adequate perception of existing oral pathologies by patients under palliative care and their impact on the quality of life. (Tebidze N. et al., 2017). During the conduction of the research, many difficulties were revealed, but the most noteworthy of them was the lack of awareness of the patients about their health status.

We grouped them into 3 main groups:

1. Most of them either do not know the diagnosis at all, or

2. they know it incompletely. Few of them are aware of the case, but their psychological condition is so severe that it causes their general condition to deteriorate.

The part that doesn't know the diagnosis calmly waits for recovery and his/her life ends unplanned.

Unprofessional delivery of a diagnosis or no delivery at all is a brutal violation not only of medical ethics but also of the law.

The question arises - do health care workers have the right to hide the diagnosis, which is a gross violation of the patient's autonomy and rights, or is it correct to report the diagnosis in a form that further aggravates the patient's condition?

Aim: We aimed to discuss the mentioned problem within the framework of bioethics and Georgian legislation.

Methods:

Despite the few amount of literary sources, we tried to discuss the mentioned issue on existing publications based on Elsevier, Google Scholar, and Georgian legislation. At this point, we discussed the ongoing practice and legislation. The amount of literature with the same content was analyzed. Qualitative content analysis and quantitative approaches were used to evaluate the overall situation in the mentioned field.

Results and discussion:

Palliative care is nonsense without effective communication. Healthcare professionals must accurately understand the patient's pain and condition. Accurate assessment of the situation requires effective communication skills. Almost invariably, communication is a central part of therapy, sometimes the only part. It requires more thought and planning than writing a prescription (Buckman R., 2001).

Patients with incurable diseases need doctors with good communication skills, but unfortunately, this is not the case (Buckman R., 2001).

When receiving information about an incurable disease, a significant part of patients and their families experience great emotional stress, and therefore this circumstance requires the improvement of communication skills and methods. Effective communication includes the following important points:

1. Reassuring the patient that doctors will do everything to achieve specific goals. In no case should the patient be told that there is nothing they can do;
2. The provided information, including the estimated forecast, should contain less uncertainty;
3. Study of the patient's emotional background and emotional support;
4. Providing information about advanced treatment;
5. Quiet environment (Morita T. et al., 2004).

Providing bad information requires correct action on the part of both the doctor and the patient. The most important and painful information is about life limitations.

Before, it was considered correct to provide the correct prognosis to the patient, but today it is a question of what information should be provided to the patient and in what form. Studies have shown that the majority of patients prefer detailed information about the disease and the expected

outcome. However, the need for information may vary in different phases of the disease.

The legislation of some countries obliges the doctor to provide all necessary information to the patient (Delvaux N. et al., 2004)
However, patients often misunderstand their disease status and treatment goals. As a rule, their life expectancy is overestimated. All this can affect the course of the disease and, as a result, worsen the quality of life.

Today, there is a broad consensus regarding the need to improve the communication skills of healthcare professionals (Delvaux N. et al., 2004).

Unfortunately, there is no evidence-based information on how to deliver the diagnosis correctly. Which obviously requires more research, literature, and sources. Inadequate information leads to a loss of trust in the doctor. Correct delivery of bad information is an ideal option, but raising false hopes is unethical (Hagerty R.G. et al., 2005, Tulsky J.A. et al., 2005).

Ethics has been relevant since the time of Hippocrates (Beauchamp T.L. et al., 2001).

It refers to the application of values and moral rules in human activities. Bioethics is a subset of ethics, actually, a part of applied ethics, which uses ethical principles and decision-making to solve existing or anticipated dilemmas in medicine and biology (Beauchamp T.L. et al., 2001).

There are 4 basic principles of medical ethics:
• Respect for autonomy
• Prosperity
• No malice (or innocence)
• Justice (Beauchamp T.L. et al., 2001).

It offers a common, basic moral-analytical framework and moral language. Although they are not hard-and-fast rules, these principles can help physicians and other healthcare workers make decisions when considering ethical issues that arise in the workplace. (DeGrazia D. 2005)

The abovementioned four principles have withstood 40 years of challenge and still form the basis for most decision-making in both research and clinical practice. However, it is still a matter of controversy and requires more research and attention (Laurence D.J. et al., 2007)

As mentioned earlier, the legislation of some countries obliges the doctor to provide the patient with all necessary information (Delvaux N. et al., 2004). The legislation of Georgia in the field of health care consists of the Constitution of Georgia, treaties and international agreements of Georgia, this Law, and other legislative and subordinate normative acts (https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/29980?publication=50).

Article 5th of the Constitution of Georgia declares the principle of Social State. Paragraph 4 of the mentioned article says: The State shall take care of human health care and social protection (https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/30346?publication=36).

Article 28th defines the citizen's right to healthcare. The right of a citizen to affordable and quality healthcare services shall be guaranteed by law (https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/30346?publication=36).

The Georgian law of „Health Care" defines the term - patient autonomy – a patient's right to make independent decisions on all issues related to the provision of medical care to him/her.

For the patient to exercise the right granted to him autonomously, he must have complete information about his health condition, to know the correct diagnosis in order to determine further actions related to medical intervention or making other lifemeaning decisions. Diagnosing the patient is the initial and at the same time determining stage for further actions.

It is also noteworthy that one of the serious arguments of the opponents of euthanasia is that "a mistake in the diagnosis'' is possible;

Diseases that are considered incurable today may become curable tomorrow; Cases are known to medicine when patients considered incurable - recovered; It is possible that the doctor might be unqualified and dishonest (ფარსადანაშვილი ნ. et al.2007).

„ Even one life lost by mistake during euthanasia is enough for the legislator to refuse euthanasia'' ((სადრაძე თ. Et al., 2010).

One of the functions of the World Health Organization is to standardize diagnostic procedures as necessary (WHO 2006 standardize diagnostic procedures as necessary), in order to reach the goal - as the objective of the World Health Organization (hereinafter called the Organization) shall be the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health (WHO 2006)

Article 18 of the Georgian law on „Patient rights'' declares the patient's rights to receive the information. Patients may receive from medical care providers comprehensive, timely, and clear information related to:

a) existing resources of medical care and the forms of receiving such care, as well as the costs and payment methods;
b) the rights and duties of patients under the legislation of Georgia and the internal regulations of medical institutions;
c) planned prophylactic, diagnostic, treatment, and rehabilitation services, associated risks, and possible benefits;
d) results of medical examinations;
e) alternatives to planned medical care, associated risks, and possible benefits;

f) expected consequences in the case of refusal to receive the planned medical care;
g) diagnosis and possible prognosis, or current treatment;
h) identity and professional experience of medical care providers.

The second paragraph of the article gives us the exception. The information about the health status of a patient may be withheld or limited if there is a reasonable belief that knowledge of full information will seriously affect the health of the patient. Patients shall be given full information about their health status only if they insist. This kind of behavior requires an individual approach, it should not be considered a general rule, it should not be made solely by one doctor. The decision on withholding or limiting information shall be taken by a medical ethics commission. If there is no such commission in a medical institution, the decision shall be made by another physician. A well-grounded decision on withholding or limiting information shall be entered into the medical records of patients. If a patient is a minor or unable to make a conscious decision, the medical care provider shall give the information specified in paragraph 1 of this article to a relative or a legal representative of the patient (https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/16978?publication=12).

According to Article 992 of the Civil Code of Georgia a person who unlawfully, intentionally, or negligently causes damage to another person shall compensate the damage to the injured party. Due to the harm to the life and health of a citizen caused by a medical error, the conditions for the emergence of civil legal liability are the same as in all tortious obligations: damage, wrongdoing, fault, and causal connection. The peculiarity of each of these components is determined by the nature of medical activity.

According to Article 3 (paragraph " n") of Georgian Law on ,,HealthCare" medical error is unintentional diagnostic and/or therapeutic measures inappropriate for the patient's condition taken by a doctor, which is a direct cause of harm;

Accordingly, in cases of harm caused to the patient, it is enough to establish the negligence of the doctor, which implies the implementation of the obligations assumed by him without the necessary care and attention (Judgment of the Civil Affairs Chamber of the Supreme Court of Georgia of November 17, 2022, Case No. As-1169-2022, para. 16, 17, 18).

Conclusion

Thus, as we mentioned in medical activities there are cases when the real diagnosis is not told to the patient for ,,his favor", also there are cases when an inappropriate diagnosis is made, which can lead the patient to a fatal condition. In this case, the patient can protect his rights in civil manner.

The best option is to provide the patient with information in the correct form so that it does not mean the end of the world and does not cause depression in him. The patient should be able to pass the last stage of life peacefully and with dignity.

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From the Classroom to the Screen: The Power of Artistic Expression and Emotional Intelligence in Effective Online Teaching and Communication

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Abstract

In the context of the increasing prevalence of online education, it is crucial to explore productive approaches that enhance student engagement and foster meaningful interactions. The article examines the role of emotional intelligence and artistic expression in online teaching and communication, drawing from original global survey research with over 200 teacher and educator respondents. The study emphasizes the effectiveness of artistic expression in capturing students' attention, facilitating comprehension, and promoting creativity. The research explores strategies for incorporating emotional intelligence and artistic expression in online teaching, offering practical tips specifically suited for online English instruction. These strategies guide educators in creating dynamic online learning environments that optimize the learning experience and promote academic success. Acknowledging challenges, the paper sheds light on the hesitations and fears experienced by participants in being recorded or teaching in front of a camera. It highlights the need for training, resources, and guidelines to support educators in acquiring and developing artistic expression skills. By addressing challenges and integrating artistic expression, teachers can create impactful and supportive online learning environments that promote student engagement and provide an enriched learning experience in the digital era of education. Finally, the article provides valuable insights and practical recommendations

to enhance online teaching practices.

Keywords: Online teaching and communication, artistic expression, emotional intelligence

I.   Introduction:

Effective communication plays a crucial role in online teaching, where instructors strive to engage and connect with learners in virtual environments. As the demand for online education continues to grow, it becomes imperative to explore innovative approaches that foster meaningful interactions and enhance the learning experience. The article examines the power of artistic expression and the role of emotional intelligence in effective online teaching and communication.

Online teaching refers to the delivery of educational content and instruction through digital platforms, allowing learners to access courses remotely. The global pandemic has accelerated the adoption of online teaching, making it a prevalent mode of education worldwide (Hodges et al., 2020). In this context, effective communication becomes essential for building rapport, creating a sense of community, and promoting successful learning outcomes.

Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions and those of others, has been widely recognized as a valuable skill for educators (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In the online teaching realm, emotional intelligence assumes even greater significance as instructors face challenges related to physical distance and limited nonverbal cues (Tang et al., 2023). Cultivating emotional intelligence enables educators to empathize with their students, adapt teaching strategies to meet their needs, and establish a supportive learning environment (Ali Alshehri et al., 2021).

Artistic expression, encompassing various forms of creative communication, holds immense potential for engaging students in online learning environments. It allows instructors to convey complex ideas and emotions through visual, auditory, or kinesthetic means, capturing learners' attention and facilitating comprehension (Siddins et al., 2021). Integrating artistic expression in online teaching stimulates cognitive processes, encourages active participation, and fosters a sense of enjoyment and connection among learners (Mathews et al., 2022).

By exploring the power of emotional intelligence and artistic expression in online teaching, this article seeks to provide educators with valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance their instructional practices. The subsequent sections delve into the significance of emotional

intelligence and artistic expression, offering examples and recommendations for incorporating these elements into online teaching environments.

II.   Literature Review:

Emotional intelligence (EI), a construct coined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others. In the context of online teaching, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in fostering meaningful connections, promoting student engagement, and enhancing overall learning outcomes.

The relevance of emotional intelligence in online teaching stems from the unique challenges faced by instructors in virtual environments. The absence of physical proximity and limited nonverbal cues can hinder effective communication and rapport-building. However, educators with well-developed emotional intelligence skills can bridge these gaps by exhibiting empathy, adaptability, and attentiveness to students' emotional states (Tang et al., 2023).

Research has demonstrated the positive impact of emotional intelligence on student engagement and success in online learning environments. Students who perceive their instructors as emotionally intelligent tend to report higher levels of satisfaction, motivation, and a sense of belonging in the online classroom (Ali Alshehri et al., 2021; Vîşcu et al., 2016). Emotional intelligence also contributes to the establishment of a supportive and inclusive learning environment, where students feel valued and understood, thereby enhancing their willingness to participate actively in discussions and collaborative activities.

In online teaching, examples of emotional intelligence can manifest in various ways. For instance, instructors can demonstrate empathy by acknowledging and validating students' challenges, concerns, or achievements through personalized feedback. They can also adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate diverse learning preferences and individual circumstances, thereby fostering a sense of inclusivity and understanding. Additionally, instructors with high emotional intelligence can effectively manage their own emotions and respond constructively to student queries, concerns, or conflicts, thereby promoting a positive and conducive online learning environment.

By harnessing emotional intelligence skills, online educators can create an atmosphere of trust, empathy, and collaboration, which in turn enhances student engagement, promotes active learning, and contributes to improved academic performance.

Artistic expression refers to the use of creative and imaginative methods to convey ideas, emotions, and concepts (Zakaria et al., 2019). In the context of online teaching, artistic expression can play a powerful role in

engaging students, enhancing their learning experience, and fostering their academic success.

Artistic expression encompasses a range of mediums, including visual arts, music, drama, storytelling, and multimedia presentations. In online teaching, artistic expression involves integrating these creative elements into instructional materials and activities to stimulate students' senses and imagination.

Artistic expression is particularly crucial in online teaching because it helps to overcome the limitations of the virtual environment. Incorporating visual and auditory stimuli, it provides a multi-sensory learning experience, compensating for the absence of physical presence and facilitating deeper engagement with the subject matter (Volpe et al., 2019).

Artistic expression in online teaching has a profound impact on student engagement and success. It captures students' attention, sparks their curiosity, and creates an emotional connection with the learning content. When students are emotionally engaged, they are more likely to be motivated, focused, and active participants in the learning process.

Artistic expression also enhances comprehension and retention of information (Rinne et al., 2011). Visual representations, such as infographics or interactive diagrams, can simplify complex concepts and make them more accessible to students. Similarly, incorporating music, storytelling, or dramatic elements can create a memorable and immersive learning experience that facilitates knowledge retention.

Furthermore, artistic expression fosters creativity and critical thinking skills, empowering students to develop higher-order thinking abilities, problem-solving skills, and self-expression Maneen, Cari A. 2016). In the context of online teaching, incorporating various forms of artistic expression offers a rich learning experience.

III.   Research Questions:

The investigation into the role of emotional intelligence and artistic expression in effective online teaching and communication sought to address the following research questions:

1. How does incorporating artistic expression in online teaching contribute to student engagement and comprehension and what is the impact of emotional intelligence in this context?
2. Which forms of artistic expression and skills of emotional intelligence are most effective in capturing students' attention and fostering a sense of enjoyment and connection?
3. What are the challenges faced by educators in implementing artistic expression strategies in online teaching?

4. How can educators overcome these challenges and effectively integrate emotional intelligence and artistic expression in their online instructional practices?

By exploring these questions, the present study aims to provide educators with valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance their instructional practices in the digital era of education. Understanding the impact of emotional intelligence and artistic expression on student engagement, comprehension, and overall learning outcomes can lead to more effective and transformative online teaching experiences. Additionally, identifying and addressing the challenges faced by educators in adopting these strategies will inform the development of training programs and resources to support educators in acquiring and developing these crucial skills. Ultimately, the research aims to contribute to the optimization of online learning environments and the promotion of successful academic experiences for both educators and learners.

IV: Methodology:

The research methodology involved a survey-based approach. The survey was designed with 10 questions, and 221 respondents (teachers/educators) from all over the world participated by providing their responses to these questions (See Figures 1 and 2).

The survey included a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The closed-ended questions provided respondents with pre-defined response options, allowing for statistical analysis and calculation of percentages. The open-ended questions, on the other hand, allowed respondents to provide more detailed and subjective responses, offering qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions.

The gathered data from the survey responses was then analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and themes within the data set. The analysis involved quantitative techniques such as calculating percentages and frequencies, as well as qualitative techniques to identify common themes or extract meaningful insights from the open-ended responses.

Figure 1.

1. How long have you been teaching online?
221 responses

- a) Less than 1 year
- b) 1-3 years
- c) 3-5 years
- d) More than 5 years

37.1%
12.2%
19%
31.7%
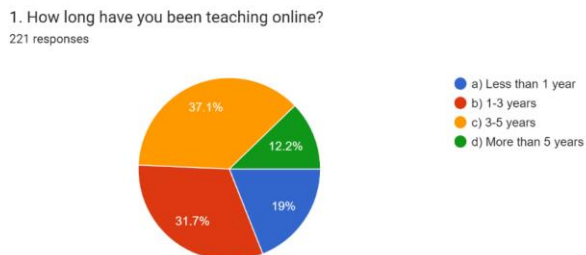
The data shows that the majority of respondents have been teaching online for 1-5 years, with the highest percentage in the 3-5-year range. This suggests a considerable level of experience among the participants.

Figure 2.

2. Have you undergone any training or professional development in utilizing artistic expression in online teaching?

221 responses
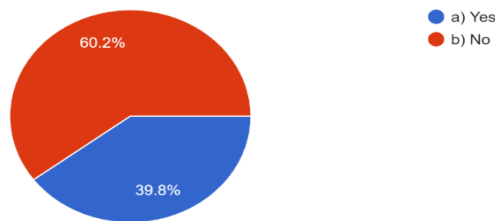
Around 40% of the respondents have undergone training or professional development in utilizing artistic expression in online teaching, indicating that a significant portion of the teachers have actively sought to enhance their skills in this area.

V.   Urgency and Findings:

Online teaching comes with its own set of challenges. Technical difficulties, maintaining student engagement, and creating a sense of community in a virtual environment are some common challenges faced by online teachers. However, with the increasing prevalence of online teaching and remote work, resources and support are now available to help teachers overcome these challenges (see Table 1). Many online teaching platforms offer training and guidance on effective online teaching strategies, managing virtual classrooms, and utilizing technology for enhanced learning experiences[1].

Besides these challenges, it is understandable that some teachers may initially feel uncomfortable with video recording or public speaking. However, being comfortable in front of a camera is an important aspect of online teaching, and it can be developed over time. Online teaching platforms, along with training resources, provide guidance on improving video recording skills, including tips for lighting, sound, and camera setup. With practice and support, teachers can gradually gain confidence in presenting themselves on camera and delivering engaging online lessons.

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[1] Not all resources are free, and some may require a fee or subscription. However, many resources offer free trials or introductory sessions.

A significant number of respondents (19.44%) indicated that they did not have any hesitations or fears about being recorded or teaching in front of a camera. They expressed confidence and comfort in this aspect of online teaching.

Some respondents (22.22%) mentioned that they overcame their initial hesitations or fears through practice and getting used to being in front of the camera. They emphasized the importance of self-improvement, practicing on their own, and gradually becoming comfortable over time.

Several respondents (20.28%) shared that they still have hesitations or fears when it comes to being recorded or teaching in front of a camera. They expressed discomfort, nervousness, and uneasiness. Some mentioned the need for a regulated recording policy or optional recording to address these concerns.

A few respondents (18.06%) specifically mentioned the importance of acquiring artistic expression skills similar to those of an actor. They acknowledged the initial challenges in acquiring these skills and the role of practice in improving their comfort level.

The responses reflect a mix of experiences and feelings regarding being recorded or teaching in front of a camera. While some teachers have overcome their hesitations and become comfortable over time, others still experience discomfort. These insights provide valuable information about the challenges and experiences faced by educators in the online teaching environment.

In the context of online teaching, educators have undergone a remarkable transformation, adopting roles akin to actors and acquiring artistic expression skills that are essential for successful communication in the virtual environment. Just as actors bring characters to life on stage, online teachers have embraced the challenge of engaging their students through the power of artistic expression.

Table 1.

Resource Type	Examples
Online Teaching Platforms	VIPKid, iTutorGroup, Cambly
Professional Organizations	TESOL International Association, IATEFL
Online Courses	University of Cambridge's Teaching English Online course, American TESOL Institute's Online TESOL Certification
Social Media Groups	Teaching English Online Facebook group, Online English Teaching LinkedIn group

The experience of teaching online has prompted educators to overcome their initial hesitations and embrace the camera as a powerful tool. Similar to the way the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, an actor by profession, captivated audiences during his visits to Western democratic institutions, using his deep insights and persuasive communication skills to

garner support for his defiance of Russia's aggression, online teachers are leveraging their newfound artistic expression skills to reach students on a profound level.

By embracing artistic expression, teachers have learned to harness the power of visual and auditory stimuli to create a dynamic and immersive learning experience. They have discovered the art of effectively using body language, tone, and inflection to convey emotions and engage students in meaningful ways. Through this transformation, online educators have become adept at building connections, fostering student engagement, and creating a supportive virtual learning environment.

The parallels between the role of an actor and that of an online teacher highlight the significance of possessing artistic expression skills in the realm of online education. Just as actors captivate audiences with their performances, teachers can captivate students by utilizing artistic expression to deliver engaging and impactful online lessons.

This transformation underscores the power of communication through artistic expression in the online teaching environment. By developing these skills, educators can effectively bridge the physical distance and limited nonverbal cues inherent in online teaching, establishing connections with students that transcend the virtual realm.

VI.   Findings and Implications:

Figure 3.

3. In your experience, do you believe that incorporating artistic expression skills (e.g., body language, tone, inflection) has enhanced your com...with students in the online teaching environment?
221 responses

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree
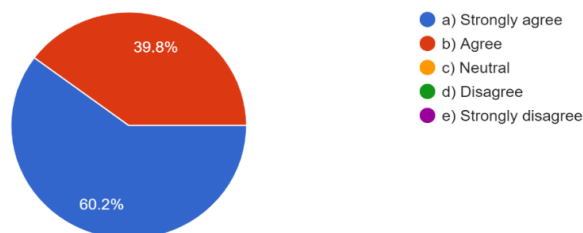
An overwhelming majority of 60.2% strongly agree and 39.8% agree that incorporating artistic expression skills has enhanced their communication and engagement with students in the online teaching environment. This demonstrates the perceived positive impact of artistic expression on teaching effectiveness.

Figure 4.

6. Do you believe that possessing artistic expression skills is crucial for successful communication and engagement in the online teaching environment?
221 responses
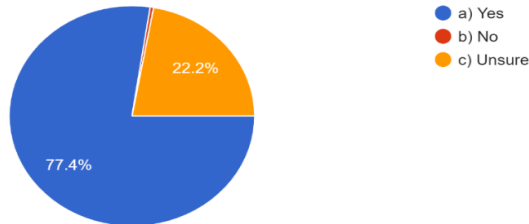
The data reveals that the majority, 77.4%, believe that possessing artistic expression skills is crucial for successful communication and engagement in the online teaching environment. However, there is a notable percentage, 22.2%, who are unsure, indicating a need for further exploration and understanding of the importance of artistic expression skills in online teaching.

Overall, the data suggests that a significant number of teachers have been teaching online for several years, and a considerable portion of them have undergone training in utilizing artistic expression. Moreover, respondents strongly believe that incorporating artistic expression skills enhances their communication and engagement with students. The majority also view artistic expression skills as crucial for successful communication and engagement in the online teaching environment.

The data regarding the changes in student engagement and learning outcomes since incorporating artistic expression skills into online teaching demonstrate:

1. Positive Impact on Engagement:
   - 68.31% of respondents reported observing an increase in student engagement.
   - They mentioned that students were more engaged, focused, motivated, and responsive to communication.
   - Some respondents noted that incorporating artistic expression skills, such as body language, emotions, and creativity, attracted students and made learning more interesting.
2. Improved Learning Outcomes:
   - 28.17% of respondents mentioned that they noticed improvements in student learning outcomes.

- They stated that students showed better academic performance, scored higher, had better communication skills, and were more active in formative assessments.
- Respondents highlighted that incorporating artistic expression skills facilitated understanding, made content more accessible, and fostered deeper connections with the subject matter.

3. Student Feedback:
   - Several respondents mentioned that students commented on their performance, skills, and artistic abilities.
   - Students expressed joy, complimented the teacher's body language, and were inspired to engage and communicate more effectively.

4. Some Uncertainty:
   - 8.45% of respondents were uncertain or unable to observe specific changes in student engagement or learning outcomes.
   - They either didn't have enough data or felt confused about the impact of artistic expression skills on student performance.

To sum up, the majority of respondents reported a positive impact on student engagement and learning outcomes since incorporating artistic expression skills into online teaching. The use of body language, emotions, and creative elements seemed to attract and motivate students, leading to improved academic performance and better communication skills[2].

The majority of respondents (85.07%) would recommend incorporating artistic expression skills in online teaching to other educators. Here are some key reasons mentioned for recommending it:

1. Artistic expression skills were seen as beneficial in enhancing *student engagement and motivation.* Respondents mentioned that it helps make the learning process more compelling, fosters student engagement, and increases student participation.
2. Incorporating artistic expression skills was perceived as a way to *communicate* more effectively with students. Respondents mentioned that it helps build a genuine and frank attitude, enhances communication, and facilitates a better overall teaching experience.
3. Artistic expression skills were seen as *a differentiating factor* in online teaching. Respondents mentioned that it adds a unique and creative approach to teaching, making it more interesting and enjoyable for both teachers and students.

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[2] The findings are based on self-reported perceptions and experiences of the respondents. The data suggests that incorporating artistic expression skills has the potential to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes in the online teaching environment.

4. Respondents emphasized the importance of acquiring artistic expression skills in the *digitalization era.* They mentioned that these skills are needed in a technology-driven world and will become even more crucial in the *future.*

Overall, the responses indicate a positive sentiment towards incorporating artistic expression skills in online teaching, highlighting its potential benefits in student engagement, communication, and creating an engaging learning environment

The responses provided highlight several key points and suggestions regarding *the adoption of artistic expression skills* in online teaching:

1. Many respondents emphasized the need for *practical guidelines, tips, and training programs* to assist educators in acquiring artistic expression skills. They expressed the desire for accessible resources that provide practical advice and assistance in developing these skills.
2. Some respondents mentioned the challenge of *overcoming fear and discomfort* in front of the camera. They expressed a need for tips, guidance, and suggestions on how to feel more comfortable and confident while teaching online.
3. A few respondents raised concerns about *copyright issues* related to recording video classes. They mentioned the need for regulations and *legal frameworks* to address copyright concerns in online teaching.
4. Several respondents highlighted the importance of *incorporating artistic expression skills into teacher training programs.* They suggested that these skills should be included as a component of contemporary coaching programs to prepare educators for the digitalization era.
5. The respondents emphasized the need for more *practical resources, guidelines,* and training opportunities for teachers. They believed that accessible and helpful resources would assist educators in acquiring and developing their artistic expression skills.
6. Some respondents noted that online teaching offers benefits such as *time-saving and efficiency* compared to in-person classes. They acknowledged that online teaching requires preparation but can flow smoothly once educators adjust to the new challenges.

In summary, the responses underscore the importance of training, resources, and practical guidance to support educators in adopting artistic expression skills. They also highlight the need for regulations, copyright considerations, and the integration of these skills into teacher training programs.

Diagram 1.

Utilization of Audio/Visual Aids and Multimedia Resources in Online Teaching

[Bar chart with the following values:]
- Images and/or photographs: 70.90%
- Videos and/or animations: 85.50%
- Infographics and/or charts/diagrams: 65.50%
- Interactive learning activities: 85.50%
- Listening: 36.40%
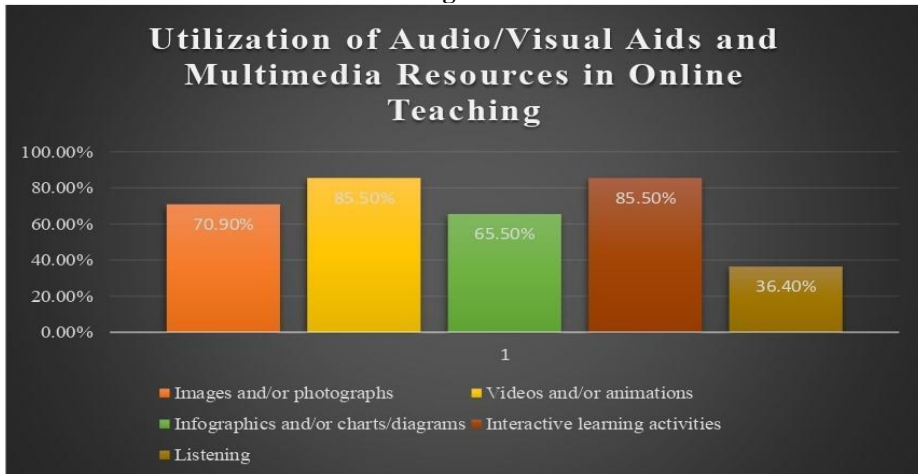
In conclusion, the journey of teachers becoming actors in the online teaching landscape has empowered them to utilize artistic expression as a powerful tool for communication and engagement. By embracing their newfound skills, educators have the ability to create transformative learning experiences that foster deep connections and facilitate meaningful learning outcomes in the virtual classroom (See Diagram 2).

Diagram 2.

Strategies for Developing Pedagogical Skills, Communication, and Learner Engagement in Online Teaching Response percentage

[Horizontal bar chart with the following values:]
- Classroom management: 15.50%
- Time management: 30%
- Usinng formative assessments: 69.10%
- Incorporating interactive activities: 87.30%
- Facilitating online discussions: 83.90%
- Providing clear instructions: 89.10%

Furthermore, online teaching provides opportunities for teachers to take advantage of visual aids and multimedia resources, such as videos, images, and interactive learning activities, which can enhance the learning experience for students (See Diagram 1).

While being comfortable on camera is important for online teaching, it is not the sole determinant of a teacher's success. Strong pedagogical skills,

effective communication, and the ability to engage learners are also crucial elements of successful online teaching. Teachers can develop these skills through training, practice, and gradually gaining confidence in front of the camera.

VII. Recommendations:

To effectively teach English online, English teachers should possess both academic knowledge and practical skills. They should have expertise in the following key areas and abilities:

1. *Strong knowledge of the English language:* English teachers should have a solid understanding of grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation, enabling them to teach the language accurately and effectively.
2. *Familiarity with technology and online teaching tools:* Proficiency in using digital tools such as video conferencing software, learning management systems, and online whiteboards is crucial for facilitating engaging and interactive online English lessons.
3. *Knowledge of online teaching best practices:* English teachers should be familiar with effective strategies and techniques for online teaching, including engaging learners, providing clear instructions, and managing online discussions. This familiarity allows them to create a conducive virtual learning environment.

In addition to academic knowledge, successful online English teachers should possess a set of skills to deliver smooth and effective lessons:

4. *Clear communication:* With online teaching relying on video conferencing, English teachers should have excellent verbal communication skills, ensuring clear pronunciation and effective use of tone and inflection to engage learners effectively.
5. *Time management:* Effective time management is essential for keeping lessons on track and ensuring all learners have ample opportunities to participate actively.
6. *Flexibility and adaptability:* Online teaching can present unexpected situations such as technical difficulties or changes in the lesson plan. English teachers should be adaptable to handle these challenges and modify their approach as needed.
7. *Interpersonal skills:* Building rapport with learners, facilitating discussions, and providing constructive feedback are vital interpersonal skills that enable English teachers to create a supportive and engaging virtual learning environment.

Some examples of how artistic expression can be integrated into online teaching:

a) *Visual arts:* Online teachers can use images, diagrams, videos, and animations to illustrate concepts, create visual summaries, or present data in an engaging manner.

b) *Music and audio:* Incorporating music, sound effects, or recorded audio clips can enhance the learning atmosphere, evoke emotions, and support content delivery.

c) *Drama and storytelling:* Online teachers can incorporate dramatic elements, storytelling techniques, or role-playing activities to make the learning experience more immersive and relatable.

d) *Multimedia presentations:* Creating interactive multimedia presentations using tools like slide decks, video recordings, or screencasts can capture students' attention and provide an engaging platform for delivering content.

e) *Digital collaboration:* Encouraging students to collaborate on creative projects, such as designing a digital artwork or producing a video, promotes teamwork, communication, and artistic expression.

Conclusion

Effective online teaching requires the integration of emotional intelligence and artistic expression to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences. The unique challenges posed by online teaching, such as physical distance and limited nonverbal cues, emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence in building connections and promoting student engagement. Educators with well-developed emotional intelligence skills can exhibit empathy, adaptability, and attentiveness, establishing a supportive learning environment and enhancing overall learning outcomes.

Artistic expression, on the other hand, offers a powerful tool for capturing students' attention, stimulating their senses, and fostering comprehension. By incorporating visual, auditory, or kinesthetic elements into online teaching, educators can create immersive and memorable learning experiences that enhance student engagement, promote active participation, and facilitate knowledge retention. Artistic expression also nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression, equipping students with valuable skills for lifelong learning.

Strategies for incorporating emotional intelligence and artistic expression in online teaching include personalized feedback, adaptability to diverse learning preferences, effective management of emotions, and the use of multimedia resources. Online English teaching, in particular, requires a combination of academic knowledge, practical skills, clear communication, time management, and interpersonal skills. Teachers can further enhance their

teaching through professional development opportunities provided by online teaching platforms, professional organizations, online courses, and social media groups.

By embracing emotional intelligence and incorporating artistic expression, educators can create a vibrant and supportive online learning environment that fosters student engagement, promotes effective communication, and facilitates academic success. As online education continues to expand, the integration of these elements becomes essential for optimizing the learning experience and ensuring the success of both educators and learners.

Human Studies: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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The Legal Dimension of the Formation and Function of the Hellenic Supremes Councils for Marine Accidents

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Abstract
Shipping is perhaps the largest industry globally, transporting more than 90% of the world's trade efficiently and safely. Ships, given their activity on a global scale, are subject to different legal regimes. However, marine accidents with adverse consequences for the environment and people still occur. Hellas, as a country with a strong maritime tradition and with one of the largest shipping companies in the world since the 70s, has established a special legislative framework for the investigation of marine accidents with the Act Decree (A.D.) 712/1970 (A΄ 237). This special legislative process will be critically examined in this brief study.

Keywords: Marine Accident, Hellenic Supremes Councils for Marine Accidents (S.C.M.A.), Hellenic Coast Guard (H.C.G), Hellenic Service for Marine Accidents Investigation (S.M.A.I.), Ministry of Mercantile Marine (M.M.M.)

Introduction-Analysis
Supreme Councils for Marine Accidents (S.C.M.A.)[1](Note 1)

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[1] In Presidential Decree (P.D.) 13/2018 (A' 26), "Organization of the Ministry of Shipping and

[hereinafter S.C.M.A.] which are responsible for the administrative control of marine accidents, were established in order, due to the peculiarity of marine accidents and the special knowledge that their investigation requires, to contribute with the executives who participate to them, to the more complete investigation of the conditions under which a marine[2] (Note 2) happened.

As a maritime accident according to article 1 of the A.D. 712/1970 (A΄ 237) is considered:

1.- total real or presumed loss of a Hellenic ship or floating building,

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Island Policy" in article 21 entitled "Navigation Safety Directorate" the following are defined: 1. The Directorate of Navigation Safety ensures the determination of safe navigation conditions, to protect human life and property at sea, the establishment of a national regulatory framework on safe navigation issues, including those concerning technical issues of ship construction and equipment, as well as the adaptation of the national legislation in accordance with the International Conventions ratified by the Country and the Union legislation, the organization of the implementation and the exercise of quality controls of the inspections of Hellenic-flagged ships as well as foreign-flagged ships sailing in the Hellenic ports in accordance with Paris Memorandum of Understanding (Paris MoU), the recognition and authorization of the Recognized Organizations, the administrative control of maritime accidents, the formation and support of positions and the coordination of actions on navigational safety issues at an international level. It also plans, plans, develops, enacts and implements the legislative framework, operationally organizes the marine traffic monitoring and coastal surveillance systems of the sea area that the H.C.G. has or uses and related to the tracking of ships, through the following Departments: a) Department of Safe Navigation and Marine Accidents b) Department of Legislation and International Cooperation c) Department of Maritime Surveillance and Ship Traffic Management d) Department of Organization and Supervision of Ship Inspections (Paris MOU). 2. The responsibilities of the Safe Navigation and Maritime Accidents Department are the following: ……………………………………………………………………………………………… ………….. d) The monitoring of international developments in matters of maritime accidents and the coordination of actions to investigate maritime accidents of ships under the Hellenic flag and ships in which Hellenic sailors work or Hellenic citizens are on board, including the formation and operation of the Supremes Councils for Marine Accidents (S.C.M.A.) and other maritime accident investigation bodies. e) The cooperation with the Hellenic Service for Marine Accidents Investigation (S.M.A.I.), for the implementation of its work, as well as with corresponding Services or Authorities and Agencies of technical and administrative investigation of maritime accidents of other states as well as Recognized Organizations and Registries for maritime accidents of ships under the Hellenic flag. f) Taking preventive and corrective measures based on the results of marine accident investigations. 3. The responsibilities of the Department of Legislation and International Cooperation are the following: a) the monitoring of the formation of legislation at the EU level. and International Organizations in the field of navigation safety and the care for the adaptation of the Hellenic legislation as well as the formation of the national legislation in the whole range of the above sector which includes issues of construction and equipment of ships.

…………………………………………………………………………………………..
[2]See Tsouris G., "The Administrative Control of Maritime Accidents", PhD, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, 1978 and Korontzis T., "Administrative Control of Maritime Accidents", ΄΄Limeniki Rota΄΄, issue 14, October-November -December 2013, p.p. 60-62.

2.- abandoning this to the insurers,

3.- permanent or temporary abandonment of the ship by the crew,

4.- loss or damage of the cargo carried on board the ship or floating building by a percentage higher than a quarter of it,

5.- serious damage resulting in permanent unruliness of the ship and

6.- loss of life or serious injury to a crew member or passenger.

It is noted that the Hellenic S.C.M.A. are three (3) A', B' and C', they are equivalent and operate in accordance with the provisions of the A.D. 712/70 (A΄ 237) "On administrative control of marine accidents" and Act 2575/98 (A΄ 23 A) "Regulation of matters under the competence of the Ministry of Mercantile Marine" with article 9 paragraph 10 of which paragraph 2 of article 3 was replaced, item d of paragraph 4 of article 3 and paragraph 6 of article 3 of the aforementioned A.D. and Ministerial Decisions (M.D.):

a) no. 68108/14/70/5.2.71, "Regulation on the function of the Marine Accident Investigation Council (M.A.I.C.) [hereinafter M.A.I.C.]",

b) no. 68777/2/79/7.6.79, "Determining the seat of the M.A.I.C.",

c) no. 68108/81/15.7.81, "Establishment of a third M.A.I.C." and

d) no. 14145/5/92/24.7.92 "Amendment of the M.A.I.C. functioning regulation".

It is noted that all the mentioned M.D. have not been published in the Government Gazette as provided for regulatory acts, they are therefore characterized as non-existent and do not produce legal effects[3] (Note 3).

The S.C.M.A. is established every two years by a decision issued by the Minister of Mercantile Marine[4] (Note 4) [hereinafter M.M.M.], are seven

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[3] …………. The specific category is characterized as: (b) incomplete acts, i.e. those that lack the constituent type necessary for their legal completion. Thus, acts whose production process has not been completed are non-existent. In particular, the non-existence of the deed implies the lack of recording in a document, the lack of signature, as well as the lack of publication, in the appropriate manner [Act 3469/2003] in the case of normative acts and published individual ones [The Constitution requires the full publication not only of formal laws, but also of all normative administrative acts, as a constituent element of their validity (The Council of State (Plenary Session) 87/2011)]. See in detail "Jurisprudential developments in the judicial control of non-existent deeds (on the occasion of the decisions of the Council of State 2649/2017 and Council of State 3151/2017)" by Eugenia V. Prevedourou available on the website https://www.prevedourou.gr/%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%AD%CF%82-%CE%B5%CE%BE%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%BE%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82-%

[4] For the evolution of the Ministry of Mercantile Marine (M.M.M.) and for its administrative transformations, see Korontzis Tr., "The Ministry of MerchantileMarine as an autonomous administrative government institution during the period 1971-2016", p. 231, BOOKSTARS

members and consists of the President and six members, as well as a corresponding number of their deputies. A quorum is present if the Chairman and four of the members are present. The authority to establish S.C.M.A. as well as the modification – replacement of their members, based on no. 1141.1/01/20 M.D. (B´ 114) has been transferred to the General Secretary of M.M.M.

The provisions for the administrative control of the marine accident as mentioned are defined in A.D. 712/70 (A' 237), as amended by Article 9 par. 10 of Act 2575/98 (A' 23). At the same time, the administrative control of marine accidents is also provided for by the international convention on the safety of human life at sea (Safety of Life At Sea - SOLAS 74 Reg. 21 Ch. A part C), which was ratified by Hellas with Act 1045 /1980 (A' 95), [On the ratification of the signing in London of the International Convention "on the safety of human life at sea 1974" and on other such provisions].

It is emphasized that this investigation is independent of the safety investigations of marine accidents carried out in accordance with the provisions of Act 4033/2011 (A´ 264), "Adaptation to the provisions of Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 for the determination of the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector and for the amendment of Directive 1999/35/EC of the Council and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council − Incorporation of regulations, implementing measures and other provisions»[5] (Note 5).

As is known, the criminal preliminary investigation constitutes a completely different investigation from the administrative investigation, in the specific case of a marine accident. Bearing in mind this diversity, the following concerns are formulated:

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ed., Athens, 2016, ISBN: 978-960-571-198-6, of the same "The Hellenic Ministry of Mercantile Marine, as an autonomous administrative governmental institution in the period 1971-2011. A descriptive and critical approach", International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 3, issue 8, special issue, April 2012, p.p.61-75, of the same "Administrative Government Reforms. The case of the Ministry of Commercial Shipping, Aegean and Island Policy (YENANP)" Administrative Update (quarterly review of administrative science), vol. 52, October- November- December 2009, pp. 31-57, of the same "The Administrative Government Evolution of the former Ministry of Mercantile Marine in the period 2009-2011", ´´Limenika Chronika´´, issue 90, April - May-June 2012, p.p. 14-15, of the same "Hellenic Coast Guard and Administrative Experiments", ´´Public Sector´´, issue 269, January 2010, p.p. 33-35, of the same "Ministry of Mercantile Marine and Coast Guard. Critical approach of the organizations M.M.M. - proposals for administrative reforms", Administrative Update (quarterly review of administrative science), vol. 32, January-February-March 2005, p.p. 93-112.

[5] See Report of the law in question available on the link https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/UserFiles/2f026f42-950c-4efc-b950-340c4fb76a24/p-sea-eis_XPress_Hamster_temp.pdf

The use of the term preliminary investigation which is carried out in the A.D. 712/70 is inadmissible, as the wording of the said term can very easily be misinterpreted by the executive who carries out pre-investigation criminal acts and creates confusion based on its meaning as defined in the Code of Criminal Procedure (C.C.P.).

From the provision of Article 2 paragraph 1 of the A.D. 720/1970, a question arises whether the notification of the M.M.M. is parallel to the notification of the competent Prosecutor or only the Minister of M.M.M. is informed. If paragraph 7 of article 2 and the provision of article 6 are taken into account, it is concluded that the notification is made only to the Minister of M.M.M. by passing the appropriate notification of the competent Prosecutor's Officer.

This is inferred from the fact that if the competent Prosecution Officer has been informed, there is no need to notify him/her of the case file, as logically it will have been submitted to him/her by the competent Port Police Authority (Domestic or Foreign)[6] (Note 6) [hereinafter means the H.C.G. which conducts a preliminary investigation under its direct supervision].

Upon completion of the preliminary investigations on marine accidents by the H.C.G. or Maritime Attaché Authorities or by an H.C.G. officer designated by the minister of M.M.M. in exceptional cases (article 2 par. 2 A.D. 712/70), the case files after the end of the preliminary investigation are submitted to the M.M.M. without the conclusion of the person who conducted the preliminary investigation.

The minister of M.M.M. refers the file to the S.C.M.A., which proceeds under the direction of their presidents, in the action of jury regular investigations, if the Councils judge that the conducted preliminary investigations are insufficient. Minister of M.M.M. if he/she decides with a reasoned opinion, he/she may not submit the file to the S.C.M.A. (article 2 paragraph. 6 of A.D. 712/70).

If from the preliminary investigation there are indications of the commission of a punishable offense or a subpoena is submitted against everyone responsible, the person who carried out the preliminary investigation if he/she is an officer of the H.C.G. and in the other cases the M.M.M. forwards the case file with all the information to the competent Misdemeanor

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[6] General about the Hellenic Coast Guard see Korontzis Tr., "The institutional role of the Coast Guard", p.411, BOOKSTARS ed., Athens, 2017, ISBN: 978-960-571-266-2, of the same "The Hellenic internal security system in combating organized crime. The case of the Hellenic Coast Guard", The HELLENIC OPEN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION Journal, Vol. 1-2015 No. 2, p.p. 23-48 (ISBN 2407-9332), of the same "The role of the Hellenic Coast Guard in the Hellenic internal security and in combating the phenomenon of organized crime", International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vol. 3, issue 1, April 2012, p.p. 210-227.

Prosecutor (article 2 paragraph 7 of A.D. 712/70).

In every case of a marine accident, one of the members of the S.C.M.A. is designated by the president as rapporteur, who studies the case and makes a recommendation on it, before the Council, then the S.C.M.A. decides with its report, on the causes, conditions, those responsible for the marine accident and their degree of responsibility, unanimously or by majority (in case of a tie, the vote of the president prevails).

Those before the S.C.M.A. procedures must be completed within the deadlines set by the A.D. 712/70 and which must not exceed a total of seven (7) months from the delivery of the marine accident files to the S.C.M.A.

In practice, these deadlines are usually met, except for some exceptional cases where the Councils must carry out a regular investigation and the deadlines are impossible to meet (calling witnesses, receiving witness statements, correspondence with Authorities, Organizations, Services, private individuals, etc).

The report of S.C.M.A. with the marine accident file is forwarded by the president to the minister of M.M.M.[7] (Note 7) to the competent Prosecutor for criminal prosecution. If there is evidence of disciplinary liability of Captains or crew members, these Reports are also referred to the competent Merchant Marine Disciplinary Council (M.M.D.C.) for the imposition of legal disciplinary sanctions (Article 6 of A.D. 712/70).

The exhibitions of S.C.M.A. do not bind the judges and are freely evaluated by them together with the rest of the evidence of the cases (Article 7).

Noteworthy in this particular A.D., is the fact that the Minister of M.M.M., after the report of the Consular or Port Police Authority, if he/she deems that there is a case for further investigation, orders the holding of a jury preliminary investigation as well as the Authority that will conduct it. Similarly, the minister designates in extraordinary circumstances (without

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[7] With No. 71/1979 opinion issued by the Legal Council of the State (L.C.S) which was accepted by the Minister of M.M.M. with his/her decision No. 68587/79/20.8.79, there is a possibility of referral to the S.C.M.A. (under the conditions mentioned in the opinion) for a new judgment cases of marine accidents, which have been referred to the criminal and disciplinary courts, but for which final decisions have not yet been issued by these courts. In practice, the interested parties, through the Directorate of Maritime Safety/Department 1), submit to the minister of M.M.M. new elements which were not taken into account during the initial hearing of the case by the S.C.M.A. and if these are accepted by the minister of M.M.M. the referral cases are forwarded to the same S.C.M.A. who had issued the initial report and the chairman of the council charged the case to another reporter (for obvious reasons, without committing to charge it to the same person who had initially reported the case). For the rest, the same adjudication procedure is followed in accordance with the current [question arises why these elements should be brought to the attention of the S.C.M.A. and not before the Judicial Authorities].

specifying what they are) an officer of the H.C.G. to conduct a preliminary investigation.

Furthermore, the possibility is given to the Minister of M.M.M., with his reasoned judgment (but who will evaluate it?) not to refer the file to the S.C.M.A. In this particular case, without defining anything related to the provisions of the A.D., it is concluded that if the minister of M.M.M. did not forward the file to S.C.M.A. apparently he/she will not forward it to the competent Misdemeanor Prosecutor's Office either, taking for granted that the competent Port Police or Consular Authority has only informed the M.M.M. (Article 2 paragraph 1). Consequently, the collected pre-investigative material will not be forwarded to a competent Prosecuting Authority and the Minister's Decision will not be judged by the Judicial Function.

It is also stipulated that if the preliminary investigation reveals evidence of the commission of a crime or a subpoena is submitted then either the officer of the H.C.G. if the preliminary investigation or the M.M.M. forwards the case file to the competent Misdemeanor Prosecutor (the allegation of failure to inform the competent Prosecution Authority is affected).

In Article 5 paragraph 5 it is defined that the minister of M.M.M. in serious and urgent cases ex officio or at the request of anyone with a legal interest, he/she may order the direct under the S.C.M.A. regular investigation in the event that no preliminary investigation is carried out by the Port Police or Consular Authority and the one that has started ceases (the claim of not informing the competent Prosecutorial Authority is valid).

Also noteworthy is the administrative practice followed by the competent directorate of the M.M.M. namely the Directorate of Maritime Safety, which evaluates the preliminary investigation material submitted by the Port Police Authorities in the event of a maritime accident, in order to assess whether the relevant conditions for a maritime accident are indeed met, in order to subsequently forward the collected for further evaluation pre-investigative material to S.C.M.A.. It is noted that the competent Port Police Authority (Domestic or Foreign) has submitted the same pre-investigative material at the same time to the competent Prosecution Authority for criminal assessment/assessment.

In fact, it is found many times that the said department orders the Port Police Authorities to carry out additional criminal acts, in order, in its opinion, to complete the original pre-investigative material, before it is forwarded to the S.C.M.A. and its orders to communicate them to the competent Prosecution Authority that has been submitted by the Port Police Authority with the pre-investigative material that has been collected.

These actions of the aforementioned M.M.M. are based on article 21 of the P.D. 13/2018 (A' 26), "Organization of the Ministry of Shipping and

Island Policy" entitled "Navigation Safety Directorate" and specifically in par. 2.d) where the following are stated: "…………The monitoring of international developments in matters of maritime accidents and the coordination of actions to investigate maritime accidents of ships under the Hellenic flag and ships in which Hellenic sailors work or Hellenic citizens are on board, including the formation and operation of the S.C.M.A. and other maritime accident investigation bodies..." as well as in no. 68108/14/70/5.2.71 M.D., on the subject of "Regulations for the operation of the Marine Accident Investigation Board S.C.M.A.", which, however, is unpublished in the Government Gazette as it should be as a regulatory act and consequently it is non-existent and produces no legal effect at all.

The question that arises is whether the specific procedure followed as described above is legal in the sense that it is provided for by the legal texts. Specifically, the following two questions were raised:

1.- Has the authority, as claimed by the competent directorate of the M.M.M. to evaluate the pre-investigative material that the competent Port Police Authority has collected and submitted to it and to the Prosecution Authority if it is a marine accident before transmission of S.C.M.A. in order to establish that all the conditions that constitute the concept of a maritime accident are met according to the provisions of the A.D. 712/1970;

2.-Has the authority to issue orders to the Port Police Authorities to competently complete, in its opinion, the said pre-investigation material which are communicated to the Prosecution Authorities, the content of which includes the order for parallel submission to the Prosecution Authorities as well for his criminal assessment substituting the judicial judgment of the Prosecuting Authority without its knowledge?

The answer to both the aforementioned two questions is clear based on the legislative texts, and specifically, the answer is negative.

Specifically, for every event or incident that occurs in the area of jurisdiction of the H.C.G. as determined by the relevant provisions of the C.P.P., the Prosecution Authority is inevitably informed and proceeds with a criminal assessment. From the combination of the provisions of articles 33, 43 of the C.P.P. with article 19 par. 1 of the M.D. 040/2014 (A´ 3212) [Regulation of Port Police Authorities Functioning], is very clear that the officers of the H.C.G. as general pre-investigation officers who carry out a preliminary investigation in the context of the criminal prosecution initiated by the competent Prosecution authority and under its direction, report and receive instructions and orders only from them The aforementioned framework of action constitutes the so-called Judicial Police in which other hierarchical

levels cannot under any circumstances intervene to issue instructions-orders-hints [articles 158-159 of the Code of Public Marine Act, A.D. 187/1973 (A' 261), article 33 par. 8 of Act. 4256/2014 (A´ 92) (Tourist vessels and other provisions) and articles 31-33-36 and 43 of the C.P.P.].

The administrative control of the maritime accident (A.D. 712/70) constitutes another procedure by special councils, which are composed of members who have similar experience and know-how and in each case a judicial officer also participates. These councils have the authority as provided for in article 5 of the A.D. 712/70 as applicable to proceed under the direction of their president to conduct a regular preliminary jury investigation if they consider the conducted preliminary jury investigation to be insufficient[8] (Note 8).

From the existing legislative framework, namely the A.D. 712/70 as applicable, article 21 of the P.D. 13/2018 and no. 1000.0/35289/2015 M.D. (B´ 2582), is very clear that nowhere is the competence of the Directorate of Safety Navigation to evaluate collected pre-investigative material and recommendations competently.

A careful study of the provisions in question reveals the authority of the said department for actions of an administrative nature, i.e. the coordination of various administrative bodies and units as well as procedural arrangements that refer to the way cases are processed in a specific organizational unit, for the purpose of its efficient operation only, which is influenced by a teleological interpretation of the relevant wordings "monitoring of international developments………the coordination of actions to investigate maritime accidents……..including the establishment and operation of ………." [see article 21 par. 2 of the P.D. 13/2018].

The coordination of actions in no way means the evaluative judgment of submitted pre-investigative material, but bureaucratic actions of an administrative nature, something that is inferred from the relevant wordings at the beginning and end of the above-mentioned relevant provision.

If the legislator wished, he/she would use different wording such as "e.g. evaluation of collected pre-investigative material before sending it to the S.C.M.A. issuing instructions-orders to the Port Authorities for the additional completion of the case file after its evaluation, etc.

However, such a wording would replace the responsibilities of the above directorate of the M.M.M. with the jurisdiction of the Prosecution Authority or the competencies of preliminary investigations according to C.P.P. employees. In addition, from a careful study of article 15 of the M.D.

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[8] In article 9 of the specific A.D. is determined:
«SCMA when it receives a maritime accident preliminary investigation file, it will proceed, under the direction of this president, to a regular jury investigation, if it deems the conducted preliminary investigation to be insufficient».

1000.0/35289/2015 there is a transfer of the right to sign regarding "documents and acts by which maritime accident files are competently transmitted".

It is emphasized again that M.D. which refers to the operation and constitution of S.C.M.A. and has been issued under the authority of the A.D. 712/70, have not been published in the Gazette of the Government, are non-existent and do not produce legal consequences (articles 42 par. 1, 35 par. 1 of the constitution as well as the opinions of the Council of State (Plenary) 87/2011, 1609 /2012, 1080/2013, Supreme Court 33/2009, 256/2007, 3/2006, 1788/2004, 2200/2003, Supreme Court No. 3136/1989).

The expediency of the existence of S.C.M.A. can also be raised as a concern after the publication of Law 4033/2011 (A´ 264), "Adaptation to the provisions of Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 23, 2009 for the determination of the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the sector of maritime transport and for the amendment of Directive 1999/35/EC of the Council and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council - Incorporation of regulations, implementing measures and other provisions".

In Article 4 of the aforementioned act[9] (Note 9) the independence of the investigations from the criminal, disciplinary, and civil investigations and from the administrative control of the marine accident carried out pursuant to the A.D.712/70 carried out in accordance with Act 4033/2011.

But could the State make use of the specific mechanism of S.M.A.I. and the reports on the maritime accidents that it examines, to transmit them competently either for a criminal assessment or for any disciplinary assessment since in any case the purpose is to establish the causes and conditions that occurred a maritime accident, supplementing where necessary the legislative framework in order to there is only one mechanism saving resources in manpower and material.

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[9] Article 4
«Status of safety investigations»
1. Member States shall define, in accordance with their legal systems, the legal status of the safety investigation in such a way that such investigations can be carried out as effectively and rapidly as possible. Member States shall ensure, in accordance with their legislation and, where appropriate, through collaboration with the authorities responsible for the judicial inquiry, that safety investigations are: (a) independent of criminal or other parallel investigations held to determine liability or apportion blame; and (b) not unduly precluded, suspended or delayed by reason of such investigations. 2. The rules to be established by the Member States shall include, in accordance with the permanent cooperation framework referred to in Article 10, provisions for allowing: (a) cooperation and mutual assistance in safety investigations led by other Member States, or the delegation to another Member State of the task of leading such an investigation in accordance with Article 7; and (b) coordination of the activities of their respective investigative bodies to the extent necessary to attain the objective of this Directive.

Conclusion

The above provisions, I believe, go beyond the judicial authority they provide to the minister of M.M.M. (instead of the administrative which should have been clear from the wording of the relevant provisions), contradict the provisions of the current C.P.D. in which the duties and obligations of both the Prosecution Authorities and the pre-investigation officers are defined.

In particular, the provisions of the A.D. 712/70 described above are indicatively in conflict with the following articles of the Hellenic Criminal Code: 31 "Rights of the prosecutor", 33 "General investigative officers", 36 "Ex officio prosecution", 37 "Obligation to announce criminal conduct ", 43 "Initiation of criminal prosecution", 239 "Purpose of the interrogation", 243 "When and by whom it is acted upon", etc. of the C.P.P.

In any case, the procedural framework defined in A.D. 712/70 for the administrative control of the maritime accident, does not mean a substitution of the Prosecuting Authorities. The latter, according to the procedural system of Hellas, are the only ones to assess the maritime accident incident(s) after receiving knowledge, to give relevant orders to the pre-investigation officers at the pre-investigation stage, who report first and foremost to them as mandated by the C.P.P.

The latter, with the consent of the competent Prosecutorial Authorities, may appoint experts, etc. and not for the pre-investigation procedure to be carried out outside the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, by first informing the Minister of Justice.

In this way, each minister is provided with powers to handle and evaluate pre-investigative material, which should clearly fall outside of his/her institutional powers, bypassing the initial mandatory notification of the Prosecuting Authorities in the event of a marine accident.

In addition, all the provisions of the said A.D. cause conceptual confusion in terms and procedures such as preliminary investigation, and administrative investigation which in procedural practice are clear and delimited.

The administrative control for the performance of any disciplinary responsibilities (article 6), if this is the request of the A.D. 712/70, could be carried out by requesting a copy of the relevant case file from the competent Prosecution Authority and its further disciplinary evaluation by the competent Departments of the M.M.M. according to the applicable procedures.

Finally, it is noted that the M.D. which has been issued under the authority of the A.D. 712/70 and refers to the operation and constitution of S.C.M.A. has not been published in the Government Gazette as provided for in the regulatory acts, consequently, they have characterized as non-existent and do not produce legal results with what this implies regarding the credibility of the institution in question.

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Revisiting Punjab's Transformative Journey, 1947-1966: An Appraisal

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Abstract
"Punjab, often referred to as the 'Land of five rivers,' has been a significant player in shaping India's historical narrative, leaving an enduring mark on its trajectory. This imprint stems from the courageous and patriotic endeavours of the people of Punjab, who have etched out a distinctive place for themselves. A comprehensive study of its people becomes imperative to comprehend the nuanced dynamics of Punjab's history. This involves delving into their historical, cultural, and religious roots and understanding their political legacy. The year 1947 marked India's liberation from British rule, coinciding with a partition based on the two-nation theory. Punjab bore a heavy toll during this partition, experiencing substantial human and territorial losses. The partition's catastrophic aftermath overshadowed the jubilation of independence for Punjab. Post-partition, Punjab portrayed a sombre and bleak landscape, with the migration of refugees significantly altering the communal composition of the region. This migration upheaved the administrative, economic, and political structures, introducing many complex challenges. The division of Punjab along communal lines generated a palpable sense of indignation and frustration among the Sikh community. The expectations of establishing a Sikh State in independent India, fervently supported by Sikh, Congress, and Hindu leaders, remained unfulfilled. Perceiving an unequal distribution of territory between Hindus and Muslims, the Sikhs advocated for

a Punjabi Suba. In their pursuit of this objective, the Akali Dal employed diverse strategies. This culminated in the reorganisation of Punjab on March 21, 1966, leading to its further trifurcation."

Keywords: Partition, Independence, Demographic shifts, Integration, Political evolution, Language agitation, Reorganisation

Introduction

Punjab, the "Land of Five Rivers", has played a significant role in the history of India and has left a deep imprint on the course of Indian History. This imprint on Indian History is due to the people of Punjab, who, through their courage and patriotism, have carved out an important place for themselves (Singh, 1981). To understand the nature and dynamics of Punjab's history from its true perspective, it is important to study the people of Punjab, their historical, cultural, and religious background and their political heritage.
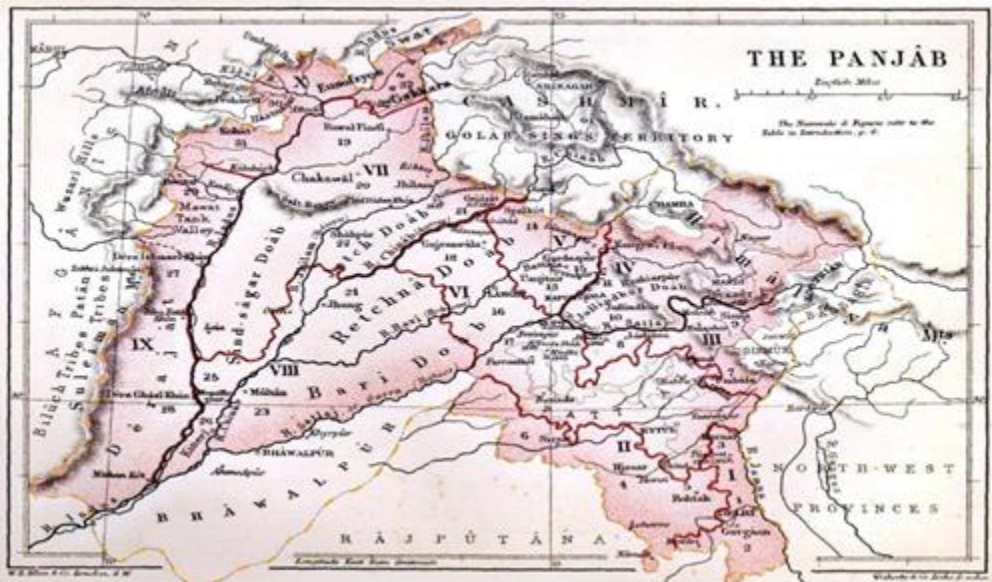
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The migration of refugees significantly altered the communal composition of Indian Punjab (Singh, 1981). (The boundaries of East Punjab were redefined under the Radcliff Award, which was announced on August 18 1947). In united Punjab, i.e. in Punjab before partition, the Hindus constituted a minority with 26 per cent of the population, and the Sikhs were only 13 per cent of the population, but after partition, the Hindus became a majority with 64 per cent of the population and the Sikhs became a sizeable minority with 33 per cent of the population (1951census). The erstwhile

majority communities, i.e. the Muslims, were now almost eliminated as a political entity (Norang, 1986).

The partition of Punjab at the time of independence shook the administrative, economic, and political machinery of the province to its foundation and brought in its wake a host of complicated problems. The flood of human misery witnessed nepotism, corruption, bribery, maladministration, and communalism in the administrative services. The state's economy had been completely disrupted as partition was a severe blow to industry and business and depleted the strength of skilled labour. The pre-partition communalism and post-partition administrative chaos were nurtured by the confused policies and politics of the faction-ridden ruling party. This all left the masses in a dilemma. (Chauhan, 1995).

But soon, it was found that adverse circumstances and gruelling struggle created a capacity in them (masses) to face ominous conditions, however formidable they might be. In no time, it was found that instead of being liabilities, they became an asset to the Punjab (East). The displaced Punjab farmers created blossoming orchards out of these new lands. The government also extended massive assistance to the rehabilitation of the refugees. "It is sufficient to record that the Punjab which had been the earliest home of the Aryans settlers, and from whence the Vedic culture had spread through. India proved once again to be the starting point of a new resurgence that came to the people of this country after centuries of slavery" (Rai, 1965).

The division of Punjab on communal lines spread a sense of indignation and frustration among the Sikhs because the hopes of creating a Sikh State in Independent India (Azad Punjab / Sikhistan) rose by the Sikh leaders and supported by the Congress and Hindu leaders had not been fulfilled. The Sikhs felt that they had been given a raw deal in the distribution of territory between the Hindus and the Muslims, giving the expression to this feeling, Master Tara Singh said.

"Every minority except Sikhs has been given justice. The Muslims demanded Pakistan, and they got it; the scheduled castes wanted representation on a population basis with the right to contest additional seats, and they got it. The Sikhs demanded that they would not (like to) be dominated by any single community, and they were being mocked for repeating the same demand which the Hindus supported before partition – with which theCongresss sympathises" (Punjab Government, 1956).

Though the changed demographic situation in Punjab was favourable to the Sikhs, yet in a free India which was committed to secularism, there was no separate communal representation for Sikhs. Due to this, Akali Dal felt that the Sikhs as a community would have little political leverage. Thus, soon after independence, the Akali Leaders started raising apprehension that in an overwhelmingly Hindu-dominated state with no particular political

safeguards, the Sikhs as a separate entity would disappear in time. (Rai, 1965). In the pre-partition days, the separate electorate for the Sikhs and reservation of posts in government services had served as a forceful tool and motivation for stressing the distinct and separate identity of the Sikhs. It was feared that in the changed secular atmosphere, the observance of outward physical symbols by the Sikhs, which was a visible symbol of Khalsa distinctness, might get affected. (Kaur, 1992). Thus, in the new religious–political context and on the pretext of retaining the district political identity of the Sikh community, the Akali Dal restored the demand for the creation of a Sikh majority state within the Indian Union soon after independence. However, it differed from their earlier demand for the creation of a Sikh-majority independent state. The leading cause of Sikh uneasiness in free India was the rejection of Sikh claims by Hindu politicians for separate political representation on the ground that the Sikhs were Hindus, and due to the resurgence of Hinduism in independent India, the Sikhs apprehended that they may engulf the minorities. Many Sikh scholars like Khushwant Singh have also apprehended this increasing unorthodoxy among the Sikhs. (Kapur, 1986).

In the meantime, the language question worsened the political position of Punjab as the language got linked with the communal politics in the province. In the ever-growing communal atmosphere, the demand for better places for Hindi and Punjabi increasingly gained momentum. (Singh, 1987). This gave rise to an anomalous position in which the spoken language of the region did not get an all–around loyalty from different sections of the people and could not acquire the status with other languages – like Bengali and Telgu (Rai, 1965) and acquired.

Language, generally, is regarded as a unifying force that cuts across several sectional, sectarian, and communal divisions. In the case of Punjab, however, the language question further deepened the existing communal division, which overshadowed the cohesive characteristics of the Punjabis. (Rai, 1965). The decision to change the status of Urdu as the only medium of instruction and to replace it with Hindu and Punjabi was due to the communal atmosphere prevalent in the province and partly an account of the partition of the province since it was no longer a Muslim-majority state. In pursuance of this objective, the education department of the East Punjab Government ordered that.

"All education in the schools of East Punjab shall be given in the mother tongue of the children, and either Devnagari or Gurumukhi script can be used in the 1st and 2nd class, provided arrangements be made to teach Gurumukhi in the third class in school where initially Hindi is taught. The same rule is required to be observed in such schools where the initial education was in Gurumukhi." (Vidyalankar, 1956)

The order contained the seeds of what later came to be known as Sachar Formula.

The language issues assumed their political dimension only in 1949, for it was preceded by the demand for the Punjabi-speaking state and other concessions by the Akali Party (Rai, 1965). The question was referred to the Punjab University with the expectation that the academic would find a solution mutually satisfactory to both communities. However, the educationists proved to be as susceptible to political and religious pressures as the politicians. So, in the end, the Punjab Government decided to take the matter into its own hands and resolve it. On October 1 1949, the Punjab Government submitted its proposal, popularly known as the Sachar Formula (on language question). The formula was widely acclaimed by the Sikhs, including the Akalis. However, they criticised the right of the parents to choose the medium of instruction for the education of their children (Rai, 1965). The proposals, however, met with severe criticism at the hands of Hindu organisations like the Arya Samaj, the Jan Sangh, and the Hindu Mahasabha. The conflict between the Hindus and Sikhs, however, took a sharp turn from this day onward. The Sikhs felt that the Hindus, by denying the right of the Punjabi as their mother tongue, wanted to gain a position of superiority over them. The Hindu communal organisations, objecting to this right of Punjabi, argued that the government, by declaring Gurumukhi as the only script for Punjabis, had denied them their right to name their mother tongue. They declared that they were left with no other alternative but to declare Hindi as their mother tongue. In a heated communal atmosphere, the press carried on the campaign in the bitterest language. The respective causes of Hindi and Punjabi were vociferously propagated, and the dozed observers in the rest of the country saw that this was being carried on in Urdu (Rai, 1965). The question of the language of the state and choice of the medium of instruction in schools may not have been as complex and complicated issues as they appeared to be, but subsequently, it got mixed up with the question of the reorganisation of the state which escalated it and made it more complex which led to the demand of Punjabi Suba.

Demand For A Punjabi Suba

The demand for a "Punjabi Suba" was made in February 1948. "The real motivation for a Punjabi-speaking state came after the failure of the Akali Dal to secure some provisions in the constitution of India in this regard. The Akali Dal, in its memorandum to the minority subcommittee of Fundamental Right, had demanded a separate communal electorate for the Sikhs; the reservation of 50 per cent of the seats in the provincial legislature and 5 per cent in the central parliament; reservation of seats in Delhi and U.P.; the same privileges for the scheduled caste Sikhs as are given to other scheduled casts;

and statutory reservation of a certain proportion of place in the Army (Singh, 1981). Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, also criticised the government of India's policy of not referring the question of demarcating the boundaries of the Punjab to the Dar Commission. Later on, undergoing a significant shift in his previous position, he emphasised the importance of preserving their cultural heritage, noting that their literature is in the Gurumukhi script and advocated for creating a province where their culture and traditions could be safeguarded (Rai, 1965). Additionally, he asserted the right to self-determination for the Sikh community in religious, social, political, and other matters. He, however, made it clear that they did not want a separate and independent sovereign state but a province which would be part of the federal unit.

In its struggle to achieve Punjabi Suba, the Akali Dal employed various strategies such as constitutional, infiltration, and agitational (Nayar, 1966). The constitutional strategy involved using methods within the framework of the existing constitutionally guaranteed rights (Nayar, 1966). Therefore, on November 15 1948, twenty-three Akali legislators resolved that if the five statutory safeguards in their charter of demands were not conceded, the Sikhs should be allowed to form a new province of seven districts, i.e. Hosiarpur, Jallandur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Amjbala (Pal, 1979). These demands, however, were not acceptable to the Congress or the constituent Assembly. Sikhs also were not unanimous in this separatist demand. Even Kartar Singh opposed it by saying that "the demand was anti-national and harmful to the Sikhs and therefore, (could) not be accommodated in the secular set up of the Indian Republic ………Besides, it would still further divide the Sikh population in a much worse manner than the partition of the country in 1947 did." (Rai, 1965).

Whereas the Sikhs were still engaged in the debate regarding Punjabi Suba and its nature, the suspicious, hostile, and somewhat aggressive attitude of the Hindus, communalists, further complicated the political situation in Punjab. The majority of them were of the opinion that the Muslim league could achieve Pakistan because of the appeasement policy of the Congress. Now that the partition was a fact and a majority of the Muslims had gone over the other side, the government of India should follow a firm policy towards all religious minorities. The Akali demand for a separate Punjabi Suba was interpreted by them as a strategy designed to create a separate Sikh state, and the press other than Akali also condemned the move as following the footsteps of the Muslim League (Rai, 1965). In fact, it was the communal leadership of both communities that continued the old communal propaganda. Master Tara Singh, however, alleged that the Hindu communal leaders and a particular section of the Hindu press in the Punjab were responsible for the unfortunate situation and were leading the present anti-Sikh agitation.

It is also believed by certain scholars (particularly Khushwant Singh) that the creation of PEPSU (a Sikh majority state) in 1948 provided an opportunity for meeting the demand by attaching the Sikh majority districts of East Punjab to PEPSU. In addition, the Punjab government's decision to declare Punjab a bilingual state (with Punjabi and Hindi as its languages) gave the Akali the necessary excuse for raising their demand for a Punjabi Suba since the spoken language of Punjab (except in the Haryana area and hilly area) was Punjabi. (Singh, 1987). The demand for the creation of a Punjabi-speaking state was further reinforced as a result of the disowning of their mother tongue by large sections of Hindus in the 1951 census. This aroused communal sentiments between the two communities as the Sikh felt that this was a political tactic to resist the demand for the creation of a unilingual Punjabi-speaking state. So, the Akali Dal manifesto of the 1952 elections elaborated on the reason for demanding a Punjabi-speaking state. (Singh, 1987). The true test of democracy, in the opinion of the Shiromani Akali Dal, was "that the minorities should feel that they are free and equal partners in the destiny of their country:

i.   To bring home this sense of freedom to the Sikhs, it is vital that there should be a Punjabi-speaking province with its own language and culture

ii. The Shiromani Akali Dal is in favour of the formation of provinces on a linguistic and cultural basis throughout India, but it holds that it is a question of life and death for the Sikhs for a new Punjab to be created immediately

iii. The Shromani Akali Dal has reasons to believe that a Punjabi-speaking province may give the Sikhs the needful security. It believes in the Punjabi-speaking province as an autonomous unit of India".

A further stimulus to the demand for a Punjabi Suba was the creation of the unilingual state of Andhra after the death of Rumulo (who undertook a fast unto death to achieve the aim) in 1953. After this incident, several leaders of Punjab declared to intensify their struggle and even threatened to go on a fast unto death. Although the demand for Punjabi Suba, or a Punjabi-speaking state, has been at the forefront of politics in Punjab since the partition, its first systematic presentation was made before the state Re-organisation commission appointed by the Government of India in 1953, with Syed Fazal Ali as Chairman (and H.N. Kunzru and KM Pannikar as Members).

In a memorandum to the commission, the Akali Dal urged the formation of a Punjabi Suba by merging the Punjabi-speaking areas of Punjab, PEPSU, and Rajasthan on the basis of language. The memorandum emphasised that Punjabis have a distinctive common culture and a common mother tongue, and they should, therefore, have their own state. (Singh, 1981)

There was vigorous opposition to the demand of the Punjabi Suba from the Hindu community, the Sikh Harijans, and the nationalist leaders, except the communist party of India.   The Akali Dal characterised the allegation as unjust and stated that the Sikhs had not asked for Punjabi Suba out of sinister communal motives. They asserted that Sikhs are India's first and last true patriots. Moreover, according to Akali Dal, Punjabi Suba would not be an independent country but would be subject to central control. (Nayar, 1966).

After winning the S.G.P.C election in 1953, the issue of a Punjabi Suba, the Akali Dal intensified its struggle with renewed vigour. To curb the rising demand, the Sachar Ministry banned the Punjabi Suba slogan on the plea that it was endangering communal harmony in the state. The Akali Dal launched an agitation for their freedom. Due to the tremendous resentment against the repressive order, the government drew this ban on July 12 1955. This was interpreted as a surrender by Sachar and a victory for the Akali. (Nayar, 1966). The state reorganisation commission, in its report submitted on September 30, 1955, rejected the demand for Punjabi Suba on the ground that "a minimum measure of agreement necessary for making a change in the existing set up did not exist" and expressed the belief that to construct a Punjabi Suba would perhaps mean" the imposition of the will of a to construct a Punjabi Suba would perhaps mean "the imposition of the width of a substantial minority over the majority which was opposed to it. (Nayar, 1966). Instead, it recommended the integration of Punjab, PEPSU, and Himachal Pradesh into our administrative unit. The Akali Dal opposed the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission tooth and nail. (Kaur, 1992). The Akali Dal alleged that it was a conspiracy to destroy the Sikh nation and that the commission delivered the "Sikh bound hand and foot to the slavery of an aggressively communal group". (Rai, 1965). Master Tara Singh demanded the report as "a decree of Sikh annihilation" (Singh, 1987). Sardar Hukam Singh, another senior leader of the Akali Dal, referred to it "as another deadly blow to the Sikhs and threatened that the Akalis would launch an agitation if peaceful negotiation failed. (Kaur, 1992).

In February 1956, Jawaharlal Nehru invited Master Tara Singh for a negotiated settlement so that an amicable solution to this problem could be sorted out. This negotiation resulted in an agreement that came to be known as the "Regional Formula" or Nehru Master Pact. As a result of this agreement, the Regional formula was adopted in the Punjab by which the work of the state legislature was assigned to separate regional committees organised according to language. The Akali Dal agreed to work according to the formula and to merge with the congress party to contest the 1957 election in the Punjab legislature. Meanwhile, under this formula, on November 1 1956, PEPSU was merged with Punjab, and the overwhelmingly Hindu province of Himachal Pradesh was retained as a separate entity.

However, the Chief Minister, Partap Singh Kairan, under pressure from the Arya Smajists, adopted delaying tactics in the implementation of the Regional Formula. The Regional Committees were constituted in November 1957, seven months after the inauguration of the new Assembly. The Chief Minister denied any special status, establishment, or staff to the chairman of the Punjab Regional Committee, which caused its chairman to resign in disgust. The dissatisfaction with the working of the Regional Formula and the indifferent attitude of Kairan towards the Akali legislators brought the Akali Dal out of the Congress fold. Master Tara Singh, in a statement at Delhi on September 15 1958, declared that the Regional Formula had not been satisfactorily implemented and that he was compelled to reopen the demand for a Punjabi Suba. Disenchanted with the workings of the Regional Formula, the Akali Dal convened the first Punjabi Suba conference at Amritsar on October 12, 1958, to revive the demand for a Punjabi Suba.

The Punjabi Suba Agitation After 1960

To mobilise support from other parties, the Akali Dal convened a Punjabi Suba convention at Amritsar on May 22 1960, at which the members of the Swantantra Party, S.S.P., P.S.P. and veteran freedom fighters like Saifud-din Kichlu and Pt. Sunder Lal justified the demand for the creation of the Punjabi-speaking state. The government took preemptive action and arrested Master Tara Singh and the Akali leaders, but the agitation gathered momentum as time passed and was launched by the Akali Dal on May 20, 1960. The Punjab government came down heavily on the agitators who were harassed and terrorised in several ways. (Singh, 1979). Procession and demonstrations became the order of the day, and at a massive Akali procession taken out on June 12 1960, in Delhi to press the demand, more than 57,000 volunteers courted arrest. (Paul & Brass, 1974)

Despite this, the government made no attempts to diffuse the situation. Sant Fateh Singh, Vice President of Akali Dal, took over the leadership of the morcha (an organised march or rally) after the arrest of Master Tara Singh and continued the agitation. In his very first public appearance as the leader of the morcha, he cleared the position regarding the nature of the Punjabi Suba by declaring that he wanted Punjabi Suba based on language alone; the percentage of Sikhs or Hindus did not matter, and he solemnly reiterated his faith in the Hindu Sikh Unity. (Singh, 1987). Sant tried to shed all the suspicion about the communal outlook of the agitation by emphasising Hindu-Sikh harmony. He brought it in line with the country's commitment to democracy and secularism.

To put pressure on the government, he embarked on a fast–for–death on December 18 1960. Later on, on the advice of Master Tara Singh, Sant Fateh Singh broke this twenty–two–day fast on January 9 1961, to negotiate

the master with Nehru. During these negotiations, Sant Fateh Singh emphasised the linguistic basis of the demand rather than its communal basis, which made Pandit Nehru more sympathetic.

However, nothing came out of the negotiations between the Akali Dal and the Government. Master Tara Singh, after his release, added the communal touch when he declared that "the primary motive for asking for the Suba was to protect the Sikh religion and improve the position of the Sikhs; the language question was secondary". Meanwhile, with the increasing popularity and credibility of Sant Fateh Singh, Master Tara Singh's hold on the community was loosening. In an effort to revive his lost prestige, he undertook a fast until death on August 15, 1961, for a Punjabi Suba (Chauhan, 1995). and against the discrimination against Sikhs by the government. However, the government under Nehru refused to be moved on the issue of Punjabi Suba. Finally, he ended his forty-eight days fast when the government agreed to set up a commission to investigate any discrimination against the Sikhs, as this was one of the allegations by Master Tara Singh against the government. However, this commission found that there was no basis for any charge of discrimination (Chauhan, 1995).

The failure of the two fasts had deep repercussions on the Sikh community and resulted in the creation of a division in the Akali leadership. For breaking the fast without achieving anything, both the leaders were found guilty by Panj Pioras and were ordered to perform religious penance. After this, Sant formed a separate Akali Dal in 1962 and challenged the leadership of Master Tara Singh.

Meanwhile, in the wake of the Chinese invasion in October 1962, Sant Fateh Singh suspended the demand for a Punjabi Suba and, mobilised defence efforts in the state and even presented a cheque of Rs. 50000 on behalf of the Akali Dal towards the war efforts. This raised Sant's position in the overall political sphere. In 1965, he and his followers succeeded in gaining control over the SGPC from Master Tara Singh and took over the leadership of the Sikhs.

In the meantime, significant changes occurred in the leadership of the congress in Punjab and at the centre. (Chauhan, 1995). The new Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, modified the tough line that had been adopted by Nehru, ostensibly on the advice of Kairan. The change of regime at the centre brought a favourable climate as the new leaders were more receptive to regional demands. Simultaneously, the opposition to creating a Punjabi Suba also declined as the Hindu leaders urged the creation of a separate Hindu-speaking state of Haryana and the hilly area to merge with Himachal.

Meanwhile, to re-establish his declining image, Master Tara Singh activated the demand for a Punjabi-speaking state and proposed the idea of self-determined political status for the Sikhs within the Indian Union. A

resolution to this effect was passed at the historic General Hari Singh Nalwa Conference held at Ludhiana on July 4 1965.

Moving the resolution, Sardar Gurman Singh declared, "This conference recalls that Sikh people agreed to merge into a common India nationality on the explicit understanding of being accorded a constitutional status of co–sharers in the India sovereignty with the major community, which solemn undertaking now stands cynically repudiated by the present rules of India…….. This conference, therefore, resolves after careful thought, that there is no alternative left for the Sikh in the interest of self-preservation but to frame their political demand for securing a self-determined political status within the republic of the Union of India". (Singh, 1979)

This was a shrewd move by Master Tara Singh to outmaneuver Sant Fateh Singh and re–establish himself as the true champion of a Punjabi Suba. Sant Fateh Singh faced the challenge of the Master group very boldly and lost no time in intensifying these efforts for the realisation of a Punjabi Suba. He called upon the Union Government to create a Punjabi-speaking state as a large number of states on linguistic basic had already been created. (Singh, 1981)

To convince Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri about the urgency for the creation of a Punjabi-speaking state, Sant met him on $7^{th} – 8^{th}$ August 1965 and declared that he wanted a Punjabi Suba purely on a linguistic basis. But talk failed as the Prime Minister agreed only to take steps for the advancement of the Punjabi language and to look into any sikh grievances but did not concede the real demand.

After the failure of this mission, Sant announced on August 16 1965, from the Akal Takhat that he would undertake to fast till death with effect from September 10 1965, for fifteen days. If he survived the fast, he would immolate himself on September 25 at exactly 9:00 A.M. In this, he also got full support from the Master's group, and there was pressure from the congress Sikh legislators on the central government on this issue. The outbreak of the Indo–Pakistan war on September 5 1965, further precipitated the situation in the border state. The national leaders appealed to the Sant to give up the fast in view of the national emergency, and the Union Home Minister announced that the whole question would be considered favourably. On September 9 1965, the working committee of the Akali Dal advised Sant to postpone the pass till the war with Pakistan was over. After withdrawing his threat of self-immolation, Sant Fateh Singh called upon all Punjabis (and Sikhs in particular) to rise to the defence of the country.

Immediately after the cease-fire with Pakistan, the government of India appointed a three-member cabinet committee, consisting of Y.B. Charan, Indira Gandhi, and Mahavir Tyagi on September 23 1965, to consider the question of the formation of Punjabi Suba. (Singh, 1981). On March 9 1966,

the Congress working committee adopted a resolution recommending that out of the existing state of Punjab, a state with Punjabi as the state language be formed. On March 18 1966, Sardar Hukam Singh presented his report to parliament, which recommended that the Punjabi-speaking region be constituted into a unilingual Punjabi state, that the hill areas be merged with Himachal Pradesh, and that the Haryana region be given the status of a state. The committee recommended the appointment of a commission to demarcate the boundaries between the states of Punjabi, Haryana, and Himachal.

On March 21 1966, the central parliament and the cabinet accepted the demand and appointed a boundary commission to propose an appropriate reorganisation of the Punjab. The Boundary Commission recommended by a majority of two to one the merger of Kharar Tehsil and Chandigarh with Haryana; however, Chairman of the Commission S. Dutta favoured the inclusion of these two into Punjab. The government of India accepted the minority report regarding Kharar and decided to convert Chandigarh into a Union Territory. The recommendation of the commission with the above modifications was incorporated in the Punjab State Recognitions Bill, which was adopted by Parliament and received the consent of the President on September 18 1966. As a result of this Act, Punjab has trifurcated in such a way that the Punjabi-speaking areas went to Punjab, the Hindu-speaking areas to Haryana, and the hill areas to Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh, with its neighbouring villages, was converted into a Union Territory. Another notable feature of the Act was the creation of common links between the states of Punjab and Haryana like a common governor, High Court, University, Electricity Boards, and other corporations like the state financial corporation and Housing corporations like the state Financial corporation and the Housing Corporation Apart from this, the management of the Bhakra Dam complex and other dams was placed under a centrally administered Board. (Singh, 1981)
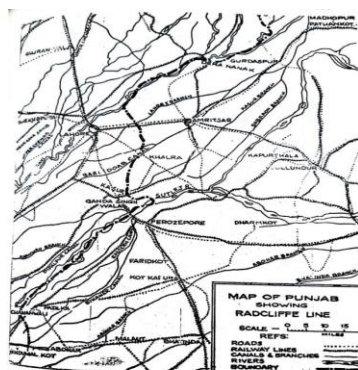
Maps: Punjab from partition to fragmentation

Conclusion

In its struggle for the achievement of Punjabi Suba, the Akali Dal employed a variety of strategies such as constitutional, infiltration, and agitational. Due to this struggle, on March 21 1966, the central parliament and the cabinet accepted the demand and appointed a boundary commission to propose an appropriate reorganisation of the Punjab. As a result of this Act, Punjab was trifurcated in such a way that the Punjabi-speaking areas went to Punjab, the Hindu-speaking areas to Haryana, and the hill areas to Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh, with its neighbouring villages, was converted into a Union Territory. The demand for the Punjabi Suba was fulfilled, but it led to the fragmentation of Punjab.

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A Comparative Research and Analysis of the Development of Sustainable Tourism in Georgian and other International Curricula

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Abstract

        In recent years, sustainable development has become an important part of educational systems, beginning from primary schools to universities. Consequently, it has evolved into a societal priority. In 2019, the UNESCO adopted the ESD for 2030 framework with the overall objective of building a more just and sustainable world through the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Education for sustainable development for 2030 framework identifies 5 priority action areas: policy, education and training settings, educators, youth, and communities. Sustainable tourism development has been a commonly used term for many years and is, therefore, an important concept for consideration within tourism degree courses/programs. Based on qualitative research and case study method, this paper focuses on discussing the undergraduate and graduate programs in the context of teaching sustainable tourism in foreign countries, which are compared with the experience of the Georgian Technical University. The aim of the research was to study current educational programs related to sustainable tourism and highlight its importance. In conclusion, it can be asserted that sustainable tourism programs are experiencing a growing demand, with various types of policies being developed. However, the program at the Georgian Technical

University stands out on an international scale, having no analogue and being truly unique. At the same time, the results indicate that in many cases, sustainability pedagogy/teaching methods, such as systems and holistic thinking, are not yet widely adopted and are in the process of implementation.

Keywords: Sustainability, Education, Sustainable tourism, Mountain, Tourism curricula

Introduction

Sustainability poses a new challenge for the entire world, emerging prominently in the 20th and 21st centuries, which is evidenced by several international agreements. Tourism is one of the main economic sectors in the world, contributing significantly to the generation of crucial social benefits.
Tourism has been recognized for its potential to contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the areas of job creation, sustainable consumption and production, and the conservation of natural resources. The tourism sector is specifically mentioned and tasked with fulfilling three of the SDGs (Romeo et al., 2021).

1. SDG 8 focuses on the promotion of "sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all".
2. SDG 12 aims to "ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns", and to "develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism, which creates jobs, promotes local culture, and products".
3. SDG 14 sets out to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development".

Accelerating climate action (SDG 13) in tourism is of utmost importance for the resilience of the tourism sector, which is highly vulnerable to climate change, while simultaneously contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.

Cross-cutting Nature of Tourism and its Role in the Achievement of the SDGs in Mountain Regions (Romeo et al., 2021)

− SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Tourism can contribute to the economic resilience of mountain communities, who depend on agriculture. Tourism can also contribute to the inclusiveness and sustainability of mountain settlements by supporting the conservation of natural resources and providing jobs for youth and women.
− SDG 15 – Life on Land.

- Since natural ecosystems and biodiversity, including mountains, rivers, and lakes, are prime tourism assets, the sector offers considerable opportunities for their conservation if managed in a sustainable manner. Destinations are increasingly aware of the mutually beneficial relationship between the conservation of natural ecosystems and tourism revenues.
- SDG 17 – Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Developing sustainable tourism in mountains requires reducing its negative environmental and social impacts and addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Materials and Methods

The research was conducted using qualitative research method. The article analyses materials provided by research paper, articles and literature reviews, and websites. The study was carried out from 1st of July, 2023 to 1st of August, 2023 and reviewed all educational programs related to tourism sustainable development (searched on google). This paper is based on content analysis. Only content published through the official websites of selected universities has been included. The article includes curriculas of universities in Georgia and other foreign countries. According to case study method, the article examines and analyses the experiences of the following universities: University of Florence Italy, Florence - School of Economics and Management; University of Groningen, Leeuwarden, Netherlands; Linnaeus University Kalmar, Sweden; University of Cagliari, Italy; ESDES Lyon Business School, France; Harokopio University of Athens, the Institute of Research, Higher Studies in Tourism (IREST) of the University of Paris I - Panthéon Sorbonne, the Department of Business Administration of the University of the Aegean; Arden Study Centre, ARDEN University, Berlin, Germany; Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia; ISPGAY vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal; Florida International University Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Managemen, USA.

Main Text

Sustainability is an ongoing theme in the tourism literature and is a growing concern in the wider area of business studies. Consequently, there is a growing recognition of the need for sustainability education in programs for business and tourism students. The development of such programs should be based on a sound understanding of the existing values and attitudes of current students. This article reports a study that explored the environmental attitudes

of a sample of Generation Y students in a business and tourism program using the New Environmental Paradigm Scale (Benckendorff et al., 2013).

In September 2015, world leaders unanimously adopted a new framework document, marking a global commitment to collective action. The 17 Sustainable development goals obligate states to ensure the achievement of 169 goals by 2030. These goals aim to eradicate poverty, defend the environment of the earth and climate, and promote peace and well-being to the whole inhabitants (United Nations Georgia n.d.).

The fourth goal of sustainable development is aimed at achieving inclusive and equal education, providing lifelong learning opportunity to all. For example, this goal focuses on achieving the following by 2030:
- − Providing affordable and high-quality technical, professional and secondary, and higher education.
- − To increase the number of youngers and adults, who have appropriate skills to be employed in decent work and entrepreneurship.
- − To ensure that all pupils acquire knowledge and skills (including sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles) to promote sustainable development.

Due to the necessity to provide education on sustainable development, in 2019, UNESCO adopted the Education for Sustainable Development framework for 2030. This framework identifies priority action areas and includes education and training settings, educators, and youth (alongside policy and communities (Education for Sustainable Development. UNESCO. n.d.)

In recent years, numerous studies have been conducted on issues related to sustainable development education. However, this research emphasizes two significant directions: Mountain Sustainable development (Ueno et al., 2020) and Tourism Sustainable Development (Boluk et al., 2021) (Balsiger & Price, 2020).

In addition to these considerations, the experience around the world is also studied. Millar and Park, (2013) in their article "Sustainability in hospitality education: the industry's perspective and implications for curriculum," highlight that the hospitality curriculum should be updated and more progressive. This will help students harness conceptual and practical competencies about sustainability. According to Chawla (2015), who studied Sustainability in Hospitality Education: A Content Analysis of the Curriculum of British Universities, sustainability is now a key part of the hospitality/tourism management curriculum, rather than merely an interesting alternative.

One of the challenges in developing a curriculum for sustainable tourism development is gaining firsthand experience of the actual conditions

of tourism development. The goal is to educate students to identify and understand the existing problems in sustainable tourism development. Therefore, one learning method developed to meet the need for experiencing real conditions is field studies or field trips. These activities have been organised in the form of tourism known as educational tourism (edu-tourism) or tourism activities proposed to enhance knowledge and understanding for scholars (Malihah & Setiyorini, 2014). Researchers from Japan, Switzerland, and United Kingdom (Ueno at al., 2020) identified the 28 program opportunities of mountain studies as education for SMD (Education Sustainable Mountain Development - ESMD):

- − Programs were primarily implemented by universities, research institutes, or NPOs, individually or in collaboration.
- − The type of teaching and learning (TL) settings included regular oral lectures, online courses, and intensive lectures, often combined with fieldwork.
- − Researchers have classified the 28 cases of programs into 6 types: Degree programs and specializations within a degree program, delivered by an individual university/college; Regular intensive courses, including a field component, such as summer or winter school; Single center organizing multiple relevant degrees and training courses or three-degree program delivered by a group of universities; Online education programs or degree programs; Schools for environment conservation or outdoor education organized by an NPO; Research facilities (institutes) or observatories.

It is important to mention the significant role of the journal "Mountain Research and Development,, which is the leading international scientific journal specifically devoted to sustainable development in the world's mountains. The journal is published by the International Mountain Society (IMS).

The research about sustainable tourism educational programs in the field of tourism in the system was not found. However, it is crucial to highlight UNWTO's special activity in the field of education. Under its umbrella, the platform "Tourism for SDGs", was created, providing brief information about the research – "Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals: The Role Of Latin American Universities: Results, Progress, And New Challenges" (2023).

Based on the results obtained from the application of a survey applied to university tourism degree courses, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level in Argentina and Brazil, it was found that, although the topic of sustainability is included in every tourism courses, there is still no evidence of concrete application of the 2030 Agenda, implemented by the SDGs, including its 17 goals and 169 targets. Hence, research on the teaching of sustainable

development of tourism is quite relevant. It is crucial to note that tourism serves as a significant resource for numerous mountain economies, a reality particularly applicable to Georgia, where a substantial portion of the territory is mountainous."

Research Findings

The results of the research are demonstrated in Table 1. Table 2 illustrates the international experience of bachelors' programs in the field of sustainable tourism. Table 1 indicates that various countries offer master's programs in the field of sustainable tourism, with varying durations. Some programs last for 12 months, while others extend for a duration of 2 years. The program provided in Italy is interesting and gives opportunity to study management of natural, cultural, and historical resources. The program offered by the University of Groningen stands out for its interesting characteristics. Additionally, challenging programs are available in Sweden, Greece, and France. Overall, all master's programs highlight that sustainable tourism is a multidisciplinary field that integrates various aspects within the framework of sustainable development.

Table 1. International Experience of Master's Programs in the Field of Sustainable Tourism

#	Title of program and Study language	University / country	Duration and ECT credits	Description of program
1	The Master's Program: Design of Sustainable Tourism Systems in English (University of Florence. Italy, Florence. School of Economics and Management, n.d).	University of Florence Italy, Florence School of Economics and Management	2 years =120 credits	Program is characterized by an interdisciplinary program. The graduates will acquire the basic competence in the fields of human and social sciences, a good command of information technology and statistical techniques, indispensable for a real-world interpretation of tourism trends and taste changes of the tourist population. The Master's Program also provides legislative, historical, and geographical knowledge useful for enhancing the values of the resources and the cultural heritage of a territory. The Master's Program deals with topics related with the sustainable management of natural, cultural, and historical resources. The remarkable growth of tourism requires considerable planning activities by both the public and private sectors in order to maximise economic returns while containing the potential negative impacts on the environment.

2	MSc in Climate Adaptation Governance in English (MSc in Climate Adaptation Governance, n.d.)	University of Groningen, Leeuwarden, Netherlands	1year=60 credits	Within this program, one can choose to pursue a track in sustainable tourism or specialize in the governance of climate adaptation. Both paths lead to a Master of Science degree. During the program, participants will engage in courses covering Place, Regions, & Identities; Fieldwork Cultural Geography; Adaptation Governance; Nature, Landscape & Heritage; Culture & Community-Based Adaptation; Qualitative Research Methods; Urban Adaptation & Innovation; and Social Impact Assessment.
3	MSc in Master of Science in Tourism and Sustainability in English (Master of Science in Tourism and Sustainability, n.d)	Linnaeus University Kalmar, Sweden	2 years = 120 credits	This Master's program provides in-depth knowledge about how to evaluate tourism and plan for future tourism from a sustainability perspective. The main field of study: Tourism Studies. As a globally leading business industry, the tourism industry has to take responsibility for the planet's limitations. The Tourism and Sustainability Master's program offers insight into the paramount challenges confronting the tourism industry's development and our world. Individuals will acquire skills to grapple with important and often contradictory trajectories of tourism and its sustainable future. This can be, for instance, how tourists often seek the pristine, the authentic, or the genuine, while also burdening destinations and travel systems through unsustainable patterns of practices and carbon dioxide emissions. On a larger scale, it is not only the tourism industry that is under threat but also the world as we know it. Therefore, the most central question in the Master's program in Tourism and Sustainability is: How do we create the tourism industry of the future?
4.	Master's Degree in Management and Monitoring of Sustainable Tourism in Italian (Master's Degree in Management and Monitoring of Sustainable Tourism, n.d)	University of Cagliari Cagliari, Italy	2 years = 120 credits	The Master's Degree Course in Management and Monitoring of Sustainable Tourism (MMTS) aims to train managers specializing in the monitoring, acquisition, processing, and interpretation of tourism data and processes with a view to sustainable development. Through a multidisciplinary training course in the economic, managerial, anthropological, environmental, IT-statistical, and legal fields, outgoing professionals will be able to carry out consultancy and support activities for decision-making processes, in the public and

			private sectors, and to assume managerial roles within companies.
5	MSc Sustainable Tourism and Event Management in English (MSc Sustainable Tourism and Event Management, n.d.)	ESDES Lyon Business School, France	13 months, number of credits unknown	The MSc Sustainable Tourism and Event Management provides strategic visions of ESG-focused practices and enables students to generate sustainable solutions, whilst combatting the environmental and societal challenges faced by the tourism and events industries. Students will be thoroughly versed in socio-economic impacts, sustainability-based marketing, and management along with ideal practices for the planning of deliverables in these sectors. The 13month program will be based in Esdes Business School's campus in Annecy and students will also benefit from 2 field trips to enhance their learning experience. At the end of the course, students will have acquired the necessary skills to determine the best impactful initiatives for working in the hospitality sector.
6	International Master's Program (MSc) in "Sustainable tourism Development: Heritage, Enviroment, Society" (Sustainable Tourism Development: Heritage, Environment, Society, n.d.)	Harokopio University of Athens, the Institute of Research, Higher Studies in Tourism (IREST) of the University of Paris I - Panthéon Sorbonne, , the Department of Business Administration of the University of the Aegean	12 months = 60 credits	The diploma offered at Harokopio University of Athens and the one offered at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University are two separate and independent diplomas. The Programme focuses on the provision of high-level qualifications for professions related to Tourism Science and Heritage. The subject of the Master's Programme focuses on providing specialized studies in the scientific field of Sustainable Tourism Development through heritage. Specifically, its goal is to provide specialized training for postgraduate students in subjects related to: • Sustainable Development of Tourism • Tourism and Culture • Cultural Tourism • Heritage Management and Marketing • Development and Management of Tourist Destinations • Economy of Tourism • Environmental Protection of Tourist Areas The Master's Programme is a double degree Programme that results in the award of two diplomas to the student. According to the 15th Special Interinstitutional Committee of

				22.03.2021 and the provisions of article 34 of the Law 4485/2017, the Master's Program is a full-time program made up of two (2) academic semesters (12 months).

Note. Authors, according to the research

Table 2. International Experience of Bachelors' Programs in the Field of Sustainable Tourism

#	Title of Program and Study Language	University /country	Duration and ECT Credits	Description of Program	Note
1	BA (Hons) in Business Management (Tourism) in English BA (Hons) Business Management (Tourism) n.d.)	Arden Study Centre, ARDEN University, Berlin, Germany	Students have 3-9 years to complete this course. Most of the students, however, aim to complete the course within 3 to 6 years.	Arden University offers the BA (Hons) in Business Management (Tourism) for individuals seeking to develop professional skills and insider knowledge within the tourism industry. The course provides the necessary foundation for managing or starting a business in the field, with a curriculum that enforces a range of transferable, relevant business skills. Students will develop business skills and understanding specific to tourism management, allowing them to respond to specific industry requirements in national and international contexts.

The course will approach several aspects of the tourism industry and how to manage them in a business setting. This includes topics such as national and international travel, understanding the tourism environment, contemporary issues in tourism management, and sustainable tourism management.

It will also tackle fundamental business elements, such as finance, marketing, business processes, and business analysis. Students can expect to acquire valuable skills such as personnel management, entrepreneurship, and the ability to analyse and interpret written, visual, and graphical data to improve business performance. | Berlin or Online. Full support both online and on-site. The exact number of credits is unknown |
| 2 | Bachelor of Arts in Sustainable Tourism | Yerevan State University, | 4 years | The program aims to prepare professionals/managers in the field of sustainable tourism management, who will be able to: | The exact number of credits is unknown |

Management in English (Bachelor of Arts in Sustainable Tourism Management. n.d)	Yerevan, Armenia		•Know the theoretical and methodological system of sustainable tourism; •Design principles and strategical programs for sustainable tourism development; •Organize tourism activities; •Apply theoretical knowledge, practical abilities, and skills in line with current trends and requirements of the tourism industry; •Manage tourism in all its dimensions based on the principles of sustainable tourism; •Think critically, creatively, and innovatively •Support global sustainability. Learning Outcomes The aim of the program is to ensure students have the following learning outcomes; •To analyze and evaluate the place and role of tourism in the structure and development of the society; •To know the principles of a service organization in tourism activities; •To identify the structural peculiarities of tourism in the field of service from the point of view of sustainable tourism; •To design organizational programs for the tourism industry; •To carry out research in the field of tourism from the point of view of sustainability; •To evaluate the tourism industry, infrastructure, and resources; •To design and implement sustainable tourism programs; •To develop strategic directions for sustainable tourism development and improvement; •To manage sustainable tourism projects; •To have a systemized understanding of interdisciplinary patterns of sustainable tourism (economics, geography and environmental science, sociology, etc.) •To establish and manage a touristic business in accordance with the principles of sustainable tourism.	

| 3 | Sustainable Tourism and Business in Portuguese (Sustainable Tourism and Business. n.d.) | ISPGAY vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal | 6 semesters = 180 credits | The Degree in Tourism and Sustainable Business at ISPGAYA provides practical and experimental training based on the theoretical knowledge necessary for professional practice.

It promotes inter and multidisciplinary training in various domains through the transmission of solid technical knowledge about human intervention and tourist activity. The program values the understanding of the intercultural dimension and its interactions in the most diverse sectoral domains of the economy and society, with the capacity to promote the realization of sustainable tourism business. Future tourism professionals are expected to possess awareness and a critical attitude regarding the ethical, environmental, and legal guidelines that frame the best practices used for the implementation and sustainable management of tourism development projects. Companies in the sector face the challenge of adapting to new competitiveness factors due to globalization, the new world order, pandemic crises, energy crises, climate change, among others. | |
| 4. | Online Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism in English (Online Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism. n.d.) | Florida International University's Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Managemen, USA | 4 years; | Worldwide, the impacts of tourism on the natural environment are under increasing scrutiny, with a growing demand for restraint and solutions. The World Tourism Organization, as well as the World Travel and Tourism Council, have explicitly called for increased focus on sustainability when creating policies and managing global tourism. There is an urgent need to protect the resources that attract tourists to destinations around the globe. The recent pandemic has prompted the world to recognise that destinations such as Venice and Amsterdam can recover from over-tourism through more sustainable practices if allowed to do so. In the state of Florida, there is increased pressure to protect natural attractions, including the state's 825 miles of beaches, | Distance Learning, Full time, Part time;

A non-European system of calculating credits |

				the Everglades, the Keys, coral reefs, springs, and mangroves. Other alarming events, such as red tide, climate change, sea-level rise, and extreme storm events have all raised awareness of the vulnerability of the tourism industry, both locally and abroad. This innovative degree recognizes the importance of sustainable operations in the tourism industry today, its impacts on the planet, and the increasing demand for a more sustainable approach to managing hospitality and tourism businesses. This unique, fully-online program, offered through the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, is an interdisciplinary collaboration with the Department of Earth and Environment of the College of Arts, Science, and Education. It features a blended curriculum comprised of the most-relevant existing courses from each department, as well as a host of new courses specifically designed for the degree. Students pursuing this degree will acquire the knowledge and tools needed to become industry leaders in the management of sustainable tourism standards. This expertise will contribute to protecting the world's natural and cultural resources, preserving them for future generations. Students will learn to apply these skills and lead through advocacy, conservation, and community partnerships. Topics covered include socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural impacts, with respect to responsible business practices and local governance. In a nutshell, the overarching thrust of the program is to teach students how tourism can adapt to and mitigate climate change, becoming a key sector in the transition to low-carbon economies.	

Note. Authors, according to the research

The collected data indicates that Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, France, Greece, Germany, Armenia, Portugal, the USA, and Great Britain are countries that offer opportunities to study tourism and sustainable development. However, the bachelor's program at the Georgian Technical University, specifically on the faculty of sustainable development of mountains, titled 'Sustainable Mountain Tourism and Hospitality Management,' stands out as distinctly different from the mentioned programs. Furthermore, the curriculum includes subjects related to mountain tourism and hospitality, training courses regarding mountain knowledge and safe tourism, as well as economics and business.

The structure of the educational program provides numerous opportunities to students.
- The program lasts for 4 years, comprising 240 ECTS, and is conducted on a full-time basis in the Georgian language.
  Students engage in:
- Learning fundamental subjects
- Learning business, tourism, and hospitality industry subjects
- Learning sustainable development and its principals, including sustainable mountain development
- Learning subjects in field of mountain
- Field practice
- Writing Bachelor's thesis

The program's distinctive feature is the opportunity to study at least 2 foreign languages. Subjects are classified into 3 pillars: Obligatory and obligatory elective, Optional/elective, and Free credits

The course itself is unique in Georgian educational system and has gained a lot of students' interest. Notably, it is fully funded by the government as a priority direction. The management team of the program is planning to offer master's program and collaborate with other universities around the world. It is important to understand the connection between sustainable development and mountain tourism. The close connection can be explained by the positive impacts that mountain tourism and sustainable development can bring to the region, contributing significantly to overall sustainable development. This assertion is supported by UNWTO approaches (Figure 1. Mountain Tourism Sustainable Development)
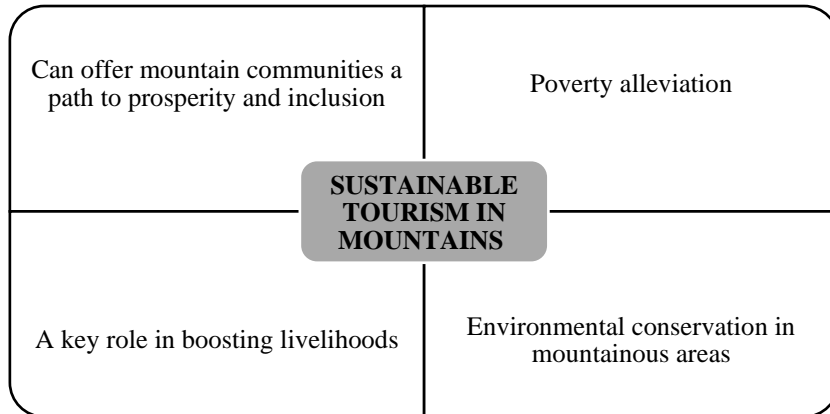
Figure 1. Mountain Tourism Sustainable Development
Note. Authors, according to UNWTO

The integration of sustainability into educational programs for tourism and hospitality is highly relevant and represents the future direction for educational systems. Sustainable tourism is particularly important for regions facing migration and employment challenges. Raising awareness, creating educational programs, and implementing policies is a must in order to achive SDGs.

The example of Georgia can serve as a model for other countries, inspiring them to follow suit by funding educational programs that integrate sustainability into their curricula. For educational system, it is also important to have partnerships with other universities.

From the studied practices, all masters' programs are unique and provide the opportunity for in-depth knowledge about how to evaluate tourism and plan for future tourism from a sustainability perspective. Bachelor's degree programs are more informative and aim to prepare professionals/managers in the field of sustainable tourism management. Both of them are important on international level, especially for developing countries, where achieving sustainability is a sensitive challenge.

Conclusion

Based on the collected data, it is evident that there are various programs available. However, a different and holistic approach to sustainability is not visible. The educational programs in the field of sustainability are highly significant, attracting an increasing number of students annually. For countries like Georgia, sustainable tourism development, particularly in mountainous regions, holds paramount importance. The residents of these areas face numerous challenges, and sustainable tourism development emerges as a pivotal tool for regional progress. This promotes the achievement of sustainable development goals

and has a positive impact on the quality of life. Furthermore, it promises decent working conditions, supports knowledge sharing, and strives to make opportunities affordable for everyone throughout their lifetime. As earlier discussed, the field of tourism offers a wide range of bachelor's and master's programs. However, Georgian academic programs are directly aimed at regional development, which will contribute to the economic development of the region. Additionally, they are specifically designed to achieve sustainable development goals. The future of integrating sustainability into educational programs looks promising, given the increasing demand. Universities are recognizing their responsibility towards sustainable development and are actively working to support it. In order to achieve sustainable development goals, which are related with educational systems, increased support is essential from government, policies, and the development of educational and certification programs. It is also intriguing to establish a network where universities collaborate, fostering exchange programs to share experiences. This network could organize workshops, conferences, and webinars to facilitate a broader exchange of ideas

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Perceived Benefits of Learning Analytics and Artificial Intelligence-Based Oniline Learning Platforms: Case of Lithuanian General Education Schools

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Abstract
Online learning platforms with integrated tools of learning analytics (LA) and artificial intelligence (AI) are growing in popularity in general education in Lithuania. Such platforms have a number of advantages in terms of the teaching-learning process, however, there is a lack of research about such advantages after direct use of the platforms in general education schools. Thus, the purpose of the current study is to find out the perceived benefits of online learning platforms with LA and AI tools. The research was conducted in 11 schools in Lithuania. The students at these schools tested the LearnLab and Eduten Playground online learning platforms for almost three months. Descriptive statistics methods and chi-square ($\chi2$) criteria were applied. Results showed that students claim that their learning achievements have improved thanks to the platforms. Moreover, research results showed, that when working with platforms, it is appropriate to pay attention and, in parallel, to teach students computer literacy from the elementary grades, to develop a relationship with the computer as a work tool. It is also appropriate to start working with LA and AI platforms from the primary grades, which would positively stimulate the growth of digital competence, as well as the interest

of students in the educational subject(s) and the positive growth of learning achievements.

Introduction

Digital technologies are changing people's communication, social life structure, and cooperation opportunities, and are forming new life habits. These changes have implications for education. Already in 2014 studies have predicted that in a decade, approximately two-thirds of students in general education schools will be fully or partially learning in a technology-based learning environment (Wang, Decker, 2014). Researchers assume that portable computing devices and developing educational technologies (e.g.: Smart Classrooms; Smart Learning Environments, etc.) will further promote the digitization of education (Har Carmel, 2016). In addition, technology is widely used by students, parents, teachers, and school leaders for a variety of educational purposes, such as reporting on student achievement in an electronic diary environment (Carpenter, Krutka 2014; Martin, 2018). The fact that digital technologies have become an important part of the learning environment and their integration into education is necessary to ensure a better education for students has been confirmed by research studies (Hollman et al., 2019). Moreover, the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic has especially encouraged the digitization of education (Kalim, 2021).

Currently, education is experiencing fast integration of learning analytics and artificial intelligence-based online learning platforms into the learning and teaching process. Data collected during the learning process is the domain of learning analytics. The academic literature defines learning analytics as "the collection, analysis, and reporting of data about students and their contexts to understand and optimize learning and the environment in which it occurs" (Long et al., 2011). Such a definition emphasizes the aspiration of learning analytics to use data with the goal of comprehensively understanding and improving education (SoLAR Society for Learning Analytics Research, n.d). As stated by Vincent-Lancrin in the 2021 OECD report, learning analytics is one of the new disciplines of Data Science, which studies how to use data mining, machine learning, natural language processing, visualization, and Human and Computer Interaction methods, so that educators and learners get insights that can improve teaching/learning practices.

Learning analytics is used in education for a variety of purposes, such as predictions to identify which students are at risk of failing a course; personalization and adaptation, when a student chooses a personally adapted

learning path; learning outcomes assessment; interventions where the teacher is given information and the teacher can help a student a targeted way; information visualization, when the learning dashboard provides an overview of learning data (using various charts, graphs and tables) (Mayer-Schönberger, Cukier, 2014, Mangaroska et al., 2019, Ifenthaler et al., 2020). Modern research and practice of learning analytics in countries such as Australia, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Finland prove its importance in solving issues related to the quality of education, identifying students at risk, and reducing exclusion (Sclater, Mullan, 2017, Kurvinen et al., 2020, Mangaroska and Giannakos, 2018). Learning analytics also proves to be a tool for monitoring and improving the performance of the school as an organization, monitoring and developing the organizational capacity of the school (Ifenthaler et al., 2020). The relevance and benefit of the application of learning analytics for education is also evidenced by the fact that in recent years, an increasing number of digital tools, both commercial, such as MS Teams, Google Classroom, iSpring Learning, etc., and open source, such as Moodle, etc., intended for various educational sectors, include data analysis technologies.

Artificial intelligence technological solutions can also be integrated into online learning environments. AI technologies can also collect a wide variety of information, e.g. visual, auditory, and physiological data about students. This type of data about students and their learning could be used to further design the teaching-learning process and better understand how the learning takes place in real-time. The data could help teachers and students choose the most effective teaching-learning strategies and methods (Luckin et al., 2016). The goal of AI in educational technology is to enable more personalized, flexible, inclusive, and engaging learning, as well as to automate everyday learning tasks through automated assessment and feedback capabilities (Gulson et al., 2018; Luckin et al., 2016). AI tools could be also designed to help address students' dropout or burnout (Coccoli, Maresa, & Stanganelli, 2016) and could contribute to overcoming students' learning gaps that arise from individual or social differences. However, despite decades of research in this area (du Boulay, 2016), current AI tools do not fully exploit the technology's potential and seem to fall short of expectations (Stone et al., 2016).

Scientific research reveals the advantages of learning analytics and artificial intelligence for the teaching-learning process: for its organizers, these are artificial intelligence-based ways of monitoring and managing learning (Williamson, 2016); for learners - smart, adaptive, personalized, predictive learning opportunities (Williamson, 2016; Maseleno et al., 2018). In addition, the teaching-learning process based on learning analytics and artificial intelligence enables students engagement and motivation (Peng et al., 2021),

and encourages the use of effective learning strategies (Lemay et al., 2021). However, despite the potential of learning analytics and artificial intelligence in education, there is still considerable hesitation and skepticism about its use, as well as challenges and unanswered questions (Meyers, 2016). One of the target groups of learning analytics are students, however, the question is how to ensure that students effectively use learning analytics and artificial intelligence technological solutions to improve their learning process (Ferguson et al., 2019).

The main goals of learning analytics and artificial intelligence are to improve academic achievement rates and help students develop greater responsibility for their own learning activities (Siemens, 2013). Learning analytics and artificial intelligence tools can direct students to their individual learning paths (Hylen, 2015), provide students with information about the gap between their current and desired learning outcomes (Admiraal et al., 2017), encourage students to learn (Abo et al., 2016), assess each student's level of competence and provide feedback in a compact and clearly laid out manner (Ebner, Schön 2013). Learning analytics and artificial intelligence tools allow students to take control of their learning by informing them of their engagement in learning activities and helping them determine what they need to do to achieve their educational goals (Dehler et al. 2011; Davis et al. 2018). Learning analysis and artificial intelligence tools support self-regulated learning and help students self-assess and adjust learning strategies in order to increase the achievement of goals (Papamitsiou, Economides 2015). In this way, learning analytics and artificial intelligence tools can expand and improve learner achievement, motivation, and confidence by providing students with timely information about their and their peers' performance, as well as suggestions for activities and content that could help address identified knowledge gaps (Siemens, 2013).

Incorporating learning analytics and artificial intelligence into the educational system in a responsible and ethical manner can significantly enhance the learning experience and improve pedagogical practices for students, ultimately contributing to their academic success and overall development. In the scientific literature, there is a lack of more detailed research on students' perceived usefulness of such platforms, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the purpose of the study is to find out the opportunities, options and perceived usefulness of platforms with LA and AI components.

Methods

The study was conducted in Lithuanian general education schools in 2021-2022. Data were collected by means of an electronic survey, mediated by schools. The questionnaire consisted of 4 blocks: opportunities to use

platforms at home; opportunities to use platforms at school; ability to use the platforms and student perceived usefulness. To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set:

1. Determine what opportunities and conditions do students have in order to use the platforms at home;

2. Determine what opportunities and conditions do students have in order to use the platforms at school;

3. Determine what abilities students should have to successfully use the platforms;

4. Determine the factors of students' satisfaction and perceived benefits when using the platforms.

The current article includes only results on students' perceived benefits when using the platforms. The current block of questions has been compiled after adapting the questionnaire for students used in Selevičienė's (2020) dissertation on the application of second-generation web technologies in foreign language lectures. Students were asked to evaluate: whether they learned more when learning via online learning platforms than without it; whether their achievements improved when learning via online learning platforms; have their learning abilities improved when using a computer/tablet; is learning via online learning platforms was better than traditional (contact) learning and would students like to see such or similar platforms used in other educational subjects as well.

Data were collected in the Google Forms system and processed with Google Excel Sheets programs. Descriptive statistics methods and chi-square ($\chi2$) criteria were applied to the analysis of the data obtained during the research in order to determine the relationship between sociodemographics and students' satisfaction and perceived benefits from using the platforms. Important to mention, that 424 Eduten Playground licenses and 550 LearnLab licenses were allocated to schools that participated in the study Some students had licenses for both platforms. Both of these platforms have LA and AI elements. In total the questionnaire was filled out by 397 students from 1-8 grades from 10 schools who worked with Eduten Playground and/or Learnlab platforms: 245 students answered about Eduten Playground and 152 about LearnLab. Students from grades 1-8 participated in the study, and the largest part of participants was from grades 5 and 6, accounting for 19.90 % , respectively, and 19.14 %. Seventh-graders participated the least - 5.29 %. In terms of gender distribution, students were nearly evenly distributed, with 48.11% being boys and 51.89% being girls.

Results

Regarding the satisfaction and perceived benefits when using the Eduten Playground and LearnLab platforms, the majority of surveyed students

positively evaluated learning via the platforms (Figure 1). 71.54% of students agreed (totally agree and agree) with the statement *I think I learn more when learning on the platform than without it* while only 20.40% answered *neither yes nor no,* and just 8.06% of participants *totally disagreed.*
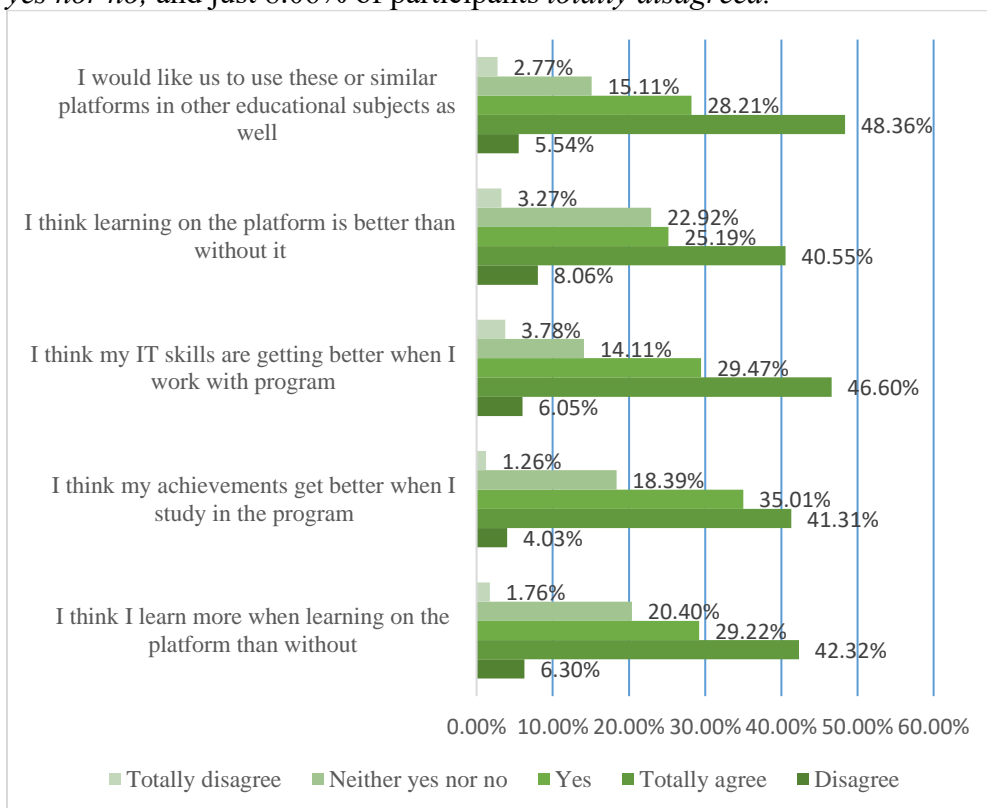
Figure 1. Perceived benefits when using the Eduten Playground and LearnLab platforms

There was a statistically significant difference in the distribution of answers by grade ($\chi^2 = 25.203$, df = NA, p = 0.0115): 3rd-4th grade students gave the most positive answers - 79.62 % (answered Agree and Totally agree). Indeed, 72.22% of 1st-2nd grade students also chose these answers, while 61,22 % of 5th-6th grade students said the same.

The 5-8 grade students who participated in the study also answered disagree and totally disagree in 14.28 % of cases. There was no statistically significant difference in responses in relationship to the particular platform.

The responses of the students who participated in the study were similarly divided when evaluating the statement *I think my achievements get better when learning on the platform.* 76.32 % of the respondents agreed with the statement, 18.39% answered neither yes or no and 5.29% disagreed. And in this case, the answers differed according to classes ($\chi^2 = 28.673$, df = NA, p= 0.0055). Students from grades 3-6 gave the most positive answers, and

students from grades 1-2 and 7-8 responded somewhat less positively. The distribution of responses by platform did not differ statistically significantly.

In the study, students were asked to rate whether learning via the platforms improved their ability to use a computer/tablet (IT skills). In total, 76.07 % of the surveyed students said that their abilities had improved. There was a significant difference (χ^2 = 47.779, df = NA, p = 0.0005) in the distribution of answers by class - the abilities of 1-6 grades students improved the most, and students of 7-8 grades improved only by 32.65 %. 16.3 % answered *Neither yes nor no* and *Definitely not.* There was no statistically significant difference in responses by platform.

Students also rated whether learning via the platforms was better than without it. A total of 65.75 % of students agreed with this statement, 22.92 % of students, answered Neither yes nor No, and 11.33 % disagreed. The answers differed significantly (χ^2 = 52.685, df = NA, p-value = 0.0005) depending on the grade: the statement was evaluated most positively by students in 3-4 grades (75.73%) and students in grades 5-6 (71 .62%), less positively - students in 7-8 grades (61.22%) and grades 1-2 (46.16%). When comparing the platforms, the responses did not statistically differ.

76.57 % of respondents agreed with the statement *I would like to use such or similar platforms in other educational subjects*, while 15.11 % chose *Neither yes nor no*, 8.37% disagreed with the statement. There was a significant difference in the answers when comparing the grades (χ^2 = 47.093, df = NA, p = 0.0005).

The students in grades 1-2 who participated in the study were the most unsure about whether they would like to use learning platforms in other educational subjects: slightly more than half of them (58.89%) answered that they would, 27.78%. answered Neither yes nor no, 13.33 %. answered that he/she would rather not. The students of 3-4 grades who participated in the study expressed the greatest desire: 87.38 %. answered that they would like to use learning platforms in other educational subjects, 8.74 % answered Neither yes nor no, 3.88 %. answered that he would not. When comparing the platforms, the responses did not statistically differ.

Discussion

The outcomes of the present research affirm findings from earlier studies indicating that, even after a short duration of utilizing these platforms, students demonstrate significantly improved learning outcomes (Christopoulos, Kajasilta, Salakoski, Laakso, 2020). They become more engaged in the learning process, leading to heightened motivation and eagerness to learn (Kaila, Rajala, Laakso, Lindén, Kurvinen, Karavirta, Salakoski, 2015). Moreover, their satisfaction with the learning process is positively rated (Youssef, Schelhorn, Jobst, Hörnlein, Puppe, Pauli,

Mühlberger, 2015). Similar results were found in research conducted in Lithuania, indicating that students exhibit greater engagement in the learning process through the use of digital learning games (Petrušauskaitė, 2021). Additionally, utilizing a virtual learning environment in the learning process enhances their academic achievements (Taujanskienė, Skripkienė, & Klizienė, 2020; Kliziene, Taujanskienė, Augustiniene, Simonaitiene, & Cibulskas, 2021), while such learning environments offer opportunities for task individualization and differentiation (Kondratavičienė, 2018).

Conclusion

The study revealed that a majority of the participating students provided favorable feedback regarding the benefits they derived from using the Eduten Playground and LearnLab online learning platforms. Over 75 percent of the students reported that they learned more effectively with the assistance of these platforms compared to traditional methods and expressed a desire to utilize similar platforms in other subjects. One-third of the students believed that their learning achievements had improved, along with a notable enhancement in their computer/tablet skills while using the platforms. A significant portion of the students preferred studying via Eduten Playground and LearnLab platforms over traditional classroom learning, with only one in four students expressing disagreement with this perspective.

The study suggests the appropriateness of implementing digital online learning platforms powered by artificial intelligence and integrated with learning analytics from the first grade onwards. This approach is expected to positively influence the development of digital competencies, spark students' interest in educational subjects, and contribute to enhanced learning achievements and knowledge.

Human Studies:

The project survey involved collection of data from respondents (e.g. gender, age). These activities were carried out in accordance with the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data: process data lawfully, transparently and fairly in relation to study participants, collect data for adequate, clearly defined, and legitimate purposes, collect accurate data and keep it up to date, keep it in a form that allows for the identification of study participants for no longer than necessary for the purposes, of ensuring data security.

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Comparative Legal Context of Land Consolidation in Georgia

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Abstract
From the time of independence to the present day, land legislation in Georgia has undergone several changes, while the legislation has been developing at its own pace. However, Georgia's aspiration to join the European Union requires other changes. The present article studies one of the problems - land consolidation, which was analyzed as a result of comparative legal and historical-toponymic research on the example of similar countries, such as Hungary, Slovakia, and other European states, which is due to the small size of the above-mentioned countries, the short history of joining the European Union and simultaneous reforms of land consolidation in an angle that continues even now. The topic is relevant and resultoriented, as land consolidation is closely related to public and private legal interests. This article covers Georgian and foreign legislative acts, doctrinal material, and other historical sources. Land consolidation is one of the main components of land law in a broad sense, and more practically, it is the main key to the functioning of the agricultural sector, the country's development, and its accession to the European Union. Thus, this article examines Georgia's ability to create the right policy and legislative framework to regulate these relationships.

Keywords: Land Fragmentation; Agricultural Land, Land Reprivatization

Introduction
Land consolidation includes in itself the meaning of distributing land pieces in order that land owners can get a much bigger patch of land in one or several places in return for their former small or scattered land pieces. The

term "land consolidation" originates from the Latin word "commassatio" (press no. 658)

Land consolidation has always been something more than only the change of land configuration. This process is also tightly related to other objectives which as a whole have increased agricultural production. In addition, land consolidation has always been and still is tightly linked to the urban planning of a country since an effective allocation of the agricultural land in the village is usually followed by the planning of non-agricultural land areas, such as roads and other infrastructural units.

Traditionally, land consolidation was always considered as the primary concept for the development of land and the best approach to land management. Earlier notions about the development of the village were almost the same as nowadays and was associated with the strengthening of agriculture to the extent that agriculture had a dominant role, especially in the past. Hence, this process was and still is good for farmers which enables them to possess larger land plots and of better geographical location and configuration as their estate (Remba, C.,2019).

By increasing land use and eliminating the issues associated with fragmented land ownership, land consolidation is a successful step forward to developing agriculture. Georgia will benefit significantly from adopting the policies that will ensure a successful implementation of land consolidation by taking its enormous agricultural potential into account. To facilitate agricultural growth and sustainability, this research will deal with legal issues of Georgian agriculture and offer some creative strategies and recommendations for land consolidation.

The goal of this article is to discuss the similarities and differences between Georgia and other European countries in terms of land consolidation. On the basis of various scientific literature, land consolidation goals in Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden were compared to the ones in Georgia, and as a result of historical- toponymic and comparative legal research the relevance and long-term perspective of this process in the context of Georgia's accession to the European Union was analyzed. The paper will highlight that land consolidation is a prerequisite for the development of agriculture and the provision of life in equal conditions for the population living in urban and rural areas. The recommendations proposed by the research paper as a result of the research will ease the practical implementation of the already existing legal regulatory norms and the development of new, more specific regulatory norms.

The comparative legal context of the nature of land

Property rights have a complex content to the extent that it comprises the integrity of various rights or to say more precisely, as some English

scholars have defined, it is a relationship expressing dependence on the thing in possession between the owner and other persons(A.M. Honore, 1961), therefore, it expresses the connection between two heterogeneous worlds, which is known to have existed before the fundamentals to the law (Remba, C.,2019), and which acquires rights to property objects more interesting. property rights are one of the oldest rights in the history of mankind which are also referred to as "natural" rights by some scholars (Dzamukashvili, D.2017). The discussion of the notion of property and its concept has a long history. As one of the Doctor of Juridical Science Davit Dzamukashvili working in Georgia

Would state – "the notion of property originated when Eva and Adam covered themselves with the fig leaves". During the English Revolution, property right was considered a fundamental right and was established in the same way in the legislation of that time as well. In view of the fact that the property right, as it was already stated, is an absolute right pursuant to private law, for some reason science and legislation do not outline the depths that concern the state interests, consequently, the protection of public interests, environmental values and natural resources is not regulated. In Slovakia, decisive measures to protect land were taken in the 19th century which was related to the development of certain sciences and the creation of unprecedented means for the soil harvest. Boosting the profit from cultivating land, which required taking regulation actions, put the need for legislation regulations on the agenda in this regard. In Slovakia and in leading developed countries the evolution of the correlation between people and land began at that time which contributed to the creation of a protected and harmonious environment at the legislative level. the European Commission considers that the efficient management of land in Europe is entirely dependent on legal regulation; this is worth paying attention to since land is a resource that will degrade and lose its properties faster than it can retrieve them, therefore, it needs effective management. Thus, a more effective agricultural land management policy should be determined. It is noteworthy that by the decision of the European Parliament, an environmental action program has been established, which indicates human impact on land and its scope, which causes significant pressure on nature (press no. 658). Land in Georgia falls into categories (Law of Georgia, Agr.Land. Art.3) and agricultural land has a special significance which is due to the international approach and natural conditions of Georgia since the economy and main development vector of Georgia are addressed towards agriculture (Mepa Gov. web source).

In Georgia, it is necessary to regulate such a significant issue in more depth at the level of the constitution, because according to the latest European practice, in the example of Slovakia, it is clear that the declared provision of the constitution states that the land of the Slovak Republic is the heritage of

the state, citizens and future generations, and land is a non-renewable natural resource in the earth's ecosystem, in Slovakia When adopting the aforementioned constitutional act, each member of the parliament relied on the legal acts adopted so far and defined land as a non-renewable natural resource(Constitution of The Slovak Republic).

In Georgia it is imperative to regulate such an important issue more deeply at the level of the constitution, as pursuant to the latest European practice, in the example of Slovakia, it is clear that the declared provision of the constitution states that the land of the Slovak Republic is the heritage of the state, citizens and future generations, and land is a non-renewable natural resource in the earth's ecosystem; in Slovakia when adopting the aforementioned constitutional act, each member of the parliament relied on the legal acts adopted so far and defined land as a non-renewable natural resource (Constitution of The Slovak Republic). Management of agricultural land resources in Georgia "nobody knows" whether it is effectively regulated at the constitutional level, however, it undoubtedly needs more depth in order to be a correct policy determinant as a basis for further acts. Apart from that, the foundation of the agricultural development of Georgia is in the promotion of farms; the effective operation of the farm, on the other hand, is a significant means of the development of the agricultural sector. Since 2016, a significant legal step has been taken, which was supposed to facilitate bringing agriculture.

Land Consolidation in EU and Georgia (comparative legal research)
Objectives of land consolidation

Land consolidation seemingly unites public and private interests and makes something like a synthesis since farming serves a private owner's economic interests as well as state business. Both the world's doctrinal and practical materials give an exact list of the objectives of the land consolidation. The paper brings forward the most general list in the form of a table in order to clearly show the goals that the above notion of land law denotes.

- To contribute to solving the problem of land fragmentation and to having small land area;
- To improve and systemize farmers' farming structure;
- To unite investments for new infrastructural projects and/or for the rehabilitation of the damaged village infrastructure;
- Developing competitive agriculture;
- To protect natural resources and the environment in the farming area;
- To facilitate the implementation of rural developmental program projects;
- To create new workplaces in the rural areas;

- To ensure global climate care.

The objectives of the land consolidation varies from country to country taking into consideration both historical tendencies and current situation which is stipulated by different cultures, traditions, and peculiarities of legislation (Macaj, L., 2022). However, the main goals of the land consolidation which are common for all countries and unite all countries, are presented in the form of a table (Figure 1). As it turns out, the necessity of the ratio of public and private interests becomes vivid, which is determined by the interests of landowners, the general public, and the state. The best possible way of using land is land consolidation which creates better conditions for the intended usage of the agricultural land (Filagova, L., 2022).

In Georgia, land consolidation should also be based on the synthesis of both public and private interests. In a broader sense, land consolidation facilitates the effective use of land, minimizes land fragmentation, and increases agricultural yields. The consolidated land pieces make it easier to develop modern farming techniques, irrigation systems, and infrastructure which improves food production, rural development, and economic prosperity and well-being. At the same time, it simplifies land administration and creates a guarantee in the long run in the view of having a positive impact on the environment.

Land fragmentation and its rationality in Georgia

It is not strange to anyone that Georgia gained its independence in the 1990s which led to the establishment of an independent legislative order including the changes to existing laws. Land law was no exception either. It is a well-known fact that pursuant to the existing regulations in the Soviet Union no citizen of Georgia had the rights to land ownership (Demetriou, D., 2014). However, the "privatization" of agricultural land, the purpose of which primarily was to utilize agricultural land funds after being registered for private use and which was previously owned by the state and use them rationally, changed the general situation in terms of distribution, possession, and realization of property rights objects. The aim of the Georgian government of that period was to completely eradicate the socialist system and commence building the capitalist system. The socialist model, which prohibited the population from owning agricultural land in private possession, could not provide for existing challenges and human needs resulting from development. Thus, land distribution was one of the problematic and urgent issues as a result of the collapse of the socialist system. The unfortunate existence of corruption and bureaucratic system in the 1990s had a very negative impact in terms of distributing agricultural land irrationally. A citizen of Georgia, who used to be an employee of the soviet farming, got a 1.25 ha patch of land, however, in a

particular geographical unit a definite area of land may amount to 0.75 ha, or even 0.25 ha. Problems existing due to the lack of land area worsened as this specific amount of land was allocated in fragments (scattered) and in most cases, land was given away in 4-5 plots, one out of which was usually intended for homesteading.

The problems existing in Georgia were not new to other countries either which in turn had the same soviet past in common. This was due to the absence of private property. However, when countries such as Hungary, Slovakia, and Georgia left socialist regimes behind, they found themselves facing some challenges like distributing land plots rationally and fairly. Unfortunately, it did not work as planned; for example, the development of agricultural land in Georgia is hampered by some other factors by the irrational distribution of land. 77% of Georgia's population possesses less than 1 ha land plot (Law of Georgia "On Rights to Immovable Property) which is concerning and unfavorable for the intended use of agricultural land.

International experience

There is a big similarity between Hungary, Slovakia, and Georgia in terms of historical development in land law, land consolidation, and even the reasons for land fragmentation. This article describes the experience of these two countries as newly joined members of the European Union, which resembles Georgia with little land area as well. In the 1990s the political system in Hungary changed and as a result of the collapse of socialist cooperatives, compensations were issued to employees and re-privatization policy began. As a result of this process, 8 percent of the population of Hungary was granted agricultural land plots in private ownership, but in the years that followed farming land was distributed among 1.8 million people which in total comprised 2.6 million land fragments.

However, the compensation with arable category land and subsequent privatization led to a huge fragmentation of land ownership which was mainly manifested in the fact that a large number of landowners possessed one or several land plots that could not be used for their intended purpose, which did not correspond to the practice and requirements of the European Union member states. Due to the above-mentioned problems Hungary, like Slovakia, had to adopt a legal act which was issued by the Slovak authorities in 1994 "Unification of land on the basis of free will" as a possible solution to the mentioned problem (Mikaberidze, R., 2015). These processes are worth paying attention to for Georgia since the consolidation of land not only in the abovementioned two states but also throughout history in more stably developed countries, such as France, was paid great attention to, which Slovak scientists also emphasized. The scientific article by Ludovit Machai, a professor at Bratislava Ian Komenski State University highlights the history

of land arrangement in the territory of the French Republic based on the Roman experience which dealt with land consolidation and which was used as an example in the reforms carried out in Slovakia. In the territories of today's French Republic, the development and distribution of land have a long history, the foundation of which was laid in ancient Rome as the territory of Roman Gaul was rich in land suitable for agriculture. The fertility of these lands requires proper management and rational distribution of territories (geographical units). Of course, we find similar efforts in the medieval state, as well as in modern state entities, from the French Revolution to the present day. In all periods, agriculture played a significant role in the development of the state economy and the development of the primitive state (Dzamukashvili, D.2017). In France, even during the Fifth Republic, land ownership was guaranteed in the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. Such a great experience of France is also connected with the fact that the period of legal regulation of land consolidation began much earlier in 1955-1975. The purpose of the current land consolidation was agricultural development, while secondary purposes included environmental protection and other aspects. The last records of land consolidation can be found in the Agricultural Code adopted in 1982, which lists three main goals:

- Effective management of agricultural land
- Simplified possibility of exchange of agricultural lands for private owners
- Protection of uncultivated land and forest massifs (Van Dijk, T., 2004).

The adoption of land consolidation in Slovakia and Hungary was due to their accession to the European Union on May 1st, 2004. Their membership required both countries to carry out certain reforms to develop agriculture. The fact that the documents establishing the right, which implies the transfer of a certain area of land to citizens in a certain geographical area by the state during privatization, required a configuration change, and these changes meant the adjustment, exchange, or relocation of the land in order to allow for the rapid and efficient development of the agricultural sector, which would enable the farmer to carry out his activities under favorable conditions.

Thus, it can be said that a complex systemization and consolidation of land is a way to guarantee the development of agriculture, environmental protection, a healthy environment, forestry, landscape protection, and urban planning. The closeness of Georgia to the experience of the reviewed countries is great, taking into account the history and shortage of land.

A significant goal of the "European Union" policy is to reduce the disparity in the living standards of citizens living in cities and rural areas. In terms of improving agriculture. Consolidation of land is a priority subject of

support from the "European Union" for member states and those wishing to join (A.M. Honore, 1961).

Perspectives of the Alternative Land Consolidation Model in Georgia

There is no clear record of land consolidation in Georgian legislation. Registration of ownership rights is possible on the basis of the unification of immovable property, which means the unification of immovable property, or the building-structure on it or without it, as well as the building-structure (under construction, built or demolished) or the unit of the building-structure and linear structures. This makes it possible to register the union of rights on two adjacent areas owned by one person, and it is well known from civil legal relations that it is permissible to exchange objects of different owners on the basis of a transaction, or registration arising from a different transaction. However, land consolidation is a broader and more significant process. The Law of Georgia "On Ownership of Agricultural Land" provides for the prevention of fragmentation and irrational use of land (Law of Georgia "On Agricultural Land Ownership), although this is not enough, it is necessary to create a single legal framework for land consolidation, which will lay the foundation for the formation of a multidisciplinary body. This body ensures both public and private legal interests.

Based on the information covered in this article, the correct model of land consolidation has a decisive role in the development of agriculture. However, the existing legislation in Georgia seems to be almost inactive and cannot work in practice, because only a legislative act, especially as superficial as this one, cannot be the creator of the process. This requires the right policies and enforcement mechanisms, which modernity has invested in technology, and all developed countries benefit from these technologies.

The proposed alternative model involves encouraging small landowners to exchange their land voluntarily, as Hungary, and Slovakia have done, based on German and French legal models because their experience showed that making mutually beneficial deals between private owners really facilitated the country's agricultural situation. It is also unconditionally necessary to promote the development of cooperatives and give freedom to these organizations to manage the consolidated land areas jointly. Cooperatives increase the efficiency and profitability of farming enterprises by using common resources. The state should ensure the technical efficiency of such associations (cooperatives), such as providing remote software and the formation of a body similar to the registry, which will register and further regulate other relations on consolidated lands within its competencies. It is also necessary to create a unified farm management system. Technological advances have indeed improved the productivity of agricultural systems and

the efficient management of resources. Thus, an inactive legislative act cannot ensure proper functioning without appropriate mechanisms.

On the whole, land consolidation unifies public and private interests and ensures their peaceful co-existence. It is the state's responsibility to ensure protection from the risks arising from such relationships.

Conclusion

This academic research takes a close look at the historical context of the land unification framework in Slovakia and Hungary, two EU members. This thorough study offers insightful information that may act as the basis for Georgia's future EU membership. The paper outlines the course that Georgia must take to pursue this main goal through a comparative legal analysis.

Agricultural land plots in Georgia have an unfavorable configuration which leads to disruption of farming and violation of the legal private interests of private owners since they cannot use their agricultural land for its original, intended purpose which in total damages public interests as well.

The offered recommendation is to create separate regulating normative material that will deal with the regulation of land consolidation and relations related to it which is relevant to the covered comparative legal study and the historictoponymic review.

It is imperative to establish an administrative body that will ensure the functioning of the already created cooperatives through the appropriate register. The established cooperatives will enhance the standards of life of the farmers living in the village, will create workplaces, and will encourage the people who are interested in farming which eventually will create abundant revenue for the state.

And lastly, land consolidation in Georgia is the process that aims at the efficiency, productivity, and sustainability of agricultural land. Farmers can benefit from this opportunity and enhance their resources. Therefore, uniting fragmented land plots into bigger units will regulate existing problems. In Georgia, land consolidation activities are crucial for sustainable development and for the future membership of the European Union as well as for agriculture and for attracting investments for farming.

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Comparative Analysis of the Concept of Death in Turkish and Japanese Proverbs

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Abstract

Death constitutes the last part of the life cycle. Although both being born and living are welcomed with joy by human beings, death brings pain and eternal unhappiness. This paper focuses on revealing how the concept of death, which contains deep sadness, is handled in Turkish and Japanese proverbs. Proverbs are stereotypes passed from one generation to another and are very important in reflecting the lifestyles and ways of thinking of the societies to which they belong. Proverbs are essential in transferring cultural knowledge because our ancestors created them with the accumulation and experience of many years. In this study, comparative analysis method is employed. Total of 127 proverbs, including 80 Turkish proverbs and 47 Japanese proverbs, are examined. They are grouped into death has causes, death as an unknown end, death has time to occur, grief for death, death is not welcomed, death occurs one time, death as a bad situation, understanding the value of things and people after death, death and animal, after death there is no meaning, comparing the wrong things with death, death relates to funerals and religious rituals, death is a relief and escape, and contradicting proverbs. As a conclusion, although Turkish and Japanese people have different cultural backgrounds, it is seen in proverbs that they have similar cultural values to death. All categories as mentioned above have similarities except the grief for death seen in Turkish proverbs but not in Japanese. The religious rituals that relate to death differ as both (Turks and Japanese) have different religions. Although there are expressions about Islam in Turkish

proverbs, expressions about Buddhism are seen in Japanese proverbs.

Keywords: Death, Turkish, Japanese, Proverb, Comparative Analysis

Introduction

No matter how normal it is to be born and live, the concept of **"**death" is considered a bad situation due to the end of life. It is a concept that is avoided in conversation. This study will discuss and analyze the concept of death in Turkish and Japanese proverbs. As a result of the analysis, the study aims to unveil the perspectives and beliefs of Turks and Japanese regarding the concept of death. Both societies have different belief systems and cultures, which is also reflected in the proverbs.

Proverbs give information about the way of thinking, living, and beliefs of the society to which they belong. Therefore, research on proverbs also has a vital place in understanding the socio-cultural structure of society.

They reflect national values. Regarding this issue, Aksoy (2020, p.25) mentions that "the proverbs of each nation are the mirror of its own being. The thoughts, lives, beliefs, and traditions of a nation can be seen. They are the most valuable examples of the sharpness of nations' intellect, the breadth of their dreams, and the delicacy of their feelings".

To understand a proverb, it is necessary to have knowledge of the context in which it is said. When the context is known, it will become understandable to everyone. So, it is important that the cultural and social background of a society should be known. Every nation has proverb books as they are considered as a cultural heritage. Norrick (1985, p.31) provides proverb definition in his book titled "Proverbs are described as self-contained, pithy and traditional expressions with didactic context and fixed, poetic form".

Many studies on proverbs have been done to date. Proverbs vary in subject in these studies because they are written about almost every field, starting from daily life, marriage, woman, man, wealth, poverty, health, illness, life, death, etc. Thus, this variety increases the number of studies on it. The word *"proverb"* corresponds to *"atasözü"* in Turkish. It is defined in the Türk Dil Kurumu (TDK) Dictionary[1] as *"a word of an advising nature that has been said based on long trials and observations and has become a public figure".* "**Proverb**" is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary[2] as *"1. a famous phrase or sentence that gives you advice, 2. a well-known saying that gives good advice or expresses a supposed truth."* The word "proverb" corresponds to 諺/ことわざ *(kotowaza)* in Japanese. It is defined in スーパー大辞林[3]

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[1]Turkish Language Association.

[2]https://dictionary.cambridge.org/ (09.20.2023)

[3]三省堂，スーパー大辞林3.0 (Electronic dictionary)

(Sūpādaijirin) dictionary as *"[s]imple words that people have favored since ancient times with satire, lessons, knowledge, interests, etc."*

As mentioned in the definitions above, proverbs are stereotyped expressions that are the product of many years of experience. These formulaic expressions are sarcastic and instructive and cannot be changed. *Proverbs are widely used in communication worldwide because they are memorable and scholarly. Proverbs fulfill the human need to summarize experiences and observations into nuggets of wisdom that provide ready-made comments on personal relationships and social affairs* (Mieder, 2004, p.1).

In the present study, the subject discussed in proverbs is "death." Various definitions are given below.

In the TDK (Türk Dil Kurumu)[4] Dictionary, "death/ölüm" is defined as *"[t]he complete and final end of a human life; Journey to the hereafter, end, eternal sleep, last journey, etc."* In the Cambridge Dictionary, the word "death" is defined as *"to lose life; to stop living and become dead."* In the Japanese Dictionary デジタル大辞泉 [5] (Dejitaru Daijisen), it is defined as *"[e]xtinction of life. The act of dying. Also, the absence of life."* It is seen that death is expressed in the same way in all definitions.

Many studies on proverbs have been conducted to date. There are studies that deal with the concept of "death" seen in Turkish proverbs as shown below.

Duman (2012) analyzed death in Turkish proverbs, the attitude of Turkish society towards the concept of death, and how this attitude is reflected in proverbs. In addition, as a result of the changes in the perception of death of the Turks in the historical process, it has been tried to determine the meanings attributed to the concept of death, which emerged as a result of the expression of emotion in a more concrete way in parallel with the development of artistic discourse. However, the meanings attributed to the concept of death have been determined.

 Pilten Ufuk (2016) analyzed Turkish proverbs through the theme of death and the title of the study is *"Turks and the Concept of Death: An Analytical Survey Among Turkish Proverbs".* It is aimed identifying, analyzing, and systematizing ideas on death in Turkish culture and determining how they reflect customs, traditions, and rituals from past to present.

Furthermore, other works related to death and proverbs are given below. Tekin (2021a) analyzed the beliefs and practices related to the meaning of death and its features, before death, near death, and after death in Kazan-Tatar Turks. This study is titled as "Death in the Traditional World view of

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[4]https://sozluk.gov.tr/ (09.20.2023)
[5]https://ejje.weblio.jp/ (09.20.2023)

Kazan-Tatar Turks with examples from proverbs". Another work of Tekin (2021b) relates to "A Study on Turks' Proverbs About Death". In the traditional worldview of the Turkish nation, the phenomenon of death, the meaning of death, its characteristics, and the beliefs and practices of the before, during, and after death processes have been determined from proverbs.

There are many studies related to death in the aspect of comparative analysis. Proverbs of two languages or more are the subject of these studies. For example, Ramazanova (2022) dealt with Turkish and Russian and the title of the study is "*An Overview of the Concept of Death in Turkish and Russian Proverbs*". The changes in the perception of death of Turks and Russians throughout history, the development of artistic discourse over the centuries, and the emotionally expressed forms of the concept of death are revealed.

After screening, it is seen that there are a few studies that relates directly to death and Japanese proverbs. Xin (2003) analyzed the concept of life and death in Japanese and Chinese. It is aimed to reveal the characteristics of the Japanese and Chinese people's views on life and death. It also compares the two cultures.

As mentioned above, there are a few studies about death related Japanese proverbs. This study will contribute to the works of Japanese and Turkish proverbs in dealing with the concept of death. Moreover, this study also aims to reveal the similarities and differences between Turks and Japanese as they have different cultural backgrounds.

Methods

In this study, comparative analysis method is used to examine how the concept of death is handled in Turkish and Japanese proverbs. As it is explained above, it is important to reveal differences and similarities of proverbs in both languages. The word "comparative" involves comparing two or more entities or things to identify similarities, differences, and patterns. Comparative analysis means describing and explaining the similarities and differences of situations or consequences among large scale of social units such as regions, nations, societies, and cultures. This definition reflects traditions such as cross-cultural analysis in anthropology, cross-societal analysis in sociology, cross-national analysis in political science, comparative historical analysis in history, and psychological analysis (Smelser, 1973).

Kaneko (1986) 日本のことわざ （上・中・上）） (Nihon no Kotowaza (jou-chuu-ge)), Hinata (2001) ことわざ新辞典(Kotowaza Shinjiten), Yonetsu (1997) ことわざ辞典 (Kotowaza Jiten), and onlineことわざ辞典 (kotowaza jiten) dictionaries are used for collecting Japanese data.

Aksoy (2020) Atasözleri Sözlüğü[6] and Türk Dil Kurumu (TDK) Atasözleri ve Deyimler Sözlüğü[7] (online dictionary) are used in this study to collect the Turkish data.

However, the words that correspond to the word "death" in both languages are listed below, and these words will be compiled and analyzed.

	Death (noun)	Die (verb)	Dead (person) (noun)
Japanese	死(shi)	死ぬ (shinu) 死す (shisu)	死者 (shisha) 死人(shinin)
Turkish	ölüm/ ecel	ölmek/gebermek	ölü

The Turkish word **"ecel"** will also be used in this study as it means death (end of life, time of death) in TDK (Türk Dil Kurumu) Dictionary. Dealing with death but not containing the word 'dead' in both languages were excluded. In this study, idiomatic expressions expressing death were not included. For example, words of "*göçmek* (to migrate)", "*ayrılmak* (to leave)", and "*gitmek* (to go)" have idiomatic meanings of "*to die*".

In Japanese and Turkish usage of rhyme, prosody has been ignored to preserve meaning and has been translated close to the original proverbs.

In this study, proverbs with the word "death" were scanned, and a total of 127 proverbs, including 80 Turkish proverbs and 47 Japanese proverbs, were examined. These proverbs were grouped according to their subjects.

Therefore, this study aims to answer the following question:
- How is the concept of death grouped in proverbs?
- How is the concept of death handled in Turkish proverbs?
- How is the concept of death handled in Japanese proverbs?
- What are the similarities and differences in both languages related to death?

Discussion

After analyzing all the proverbs in both languages, the concept of death seen in proverbs were grouped as shown below. Turkish and Japanese proverbs that relate to the topic will be placed under each group.

*Death as an inevitable end
*Death has causes   **Death as an unknown end*
*Death has time to occur   **Grief for death*
*Death is not welcomed   **Death occurs one time*
*Death as a bad situation   **Understanding the value of things*
*Death and animal   *and people after death*
*After death, there is no meaning ** Comparing the wrong things with*

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[6]Dictionary of Proverbs.
[7]Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms.

*Death relates to funerals and religious rituals death
*Contradicting proverbs
*Death is a relief and escape

Death as an Inevitable End

Death is seen as an inevitable end that all people accept. God determines life and death, and it cannot be controlled by human power. All living things experience death, and there is no cure or remedy for it.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Dünya ölümlü, gün akşamlı. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 250)	**The world is mortal; the day has evening.**
Gelin girmedik ev olur, ölüm girmedik ev olmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 284)	**There can be a home a bride has not entered, but there is no home death does not enter.**
Ecele (ölüme) çare bulunmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 254)	**There is no cure for death.**
Ölüme çare bulunmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 405)	**There is no cure for death.**
Olacakla öleceğe çare bulunmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 398)	**There is no remedy for what will happen and who will die.**
Ölüm dirim (kalım) bizim için. (Aksoy, 2020,p. 405)	**Death and life are for us.**
Ölüm var, dirim (kalım) var. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**There is death; there is life.**
Ölüm hak, miras helal. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**Death is right; inheritance is halal.[8]**
Ölüm bir kara devedir ki herkesin kapısına çöker. (TDK)	**Death is a black camel that descends on everyone's doorstep.**
Korkunun ecele faydası yoktur. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 367)	**Fear is useless for death.**

It is stated above that there is no way to get rid of death in Turkish proverbs, and death is accepted as a natural condition which has no remedy.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
生き身は死に身 *(Iki mi wa shini mi)*	**Living is dying.**
生ある者は死あり *(Sei aru mono wa shi ari)*	**The living has death.**
生は死の始はじめ *(Sei wa shi no hajime)*	**Life is the beginning of death.**
死生命あり*(Shisei mei ari)*	**Life and death have a fate.**
災難なら畳の上で死ぬ *(Sainan nara tatami no uedemo shinu)*	**If disaster comes, one could die on the *tatami*[9] mats.**

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[8]*Halal* is defined in Oxford Learner's Dictionary as *"acceptable according to Islamic law."*
[9]Tatami is defined in the Oxford Learner's Dictionary as *"a traditional Japanese mat made from dried rushes and used to cover a floor."*

In Japanese proverbs, death is accepted as all living people/things are dying.

The life and death of a person cannot be changed by human power. It is difficult to know when and where disaster will occur. Even on the safety of tatami mats, one can slip and fall, which will be the cause of death. So, it can be considered as an inevitable end. Thus, it can be seen that both languages have similarities.

Death has Causes

There are many causes of death seen in daily life. For example, one can die of disease, bad habits and old age, die from wounds and injures, die in an accident, etc. The causes are the reason for death.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ecel geldi cihane, baş ağrısı bahane. (Aksoy, 2020, p.54)	**Death came to people; headache is the excuse.** **(illness)**
Bahanesiz ölüm olmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p.174)	**There is no death without excuses.**
Ölüm gelmiş bu cane, baş ağrısı bahane. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**Death has come to people; headache is the excuse.** **(illness)**
Eden bulur, inleyen ölür. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 255)	**People cause bad things, pay the penalty, and the suffering patients die.** **(illness)**
Etme bulursun, inleme (inleye inleye) ölürsün. (Aksoy, 2020, p.275)	**Do not do bad things; you can pay the penalty and die moaning.** **(illness)**
Evden bir ölü çıkacak demişler, herkes hizmetçinin yüzüne bakmış. (Aksoy, 2020, p.276)	**It is told that one person in the house will die; everybody looks at the servant's face.** **(being lower-class)**
Görmemiş görmüş, gülmeden (güle güle) ölmüş. (Aksoy, 2020, p.290)	**A vulgar person become successful; he died of laughing.** **(upstart)**
Hasta ol benim için, öleyim senin için. (Aksoy, 2020, p.301)	**Be sick for me; I would die for you.** **(fidelity)**
İki karılı bitten, iki analı sütten ölür. (Aksoy, 2020, p.320)	**A man with two wives dies due to lice; a baby with two mother dies because of milk.** **(no authority)**
Kuduz ölür ama daladığı da ölür. (Aksoy, 2020, p.374)	**A rapid[10] person dies but the person who was bitten (by the rapid person) dies too. (fury)**
İnsan kendini beğenmezse çatlar. (ölür)	**If a person does not like himself, he cracks. (dies) (not loving oneself)**

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[10]Rapid is explained as 1. [usually before noun] (disapproving) (of feelings or opinions) violent or extreme, 2.*"(of an animal) having rabies, a rabid dog"* in Oxford Learner's Dictionary.(https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english (01.28.2024))

Rakip ölsün de ne yüzden ölürse ölsün. (Aksoy, 2020, p.413)	**I wish the rival dies, no matter what the cause. (rivalry)**
Aç ölmez, gözü kararır; susuz ölmez, benzi sararır. (Aksoy, 2020, p.111)	**The hungry one does not die; he feels dizzy; the thirsty one does not die; his face turns pale. (people do not die but fall sick from hunger and thirst)**
Tamah varken müflis acından ölmez. (Aksoy, 2020, p.439)	**As long as greed exists, the bankrupt will not perish by hunger. (greedy)**
Ananın bastığı yavru (civciv) incinmez (ölmez). (Aksoy, 2020, p.145)	**The cub (chick) stepped on by the mother does not hurt (die). (motherly love)**

Subsequently, many causes of death can be seen in Turkish proverbs. They include illness, headache, moaning, no authority, fury, not liking himself/herself, being lower class, upstart, fidelity, rivalry, hunger and thirst. Being a greedy person is a negative character that keeps people alive. Motherly love is considered important for the chick not to die.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
千金の子は市に死せず *(Senkin no ko wa ichi ni shi sezu)* (Hinata, 2001, p.164)	**The child of a wealthy man (thousand money holder) does not die in the city. (wealthy)** **Meaning:** The rich man's son does not die in the city. Even if a rich child commits an evil deed, he escapes punishment by the power of money, and his corpse is not exposed to the prison in the city.
泳ぎ上手は川で死ぬ *(Oyogi jōzu wa kawa de shinu)* (Kaneko, 1986a, p.274)	**A good swimmer dies in the river. (overconfidence)** **Meaning:** *When you're good at something, you tend to let your guard down or be overconfident about it, so you have to be careful.*
餓えて死ぬは一人、飲んで死ぬは千人 *(Katsuete shinu wa hitori, nonde shinu wa sennin)*	**Dying from starvation is one person; dying from drinking (alcohol) is a thousand people.**
畳の上で死ぬ *(Tatami no ue de shinu)*	**Dying on the tatami mat.** **Meaning:** *It is not an accidental death or a strange death, but a peaceful death in one's own home on the tatami mat.*

In Japanese proverbs, being a wealthy person is seen as a way to escape from punishment and death. Peaceful death and alcohol are seen as other causes, and overconfidence also could be a reason for the loss of life. When compared to Japanese proverbs, Turkish have more causes that both do not have in common.

Death has a Time to Occur

There is a time for each living person decided by God for death. Turkish and Japanese proverbs emphasize that death is unpredictable and has a time to occur. Even if it is desirable to die, it cannot just happen.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Her inleyen ölmez. (Aksoy, 2020, p.306)	**Not every moaner dies.**
Hasta yatan ölmez, eceli yeten ölür. (Aksoy, 2020, p.301)	**The patient who is in a sick bed does not die; the one whose death comes dies.**
Kırk yıl ecel yağsa, eceli gelen ölür.	**If death rains for forty years, the one dies who death comes.**
Kırk yılda bir ölet olur, eceli gelen ölür. (Kırk yıl kıran olmuş, eceli gelen ölmüş.) (Aksoy, 2020, p.358)	**Once in forty years, there is a lethal epidemic, and the person whose time has come dies.**
Vasiyet ölüm getirmez. (Aksoy,2020, p.458)	**A will/probate does not bring death.**

Death is considered as an inevitable end. However, not all kinds of troubles lead to death. In the proverbs above, it is stated that not every sick person will die and this means that she/he has a time to die.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死ぬ死ぬというものに死んだ例（ためし）がない *(Shinu shinu to iu mono ni shinda tameshi ga nai)*	**There is no example of death in who says, 'I am dying.'**
朝に道を聞かば夕べに死すとも可なり *(Ashita ni michi wo kikaba yūbe ni shi sutomo ka nari)* (Hinata, 2001,p. 11)	**If you ask for directions in the morning, you can die in the evening.**
江戸と背中が見て死にたい *(Edo to senaka ga mite shinitai)* (Kaneko, 1986a, p. 203)	**I want to die after seeing Edo and my back.** **Meaning:** One can see one's back in the mirror but cannot see his/her own back directly**.** Edo[11] can also be seen through pictures and stories, but it is unlikely that a poor person from a distant countryside will be able to go to see Edo.
死なば四八月 *(Shinaba shi hachi gatsu)*	**If it could be possible to die; it is the month of April and August.**

In the Japanese proverbs above, it is emphasized that one cannot arrange the death time. If it is possible, the month of April and August would be considered as the best months. Even if one says "I am dying," she/he cannot die so easily.

Both proverbs have similarities. Thus, they accept that death has a time to occur and it cannot be arranged by human beings.

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[11] *Edo* is the old name of Tokyo and the capital city.

Death is not Welcomed

Death is considered a cold thing and is not welcomed by people.

Turkish Proverb:	English Translation
Ölümün yüzü soğuktur.	**The face of death is cold.**
Japanese Proverb	**English Translation**
死中に活を求む *(Shichū ni katsu wo motomu)*	**Seeking life in death.**
死にたいと麦飯食いたいほど大きな嘘はない *(Shinitai to mugimeshi kuitai hodo ooki na uso wa nai.)*	**There is no lie so big that you want to die and eat barley.**

In Turkish proverb, death is expressed as a cold face. In Japanese, even during dying, seeking life is considered essential. As nobody likes to eat barley and do not want to die, there is no meaning to say you want to eat barley and die. Proverbs in both languages emphasizes that death is not welcomed.

Death as a Bad Situation

Death is accepted as an undesirable and dire situation.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölme bayılmaya benzemez. (Aksoy, 2020, p.405)	**Death is not like being unconscious.**
Uyku ölümün (küçük) kardeşidir. (Aksoy, 2020, p.452)	**Sleep is the younger sibling of death.**
Yerinden oynayan yetmiş kazaya uğrar; en küçüğü ölüm	**Displaced people suffer seventy accidents; the least is death.**
Adama dayanma ölür, ağaca dayanma kurur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.113)	**Do not rely on the man; he dies; do not lean on the tree; it dries.**
Anamın (babamın) öleceğini bilseydim kulağı dolu darıya satardım. (Aksoy, 2020, p.145)	**If I had known that my mother (my father) was going to die, I would have sold my ears for a bit of money.**
Hısım hısımın ne öldüğünü ister, ne onduğunu. (Aksoy, 2020:313)	**The relatives want their relatives to die or not die.**
Ölüm ile öç alınmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**Cannot be taken revenge with death.**

In Turkish proverbs, death is considered as a bad thing and cannot be compared to being unconscious and sleep. During sleep, one cannot control things and it is akin to death at this point. The inability to wake up from sleep is equated with death.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
垢で死んだ者はない *(Aka de shinda mono wa nai).*	**No one died from dirt.**
往に跡へ行くとも死に跡へ行くな *(I ni ato e ikutomo shi ni ato e ikuna)* (Yonetsu,1997, p. 57)	**Go after whose ex-wife has left home, but do not go after whose ex-wife died.**

九死に一生を得る *(Kyuushi ni isshou wo eru.)* (Hinata, 2001, p.97)	**Get a lifetime to nine deaths.** **(To have a narrow escape from death).**

In Japanese proverbs, death is considered as a bad situation. Although dirt is normally regarded as a bad thing, no one has died from it. If someone lost his wife, it is a very hard thing to overcome. So, it can be hard for the next who comes as a wife. Thus, both languages share the common view that death is a bad situation.

Death as an Unknown End

Death is considered as an unknown end. There is uncertainty about after-death. No one could come back and tell us what the after-death looks like.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölümden öte(-ye) köy yoktur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.405)	**There is no village ahead to death.**

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死んだ先を見たものはない*(Shinda saki wo mita mono wa nai)*	**No one saw the after-death.**

Both languages have the same meaning of proverbs which relate to the unknown about the after-death.

Grief for Death

Death and grief related proverbs are listed below. One cannot die with the lost one. Feeling grief about a loss is a normal thing in life, but it is also essential to continue living.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölenle (birlikte) ölünmez. (Aksoy, 2020, p.405)	**You cannot die (with) the dead.**
Dün öleni dün gömerler. (TDK)	**The one who died yesterday, they buried yesterday.**

In Turkish proverbs, it is emphasized that grief cannot be lifelong. After losing someone, one cannot change the truth. Hence, it is better for she/he to continue living. After screening Japanese proverbs, it was found that there are no proverbs related to grief.

Death Occurs One Time

It is stated that death is the last point reached in human life, and it is a road of no return. It occurs just once in life.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
İnsan iki kere ölmez.	**People do not die twice.**

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
一度死ねば二度死なぬ *(Ichi do shineba ni do shinanu)*	**If you die once, you will not die twice.**

Both languages have the same meaning of proverbs that death occurs once in a lifetime. One cannot die twice.

Understanding the Value of Things and People after Death

Some proverbs are related to the fact that things or people with no value while living become valuable after death, or their value is understood too late.

Turkish proverbs	English Translation
Ölü ölür ballanır.	**The dead, after death, become honey.**
Ölü ölünce tatlanır.	**The dead, after death, become sweet.**
Ölmüş sığır sütlü olur.	**Dead cattle become milky.**
Ölen inek sütlü olur.	**The dead cow becomes milky.**
Kör ölür badem gözlü olur, kel ölür sırma saçlı olur. (Aksoy, 2020,p.355)	**The blind dead become almond eyes; the bald dead become glazed hair.**

In Turkish proverbs, the value of things can be understood in a positive way after death.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死んだ子は賢い *(Shinda ko wa kashikoi)* (Kaneko, 1986b, p.182)	**The dead child is bright.**
死んだ子には悪い子はない *(Shinda ko ni wa warui ko wa nai)*	**There is no bad child in a dead child.**
死んだら褒められる *(Shindara homerareru) (*Kaneko, 1986b, p.185)	**When you die, you will be praised.**

In the Japanese proverbs above, it is stated that the dead child is bright. Although she/he has bad traits while alive, she/he is not considered bad after death. It is also mentioned that people are praised when they die. Both languages have the same point of view about understanding the value of things and people after death in a positive way.

Death and Animal

Proverbs do not always deal with the subject of human being. There are also proverbs about animals and death. The animals seen in proverbs in both languages have variety.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Atın ölümü arpadan olsun. (Aksoy, 2020, p.160)	**Let the death of the horse be from barley.**
At ölür, itlere bayram olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.161)	**When the horse dies, the dogs enjoy it.**
Eceli (ölümü) gelen (yaklaşan) it cami (mescit) duvarına (avlusuna) siyer (işer). (Aksoy, 2020, p.254)	**The dog, whose death is approaching, pees on the wall of the mosque.**
At ölür meydan (nalı) kalır, yiğit ölür şanı (namı) kalır. (Aksoy, 2020:161)	**When the horse dies, the horseshoe remains; when the valiant dies, his glory remains.**
Gem almayan atın ölümü yakındır. (Aksoy, 2020, p.284)	**Death is close to the horse that does not take the bit.**
Horoz ölür, gözü çöplükte kalır. (Aksoy, 2020, p.314)	**When the rooster dies, his eye looks to the garbage.**
Ölüm bir kara devedir ki herkesin kapısına çöker. (TDK)	**Death is a black camel that descends on everyone's doorstep.**
Eşeğin ölümü köpeğe düğündür. (Aksoy, 2020, p.271)	**The death of the donkey is a wedding to the dog.**
Hıyar akçesiyle alınan eşeğin ölümü sudan olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.313)	**The death of the donkey taken with the little money dies from trivial things.**
Karpuz kabuğuyla büyüyen (beslenen) eşeğin ölümü sudan olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.345)	**The donkey that grows (feeds) on watermelon peel dies from trivial things.**
Ölmüş koyun (eşek) kurttan korkmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p.405)	**The dead sheep (donkey) is not afraid of the wolf.**
Her zaman eşek ölmez, on köfte on paraya olmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p.312)	**Not always the donkey dies, ten kofta (meatballs)[12] do not cost ten coins.**
Keçi geberse de kuyruğunu indirmez. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 351)	**Even if the goat dies, it does not lower its tail.**
İti (köpeği) öldürene sürütürler. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 331)	**They drive the dog to the one who kills it.**

Animals seen in Turkish proverbs are horses (4 times), dogs (3 times), rooster (1 time), camel (1 time), goat (1 time), donkeys (5 times), sheep (1 time), and wolf (1 time). The animals are considered because; horses are royal animal, wolfs are powerful, dogs are not valuable, and goat are very stubborn.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死馬の骨を買う (*Shiba no hone wo kau*) (Hinata, 2001, p. 140)	**Buy the death horse's bones.** **Meaning:** A parable of giving preferential treatment to even boring people to attract excellent human resources

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[12]"Kofta" is a Turkish traditional dish which is made from lamb or beef meatballs. It is defined in Oxford Learner's Dictionary as "*a Middle Eastern or South Asian dish of meat, fish or cheese mixed with spices and shaped into balls; one of these balls*" (https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com (01.28.2024)).

死に馬に鍼刺す *(Shiniuma ni hari wo sasu)* (Hinata, 2001, p. 140)	**Acupuncture on a dying horse.** **Meaning:** It is useless to do something in a state where it can no longer be expected to be effective.
死馬に蹴られる *(Shiniuma ni kerareru)*	**Kicked by a dead horse.** **Meaning:** A parable of receiving great pain from an opponent who is in a state where recovery cannot be expected.
生きている犬は死んだライオンに勝る *(Ikiteiru inu wa shinda raion ni masaru)*	**A living dog beats the dead lion.**
虎は死して皮を留める人は死して名を残す *(Tora wa shi shite kawa wo todomeru hito wa shi shite na wo nokosu) (Hinata, 2001, p. 216)*	**The tiger dies; the skin is fastened, and the man dies and leaves a name.**
狡兎死して走狗烹らる *(Kōtō shi shite souku niraru)* (Hinata, 2001, p. 116)	**Because a great rabbit is caught, the hound becomes useless and is boiled in a pot.**

The animals seen in Japanese proverbs are horses (3 times), dog (1 time), lion (1 time), tiger (1 time), and rabbit (1 time). Lion is considered to be a powerful animal but the living unvaluable dog beats the dead lion. Common animals are also seen in proverbs such as horses and dog.

After Death, There is no Meaning
Death is considered the end of life. Things that are meaningful while alive lose their meaning after death.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölü aşı neylesin, türbe taşı neylesin. (Aksoy, 2020:405)	**What can a dead person do with food? What can a tomb do with a stone?**

In this Turkish proverb, it is emphasized that after someone dies, she/he does not need food and the tomb do not need a stone. It is better to think all things as important while living.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死んだ子の年を数える (Hinata, 2001, p. 153)	**Counting the years of a dead child.**
死児の齢を数える *(Shiji no yowai wo kazoeru)* (Yonetsu,1997, p. 204)	**Counting the age of the dead child.**
死んで花実が咲くものか *(Shinde hanami ga saku mono ka)* (Hinata, 2001, p. 153)	**Does the dried tree bloom?**

死人に口なし *(Shinin ni kuchi nashi)* (Hinata, 2001, p. 140)	**No mouth to the dead.** **Meaning:** Even if the dead are accused of being innocent, they cannot be given any explanation.
生きての恨み死しての嘆き *(Ikite no urami shi shite no nageki)*	**Resentment for the living and mourning for the dying.**

In these Japanese proverbs, it is stated that there is no reason to count the years of a dead child. Based on the same point of view, dried tree does not bloom. It is too late to do something after death since it has no meaning. Both languages have similar point of view of doing something that have no meaning.

Comparing the Wrong Things with Death
Death is an undesirable thing in our lives. For this reason, it shows us how to compare unpleasant and bad events in our lives with death.

Turkish Proverbs	**English Translation**
Aç gezmekten tok ölmek yeğdir. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 108*)*	**It is better to die full than to walk hungry.**
Ağlama ölü için, ağla deli (diri) için. (Aksoy, 2020, p.120)	**Do not cry for the dead, cry for the mad (living).**
Ölüsü olan bir gün ağlar, delisi olan her gün ağlar. (TDK)	**The one who is a relative of the dead cries one day, and the one who is a relative of the mad cries every day.**
Borcun iyisi vermek, derdin iyisi ölmek. (TDK)	**The best of debt is to give, the best of your problem is to die.**
Ölüm ölüm de, hırlamaya ne borcum var? (TDK)	**Death is death but what do I owe to suffer?**
Ölümü gören hastalığa razı olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**The person who sees death consents to illness.**
Ölüme giden gelmiş, paraya giden gelmemiş. (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**The one who went to death came, the one who went to the money did not come.**
In Turkish proverbs, it is preferable to die if you have problems. One can be preferring illness to death.	
Japanese Proverbs	**English Translation**
死せる孔明、生ける仲達を走らす *(Shiseru koumei ikeru chuutatsu wo hashirasu)* (Hinata, 2001, p.137)	**Dead *Koumei*, make run the living companions.**
親が死んでも食休み *(Oya ga shindemo jiki yasumi)*	**Even if parents die, have a lunch break.**
死別れより生別れ *(Shiwakare yori iki wakare)*	**Farewell to living people rather than farewell to the dead.**
運を待つは死を待つに等し *(Un wo matsu wa shi wo matsu ni hitoshi)*	**Waiting for luck is like waiting for death.**
死んでの長者より生きての貧乏 *(Shinde no chousha yori ikite no binbō)*	**Poor living is better than a dead rich person.**

人の子の死んだより我が子の転けた *(Hito no ko no shinda yori, waga ko no koketa)*	**It is worse felling down of my son than dead children of others.**
焼けたあとは立つが死んだあとは立たぬ *(Yaketa ato wa tatsu ga shinda ato wa tatanu.)*	**One can stand after burning but cannot stand after death.**

In Japanese proverbs, it is emphasized that living is important. Even if parents die, do not stop eating the lunch. One can stand after small bad situations but cannot stand after death.

Death Relates to Funerals and Religious Rituals

Turkish proverbs relate to Islam. In Islam, when a person dies, she/he is washed and shrouded and buried as soon as possible. It is considered not good to make the dead people wait, "If you wash too much the corpse, she/he will deform." This proverb means being washed as a funeral ritual. "The one who died yesterday, they buried yesterday." This proverb means the corpse is being buried the same day. Yesterday is considered as past, so it should be forgotten, and we should not be upset about dead people. "Everyone cries for their own dead." This proverb means the relatives or families of the dead cry for their loss.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölüyü çok yursan sıçağan olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.407)	**If you wash the corpse too much, he will deform.**
Ölüyü örtekorlar (örtekomuşlar), deliğe dürtekorlar (dürtekomuşlar). (Aksoy, 2020, p.407)	**They covered the funeral, put him in the grave, and left.**
Dün öleni dün gömerler.	**The one who died yesterday, they buried yesterday.**
Hayıf ölene olur. (Aksoy, 2020, p.302)	**The sorrow is to the dead person.**
Herkes kendi ölüsü için ağlar. (Aksoy, 2020, p.309)	**Everyone cries for their own dead.**
Deli deliden hoşlanır, imam ölüden. (TDK)	**The madman likes the madman; the *Imam*[13] likes the dead.**
İmam evinden aş, ölü gözünden yaş çıkmaz. (Aksoy, 2020, p.321)	**From the house of the *Imam,* there will be no food; there will be no tears in the eyes of the dead.**

In Turkish proverbs, **"Imam"** is a term of in Islam. It is defined as *a religious man who leads the prayers in a mosque*. So, Imam plays a significant role at the funeral and religious rituals.

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[13]The *imam* is defined in The Oxford Learner's Dictionaries as *"(in Islam) a religious man who leads the prayers in a mosque)*. A person likes what is similar or what he can benefit from.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
病め医者死ね坊主 *(Yame isha shine bōzu)* (Kaneko, 1986c, p.276)	**If you are sick go to the doctor; If you die, go to the Monk.**
阿闍梨死して事欠けず *(Ajari shishite koto kakezu)*	**Even a great Monk dies, and work goes on.**

In Japanese proverbs, it is stated that doctor who cures people's illnesses and the Monks are supposed to save people from suffering. However, the doctor wishes for people to get sick, and the Monks wish for the death of people. This is a parable that shows that everyone wants their business to prosper. It can be seen in the Buddhist words such as 坊主 (*bōzu)* and 阿闍梨 *(ajari).* 坊主 (*bōzu)*[14] means *Monk, Buddhist priest,* and 阿闍梨 *(ajari) means (Acharya), high Monk (esp. one of correct conduct who acts as a role model for his pupils), high priest.*

Contradicting Proverbs

Proverbs are stereotyped expressions obtained as a result of experience. There are proverbs written on various subjects. These proverbs do not always reflect the same point of view. In some proverbs, the subject mentioned is treated as opposites.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölümle misafir ansızın gelir.	**Death and guests come suddenly.**
Ölüm bağıra bağıra gelmez.	**Death does not come screaming.**
Her inleyen ölmez. (Aksoy, 2020, p.306)	**Not every moaner dies.**
Hasta yatan ölmez, eceli yeten ölür. (Aksoy, 2020, p.301)	**The patient who is in a sick bed does not die; the one whose death comes dies.**
Kırk yıl ecel yağsa, eceli gelen ölür.	**If death rains for forty years, the one dies whose death comes.**

The proverbs above contradict each other. It is stated that death and guests come suddenly, while, in other proverbs, there might be occasions that death has a definite time to occur.

Japanese Proverbs	English Translation
死ぬ死ぬというものに死んだ例(ためし)がない *(Shinu shinu to iu mono ni shinda tameshi ga nai)*	**There is no example of death in he who says, 'I am dying.'**
病上手に死下手 *(Yamai jouzu ni shinibeta)* (Kaneko, 1986, p. 269)	**Get sick easily; die hard.**

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[14] https://ejje.weblio.jp (01.30.2024)

| 生は難く死は易し (Hinata, 2001, p. 161) | **Life is hard; death is easy.** |

It is stated in Japanese proverbs that it is easy to get sick but not easy to die. People who are frequently infected with disease might live a long life. So, the proverbs contradict each other in both languages.

Death is a Relief and Escape
Death means a relief and escape for the people who lived a shameful life.

Turkish Proverbs	English Translation
Ölüm yüz aklığı(-dır). (Aksoy, 2020, p. 406)	**Death is a glory.**
Can çekişmektense ölmek yeğdir. (TDK)	**It is better to die than to suffer badly.**
Japanese Proverbs	**English Translation**
死すべき時に死せざれば死にまさるあり *(Shisubeki toki ni shisezareba shi ni masaru haji ari)*	**If you have to die at mortal time, you are better than death.**

In the proverbs above, people are likely to prefer dying to suffering badly. One can consider death as a glory for the bad things she/he has done in life. Both languages considered death as a relief and escape.

Conclusion
Due to the analysis of the perception of death in Turkish and Japanese proverbs, it has been revealed that there is diversity in the perception of death. Firstly, after screening the key word of death in both languages, a total of 127 proverbs (80 Turkish proverbs and 47 Japanese proverbs) were examined. It emphasizes that Turkish proverbs are more than Japanese in number. This study aims to answer the questions below:
-   *How is the concept of death grouped in proverbs?*

They are grouped into death has causes, death as an unknown end, death has time to occur, grief for death, death is not welcomed, death occurs one time, death as a bad situation, understanding the value of things and people after death, death and animal, after death there is no meaning, comparing the wrong things with death, death relates to funerals and religious rituals, death is a relief and escape, and contradicting proverbs.
-   How is the concept of death handled in Turkish/Japanese proverbs?
-   What are the similarities and differences in both languages relate to death?

In the proverbs in both languages, death is accepted as an inevitable end. It is believed that everyone will die one day. Although it is hard to live in the world, dying is difficult.

Death has an excuse, and something will be a reason for it. In Turkish proverbs, many causes of death can be seen when compared to Japanese. They include illness, headache, moaning, no authority, fury, not liking himself/herself, being lower class, upstart, fidelity, rivalry, hunger and thirst. Being a greedy person as a negative character, but it keeps people alive. In Japanese proverbs, being a wealthy person is seen as a way to escape from punishment and death. Peaceful death and alcohol are seen as other causes, and overconfidence also could be a reason for death. In comparison to Japanese proverbs, Turkish proverbs have more causes of death that both do not have in common.

Death has a time to occur; one cannot die if one wants to die. Death is the last journey of life with no return and occurs once only. Understanding the value of things and people after death is seen in both Turkish and Japanese proverbs. After death, there is no meaning; it is too late.

The groups mentioned above are common in both languages. However, proverbs relate to grief for deaths are found in Turkish but there is no grief that relates to proverbs in Japanese.

It is seen that there are proverbs that are related to funerals and religious rituals. Turkish proverbs relate to Islam, and Japanese proverbs include motifs related to Buddhism. In Japanese proverbs, the word of the Monk and Ajari can be seen. In Islam, the word of the "Imam" can be seen. Both Turkish and Japanese people do not welcome death, and they are afraid of dying. Death is seen as a negative situation and is compared with other negative things in life. However, death is sometimes seen as a relief and a way of escape from being in a worse situation and is acceptable.

Death is considered as an unknown ending in both languages. In Islam, there is an afterlife. So, in the Turkish proverbs, there are uncertainties about the afterlife. In the Japanese proverbs (relate to Buddhism), there is also uncertainty about this topic although they have different religions.

Proverbs include not only human beings but also animals. In Turkish proverbs, death-related animals are horses, donkeys, rooster, goat, camel, cats, dogs, wolf, and sheep. In Japanese, proverbs related to death and animals are horses, tigers, dog, lion, and rabbit.
In addition, there are contradictory proverbs related to death in both languages. In some proverbs, the subject mentioned is treated as opposites in another proverb.

In conclusion, Turkish and Japanese people have different cultural backgrounds, but they have similar expressions and share similar cultural values related to death.

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Social Context of Civil Process for Sustainable Development

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Abstract
This paper focuses on the existing mechanisms for the participation of vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities and children, in civil disputes. As modern democratic society develops the concept of a social state, ensuring equal conditions for the participation of vulnerable persons in civil turnover is essential. Hence, the aim of the study is to identify existing legislative gaps and challenges that prevent the participation of vulnerable persons in civil disputes. Humanity has agreed on a sustainable development plan, in which social sustainability is set as one of the main goals. However, modern civil procedure law is mainly based on the codification of the 19th century, which in turn originates from Roman law. Since then, public relations have changed and modern technologies are constantly developing. The concept of a digital judge, smart contracts, and a blockchain system has already emerged. Therefore, the regulations of civil proceeding do not respond to modern challenges, and it is necessary to update civil procedure legislation in order to provide an equal platform for the participation of vulnerable persons in civil disputes. The purpose of the article is to review the rules of civil procedure law in terms of a social context based on the international approaches, practices, and research. Through a mixed-quantitative, qualitative, and general research methods, as well as comparative analysis, specific recommendations are introduced that will bring civil dispute resolution closer to sustainable development plans and ensure the equal participation of vulnerable persons in civil dispute.

Keywords: Civil process, sustainable development, vulnerable person, children

Introduction

Civil relations are constantly changing, although their governing rules remain largely the same. The civil procedure legal framework was created after the end of feudalism and during the formation of a new economic formation in society. It is widely acknowledged that civil law, created by Napoleon, is focused on the bourgeoisie, while German civil law is tailored towards businessmen. Accordingly, the primary recipients of civil law are wealthy individuals, as civil codes predominantly ensure guarantees of their economic freedom (Zweigert & Koetz, 2000). In ancient Rome, people could not imagine communication via the internet, whereas today there is active discussion about granting legal subjectivity to artificial intelligence (Eidenmüller & Wagner, 2021). The concept of a legal and social state has already been developed, and its main leitmotif being the equal protection of all members of society. In this regard, attention is increasing towards the rights of vulnerable persons and their implementation mechanisms.

It should be noted that the tendency to consider all members of society in civil turnover is observed not only in law but also in economic science. The doctrine of "laissez-faire" is no longer popular, as it implies a policy of minimal government interference in the economic affairs. Instead, the theory of pluralism is gradually gaining traction, implying the coexistence of diverse qualities and interests. According to economists, "Adam Smith's principle of the invisible hand" can be successfully replaced by John Forbes Nash´s equilibrium theory, suggesting that the best strategy for society involves considering not only personal interests but also the interests of others (Kharitonashvili, 2021). Since law and economics influence each other, the mentioned economic doctrine demands a corresponding legal approach considering the interests of all members of the society.

The social and economic formation has a decisive impact on the form of civil procedure. Capitalist - mercantile society is built on obvious inequality and favors the financially privileged. However, it is undeniable that pure capitalism is no longer relevant. In this situation, the existence of mechanisms to protect public interest in civil proceedings is crucial.

Civil process, as a form of implementing civil justice, has its primary purpose: the court, delegated state power from the people, and civil process should be for the people and not for the "doctrine" (in Europe) or the "grammar of law" (common law) (Holland, 1968). Broadly speaking, decisions about matters of public interest affect not only the psychology of the individual, but also the entire society. Often this influence can be hidden, (Clermont, 2016) as any procedural detail or tool that may seem insignificant at first glance can

fundamentally alter the outcome of the dispute itself. With regard to the Code of Civil Procedure, there is a historical dogma that civil procedure is an exclusive prerogative of state jurisdictions. However, in recent years, multiple legal systems have shown an increased tendency to "privatize" civil proceedings (Fabbi, 2013). Procedural law does not change and is the same for all types of disputes (Guarnieri, Pederzoli & Thomas, 2002/1), as it is public law and contains rules about unwaivable procedural rights. That is why the Code of Civil Procedure provides mechanisms that cannot be negotiated, as they aim to protect weaker parties. However, for example, the fragmented reception that took place in Georgia, allowed for procedural agreements on a number of unwaivable procedural rights, thereby highlighting the issue of protecting vulnerable subjects.

Society has expressed interest in the rights of vulnerable persons, including the disabled and children in the 20th century, as the idea of social sustainability matured. In the technological era, UN established 17 goals and 169 tasks of sustainable development (UN, 2015). Amongst these goals is social equality achieved by creating equal opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. These goals will become mere aspirations unless each country's legislation creates the necessary mechanisms to implement them, including in civil proceedings. If the State is focused on sustainable development, it cannot be achieved without the creation of appropriate legislation. One of the goals of sustainable development is to focus on the welfare of society. A prosperous society ensures that each of its members is equally protected and has equal opportunities to assert their rights. Currently, countries are striving to become social states. Therefore, if society seeks to create social states, it must also make the civil process social. Hence, it is especially important to create a platform for vulnerable persons to participate in civil disputes, as civil procedure law is an instrument for implementing civil rights.

Based on the above, this paper discusses the problems of the social context of civil disputes, aiming for the equal participation of vulnerable persons in civil relations and towards achieving social sustainability.

1. Capacity Reform in Georgia

In Georgia in the 11th century, during the reign of David The Builder (nephew of Mariam Bagration Doukas, Queen of Byzantium), great attention was paid to the protection of vulnerable disabled people. The king even opened special treatment houses for them (Javakhishvili, 1908). It is also worth noting that the high development of procedural culture in Georgia has historically been confirmed. From the monument of the 11th century "Deed of Opiz", the following stages of the process can be seen: "Before the trial took place, the king received the disputing parties, listened to them, and appointed the trial of the case, for which he summoned the proper persons" (Chkonia, 2014). The

independent culture of Georgian law was halted by the Russian occupation. After joining the Soviet Union, Soviet legislation became widespread in Georgia. There was no private property, and the civil process was uniquely inquisitorial. Here, the court was searching objective truth. After the collapse of Soviet Union, Georgia started creating its own legislation, which is mainly on the basis of reception. The observation proved that legal institutions taken from different cultures without adaptation to Georgian culture were ineffective.

On December 26, 2013, the parliament of Georgia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by a declaration on Article 12. Despite the declaration on equal rights of legal personality, the parliament of Georgia undertook a fundamental reform of the institution of capability based on the N2/4/532,533/08.10.2015 decision of the constitutional court of Georgia. The norms about capacity in civil code and other laws were acknowledged as unconstitutional. The parliament of Georgia had six months to determine the complex modification of capability and bring the legislation into compliance with the court decision. As a result, the innovative regulation of capacity came into force on April 1, 2015.

In the old model, the Civil Code of Georgia restricted individuals due to "spiritual illness" limiting their freedom to obtain the civil rights and obligations by their own free will. An incapable person was not entitled to engage in relation with third parties; they were unable to make deals because their will was invalid. On their behalf, the guardian provided transactions. Also, the marriage of an incapable person was prohibited without considering their individual mental abilities.

The new social capacity model fundamentally replaced the old approach. According to the new model, all persons are capable. Capacity is a right, which may be restricted by law only in exceptional cases. In all other cases, persons with psychosocial needs may be provided with a supporter, rather than a substitute for their rights. According to the support model, individuals have the ability to assert their rights, but they may need assistance at some point. Participation in civil turnover of persons with psychosocial needs is ensured based on a court decision. A supporter is appointed by the court and has only the rights directly indicated by the court decision.

Consequently, there are three main authorities involved in obtaining the status of support receiver and the implementation of capacity system: 1. A multidisciplinary group of the bureau of expertise which studies the possibilities of a person with psychosocial needs. The main function of the multidisciplinary group is the individual assessment of persons. 2. The judiciary system which makes a final decision and relies on the reports of the multidisciplinary group. 3. The agency of the Ministry of Health which is responsible for the execution and monitoring of the process. During this

process, the involvement in civil proceedings of persons with psychosocial needs is also an important factor that the old so-called "medicine model" completely excluded.

Furthermore, the status of a special applicant was also established. According to Article 5.2 of the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia, parties and participants with disabilities are entitled to the rights and opportunities granted under the Georgian Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the purpose of participating on an equal basis with others in the administration of justice, including the option of participating as a special plaintiff.

The conception of special plaintiff is defined by the Georgian Law "On the rights of persons with disabilities". It highlights that organizations with the status of special plaintiffs are authorized to conduct administrative and civil disputes, as well as to apply to the relevant agencies. Thus, this is especially if the case concerns the elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities and/or is essential in this area for the development of legal practice. According to the law, a special plaintiff protects disabled persons without their legal representation, but in such a case, a power of attorney for representation is required. However, the issue is problematic since the Power of Attorney should be certified by a notary who checks the will of PWD. The case remains unresolved for such individuals who have psychosocial needs, cannot express their will, and do not have supporters. The concept of special plaintiff created a new status of civil dispute participant, the purpose of which is to protect the rights of weak persons. While the participation of the prosecutor in the civil process in Georgia has been abolished, in French and Italian law, the prosecutor is considered a successful defender of the public interest during specific proceedings. The specified burden has been transferred to the judge, although in a rather small amount. However, in some cases, due to the adversarial principle, it is insufficient and necessary to involve other bodies which can defend the public interest.

2.   Children's Procedural Rights in Georgia

The need to protect children´s interests in civil proceedings arose in connection with civil disputes involving them. The law provides mandatory participation of guardianship authorities in disputes related to children, although the civil process does not recognize a procedural status corresponding to their participation. This problem was solved by the courts with a recommendation that determined the participation of these bodies in the proceedings as third parties without an independent claim. However, the interest of such third parties and the interest of these authorities are completely different. Accordingly, the issue of protecting children and vulnerable persons´ interests remains relevant.

In the Post-Soviet period, along with the formation of a market economy and private property, the concept of adversarial civil proceedings became a symbol of freedom. However, the legislator gave priority to the balanced use of the two basic procedural principles: the adversarial principle and the inquisitorial principle (Liluashvili, Liluashvili & Khrustali, 2014). This balance is especially evident towards the rules regulating family disputes due to their specificity. Article 354 of the civil procedure code of Georgia allows the court to determine the circumstances of the case at the initiative of the court only for the consideration of family cases. This solution has proven particularly far-sighted today because the court is using this article by analogy in family disputes related to children. However, the use of this principle in non-family disputes where children are involved is not established.

Based on the Convention on the Rights of Children, the Code of Child's Rights was adopted in 2019. Recently, the state has defined a framework for intervention in relation to child´s rights. According to Article 81 of the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia, a minor has the right to apply to the court for the protection of his/her rights and legally protected interests. For the claim filed by the child, a simplified form of claim was developed. Article 51 of the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia required specialization of persons involved in the process related to the protection of the rights of minors. In a dispute related to the protection of minors, a judge, a lawyer, a social worker, and/or another appropriate invited expert must be specialized in the methodology of the relationship with minors and other related matters.

In addition, it was determined that when making a decision, the competent authority must take into account a high standard of justification which will necessarily indicate the best interests of the child. According to Article 251[1] of the Civil Procedural Code of Georgia when making and substantiating the judgment with regard to a case related to the minors' rights, the court shall give priority to the best interests of a minor. In order for the best interests of a minor to be given priority, the court judgment must be substantiated according to the appropriate basic criteria defined by Article 81(3) of the Code of Children's Rights.

Subsequently, this is also somewhat paradoxical because in the absence of a public interest defender, the legislation directly obliges the judge to give preference to one side based on age. Instead of solving the problem, this solution exacerbates it, as it puts one side in an advantageous position instead of ensuring equality of parties.

It is noteworthy that Articles 183 and 186 of the Civil Code require that immovable property and movable property worth more than 1,000 GEL, belonging to a child, can be disposed by the parent only in accordance with the best interests of the child. Hence, this is with permission of the court. The need for mandatory judicial control is prompted by regrettable examples in

judicial practice of parents violating children´s property rights. In addition, this approach creates an imbalance in legal institutions and civil turnover, since judicial control over the transaction and its prior approval are part of preventive justice. Thus, this is usually carried out by notaries in continental law countries.

The mentioned regulation establishes a new type of civil proceedings, but the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia still does not contain any rules regarding these disputes. The code does not specify the form of the application that should be submitted to the court, the form of proceedings, the form of the court's consent, the decision enforcement mechanisms, or the method of monitoring. Most importantly, the procedural legislation does not determine which principle must be used - inquisitorial or adversarial. Due to the high public interest and the obligations imposed by international conventions, it is clear that the inquisitorial principle should be applied in relation to these disputes.

Additionally, there is a different approach towards parents and guardians. Such transactions by guardians are subject to administrative control - the consent of the guardianship agency is required - instead of the consent of the court for the parent. This creates indirect discrimination of children with parents and children under care. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate the above-mentioned issues with the norms of the Civil Procedure Code.

3. Participation of Vulnerable Persons in Civil Disputes as a Necessary Condition for Social Sustainability

The term "vulnerable person" does not only refer to individuals with disabilities because vulnerability is often closely related to socioeconomic status, including factors such as race, gender, age, etc. (Wisner et al., 2003). "Quality of life" is a subjective characteristic that is difficult to precisely define. The constitutional concept of the social state is becoming more and more important. Accordingly, in this context, the social function of the civil process becomes more relevant. According to the author of the Austrian Civil Procedure Code of 1895, Franz Klein (Oberhammer & Domej, 2005) civil proceedings should be based on fundamental truth, rather than the truth presented by the parties. Franz Klein's fundamental idea was directed against the civilian process as "war without red lines" (Klein & Pro Futuro, 1891). Here, the judge is a passive observer of the litigants who manipulate reality in favor of their own goals (Van Rhee & Uzelac, 2012). It is worth noting that after 100 years, disputes involving the participation of vulnerable persons confirm the correctness of this opinion. The tendency of such an approach is slowly emerging in modern European countries. For example, according to the opinion of procedural civilist of continental law, Marcel Storme, "a competitive process without effective control is like promoting the

competition of different cultures, which is generated in an environment where the litigation process is perceived as a battlefield without rules." (Storme, 2005)

However, it should be noted that this control is not similar to that of the Soviet definition of "objective truth". It should be used strictly in relation to the principle of disposition, so that the court does not exceed the autonomous will of the parties. In this regard, the most balanced approach is expressed in the ALI/UNIDROIT principles, which advocate for the principle of equality of parties based on providing equal status to participants and interventionist judicial discretion (ALI/UNIDROIT, 2005).

The latest European approach, which has not yet been reflected in national legislations, creates a wider mechanism for the participation of vulnerable persons in the civil process through the principle of proportionality emphasized by ELI/UNIDROIT. According to rule 5, (1) The court must ensure that the dispute resolution process is proportionate. (2) In determining whether a process is proportionate, the court must take into account the nature, importance, and complexity of the particular case and of the need to give effect to its general management duty in all proceedings with due regard for the proper administration of justice (ELI/UNIDROIT, 2021).

For the social sustainability of modern social relations, there is a need for a procedural concept focused on the interests of all members of the society, ensuring a common goal of law and justice in general - justice and equality. Therefore, it is advisable to introduce civil procedures with social content. The social principle involves creating equal opportunities for vulnerable persons to protect their rights under equal conditions with others, which does not necessarily mean the victory of the strong. Thus, the introduction and development of this concept may serve as the starting point for justice.

It should be noted that social sustainability is considered as one of the areas of sustainable development. It is defined as follows: "Social sustainability derives from actions in the main thematic areas, which include the social sphere of individuals and societies, the development of capabilities and skills." In this sense, social sustainability integrates traditional social policy areas and principles such as equity and participation in health-related issues, needs, social capital, economy, environment and concepts of happiness, well-being, and the quality of the life (OISD).

To make civil dispute resolutions more social, time frames must be set for civil disputes involving vulnerable individuals. There should be no exceptions when discussing vulnerable cases in court. It is advisable to resolve these cases promptly, within the one-month timeframe established in paragraph 2 of Article 59 of the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia. Another important step towards accessibility would be the removal of the obligation to pay state fees for the aforementioned disputes. In addition, an important issue

is the distribution of free legal aid to ongoing civil disputes involving vulnerable persons.

Due to the social role of the civil process, the introduction of the amicus curiae brief in civil proceedings would be a step forward. It should be noted that the existence of an amicus curiae brief in civil proceedings is recommended by the 13th principle of the ALI/UNIDROIT model "Principles of International Civil Procedure". Although the Code of Civil Procedure of Georgia does not provide for the amicus curiae brief, it is already used by the Supreme Court in Georgian judicial practice. Hence, this is considered as a positive precedent. The introduction of amicus curiae brief in civil proceedings would be appropriate as it would lead to the certainty regarding the procedural status and legal basis of the participants. Also, it would emphasize the importance of social interest in civil proceedings. Most notably, it would be effective to submit the opinion of an "amicus" to the court, especially in disputes related to the rights of persons with disabilities.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to discuss the role of civil dispute resolution procedures in achieving social sustainable development goals. As the study showed, there are factors in civil procedure approaches that impede these goals. Accordingly, the following recommendations were made for the legislative framework to ensure the equal participation of vulnerable persons in civil proceedings in terms of social sustainability:

1. Reduce the state fee in civil disputes.
2. Decrease the time set for the consideration of the case.
3. Implement the amicus curiae brief in civil disputes to ensure the representation of societal interests before the court.
4. Extend free legal assistance.

Regarding children's participation in civil disputes, clear procedural guarantees of children's participation in civil disputes should be established. This clearly determines the body that defends the public interest in the process of exercising children's rights. In order to solve the general problem of court overcrowding, control over children's property transactions should be transferred to a notary, who is considered as a gatekeeper.

The civil process should be perceived from a social point of view and develop a social approach to disputes with societal importance or those related to vulnerable persons. This may provide a forecast for the development of the social civil process in the future. This will be beneficial for both society in general and its individual members, ultimately contributing to the achievement of social sustainable development goals.

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