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Welcome to the First International Scientific Conference of the University "UKSHIN HOTI" PRIZREN on 09-10 DECEMBER 2022.

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TEACHING MATHEMATICAL OPERATIONS WITH NUMBERS DIGIT-NINES

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Abstract.

Accuracy, speed, ease, and test of accuracy are very important to perform mathematical operations with natural or real numbers. These mathematical operations take on special importance in the first years of education, in primary education, and especially with students with learning difficulties in mathematics.

It is well known that mathematics was born to respond to human needs. In this sense, mathematics in primary education helps students to perform mathematical operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division as quickly, accurately, and safely. The question arises: Can we facilitate even more in helping students to facilitate the performance of mathematical operations? A well-known saying goes "Knowledge has no end". In this study, we will focus on some knowledge, operations, and techniques that make it easy to perform them and self-check the accuracy of the mathematical operations of addition and subtraction. At the center of the study are the number of digits-nine.

Keywords: Addition, Difficulties in Mathematics, Mathematical Operations, Number of Digits-Nine, Subtraction, Techniques.

1. Introduction

This study deals with some techniques that help students, especially students with learning difficulties in mathematics to perform addition and subtraction operations of natural and even rational numbers with nine-digit numbers. Simultaneously with these techniques, we check the authenticity of the found result. When you hear the term number of digits-nine, the question immediately arises: What do we mean by the concept of a number of digits-nine?

It is important to clarify the concept of the number of digits-nine from the beginning. Definition: A number of digits-nine is number whose all digits are only digits 9.

Such numbers are 9; 99; 999; 9999, 99…9, etc.

In summary, in short, the nine-digit number is presented in the form an = 10n - 1, where n is a natural number, n N. Anyone can prove the truth of the representation!

Proof.

For n = 1 we have a1 = 101 - 1 = 10-1 = 9. For n = 2 we have a2 = 102 - 1 = 100-1 = 99. For n = 3 we have

a3 = 103 - 1 = 1000-1 = 999, etc.

Let's show another way of representing number of digits-nine. Number of digits-nine such as: 9; 9; 999; 9999;…; 99… 9 are presented differently respectively 9 · 1; 9 · 11; 9 · 111; 9 · 1111;…; 9 · 11… 1.
9 times as many as 9.
I believe it is clear that the concept of number of digits-nine is different from naming nine-digit numbers.
It is known that nine-digit numbers are the numbers: 234 100 546; 332 405 789; 100 000 000.
According to the definitions, the number 999 999 999 is a nine-digit number and at the same time a number of digits-nine.
The number 99 is a two-digit number nine, the number 999 is a three-digit number nine, and so on. The number 9 is a nine-digit.
In the same way, the definition also has number of digits-one: 1; 11; 111; 1111; etc., number of digits-two: 2; 22; 222; etc., and so on other digits. The object of the paper is not any digit numbers but only numbers of digits-nine.
Below we will focus on numbers of digits-nine such as 9; 99; 999; 9999, etc.
We will study some mathematical operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of any number by nine-digit numbers. Let us first look at mathematical operations with natural numbers and then with the sign and rational numbers in general.

Research question:

Can we discover any regularities to perform correctly, quickly, easily the basic mathematical operations with number of digits-nine?

Purpose:

Apply this rule to perform and control mathematical operations with number of digits-nine.

Theoretical basis:

In a previous paper, I emphasized that: "The lack of students' skills is related to the inability to solve problems with previous knowledge. They are often unclear about how to connect what they are currently reading with what they know so far". Mathematics is a basic subject of the school curriculum. "Math is deeply embedded in almost every aspect of daily life - from managing your personal finances, making consumer purchases, and sharpening your computational skills, to learning to apply mathematical concepts" (Posamentier, S. A, Spreitzer Ch. 2018. 21). It is the duty of the teacher to use teaching techniques for facilitating the teaching of mathematical concepts to facilitate and assist students in learning knowledge and skills. Referring to teachers but especially parents, researcher Logsdon states: "Improve your child's understanding of math concepts by providing tools that will support them as they learn math concepts" (Logsdon, A. 2021). Recall that "experienced math educators help the average reader discover not only the everyday usefulness of math but the fun that comes from mastering the basics of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and more" (Posamentier, S. A, Spreitzer, Ch. 2018. 21). Mathematics and its operations such as addition and subtraction have arisen from the need to serve students. "It's a science of not being wrong, hammered out by centuries of hard work and argument. Armed with the tools of mathematics, we can see through to the true meaning of information we take for granted" (Ellenberg, J. 2014. 13). As is well known: "The symbols we use to write numbers are called digits. 0; 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8 and 9 are digits" (Marison, K. 2013, Book 3; 5). Recall that: "first the units are added and exchanged 10 units with 1 decimal" (Marison, K. 2013, Book 5; 12)

2. Methodology

First, I want to clarify that this study is a consequence of my experience as a teacher and lecturer. I am currently a lecturer of the subject: Didactics of Mathematics. The work is an original work of mine. The desire is for the work to be made known by teachers, students, and other readers.

Let's start by addressing the subtopics of this paper.

2.1. Findings, clarifications and confirmations.

A) Addition of any numbers with a nine-digit number.

It is known that the same ways as natural numbers are used to add and subtract decimal numbers.

Let's focus our attention on the following actions:
12 + 9 = 21; 23 + 9 = 32; 34 + 9 = 43; 45 + 9 = 54; 56 + 9 = 65; 67 + 9 = 76; 78 + 9 = 87; 89 + 9 = 98.

Let us pause for a moment and look and analyze what we can discover from the operations with the ninth in the above equations?

We can draw some conclusions:

Numbers added to 9 are two-digit numbers.

Such that the figures are consecutive in ascending sense. For example, at 12; 1 and 2 are consecutive in ascending order, 2 one greater than 1. Likewise, the other adders to the other draws. What else can we discover?

By analyzing the actions, we reach the conclusions:
1. If in adders the digits of the numbers added to the number 9 are consecutive in ascending order in the sums to the right the digits are consecutive in descending order.
2. It is clear that the sum of the digits in the adder that adds up to 9 is equal to the sum of the digits of the sum.
Thus, for the first equation we have: at the digits of the adder 1 + 2 = 3; to sum digits
2 + 1 = 3. The same goes for the other equations: in the second 2 + 3 = 5; 3 + 2 = 5… in the last, the sum of the digits of the adder 8 + 9 = 17 also in the sum of the digits of the sum
9 + 8 = 17.
3. So we came to conclusion: Such numbers when added together give as a sum such a number whose sum of digits is equal to the sum of the digits of the adder.

Undertaking this study to assist teaching but also to serve students and readers. As the famous mathematician Koshy puts it: "Number patterns are fun for both amateurs and professionals" (Koshy, Th. 2007, 98).

How will we express mathematically in the general case for the above equations the conclusions drawn case by case?
Let a be the first digit of a two-digit number. While we were talking about two-digit numbers with digits in ascending order, the next digit, ie one, will be a + 1. In a word let be the number a; a + 1. The semicolon is set simply to distinguish digits. When we perform the addition with 9 we have: (a; a + 1) + 9 = a; a + 10 = a + 1; a.
It is noticed that we reach the following statements:
1. Increases by one unit ten because we added one unit from the tenth formed by the sum of units from a to a + 1
2. Reduce by one unit the number of units from a + 1 to a.
3. The sum of the digits of the adder and the sum of the digits of the sum are equal when we add to the number 9. Thus: In the adder a + (a + 1) = a + a + 1 = 2a + 1, in the sum (a + 1) + a = a + a + 1 = 2a + 1. So it is true for any two-digit number with consecutive digits in ascending sense
Let's check whether the final conclusion on the sum of the digits is true or not for each type of two-digit number.

Note the equations: 26 + 9 = 35; 58 + 9 = 67; 73 + 9 = 82 61 + 9 = 70; 16 + 9 25; 40 + 9 = 49 etc.
We check the sums of the digits respectively to the collector and to the sum. In the first equation, the sum of the digits in the adder is 2 + 6 = 8, in the sum, the sum of the digits is 3 = 5 = 8. In the second equation, the sum of the digits at the adder is 5 = 8 = 13 and the sum of the digits of the sum is 6 = 7 = 13. The same goes for the other draws. In the last equation: the sum of the digits of the adder 4 + 0 = 4. In the sum 4 + 9 = 13, once again the sum until a single digit 1 + 3 = 4. The question arises: Is the conclusion (3) true for one-digit natural numbers.
Note that: 1 + 9 = 10, the sum of the digits of the sum 1 + 0 = 1. In the equation 2 + 9 = 11, the sum of the digits of the sum 1 + 1 = 2. The other equation 7 + 9 = 16, the sum of the digits of the sum 1 + 6 = 7. Other, 9 + 9 = 18, sum 1 + 8 = 9.
Now try the conclusion (3) for the three-digit numbers when we add them to 9. Let us try for three cases whatever.

The first case whatever: 128 + 9 = 137. The sum of the digits to the adder: 1 + 2 + 8 = 11; 1 + 1 = 2. Sum of digits in the sum: 1 + 3 + 7 = 11 or one-digit sum 1 + 1 = 2
The second case whatever. 469 + 9 = 478. The sum of the digits in the adder is 4 + 6 + 9 = 19 or 1 + 9 = 10 or 1 + 0 = 1. In the sum 4 + 7 + 8 = 19, or 1 = 9 = 10 or 1 + 0 = 1
The third case whatever. 796 + 9 = 805. The sum of digits in the adder 7 + 9 + 6 = 22 or 2 + 2 = 4. The sum of the digits to the sum 8 + 0 + 5 = 13 or 1 + 3 = 4.
The same is true for numbers with more than three digits. Example 30648 + 9 = 30657. The sum of the digits in the adder 3 + 0 + 6 + 4 + 8 = 21 or 2 + 1 = 3. The sum of the digits of the sum 3 + 0 + 6 + 5 + 7 = 21 or 2 + 1 = 3.
Also, let's see if the conclusion (3) is true for all negative numbers except [-1; 0]. So, for ∀ x / x {Q \ [- 9; 0]}.
Let us try two more cases for negative numbers:
Ex. -15 + 9 = -6. The sum of the digits in the adder - (1 + 5) = - 6, as much as the sum digit.
Next -68 + 9 = -59. Sum of digits - (6 + 8) = -14. - (5 + 9) = -14 are equal.

Let's see if the conclusion (3) is true even for finite decimal numbers. It is known that " The same ways as natural numbers are used to add and subtract decimal numbers" (Starja, D & Shkoza, Z. 2018, b, 63).

Let's take an example: 1.5 + 9 = 2.4. The sums of the digits 1 + 5 = 6 and 2 + 4 = 6. Another example -9.1 + 9 = -0.1. Sum of collector digits - (9 + 1) = - 10; - (1 + 0) = - 1. Sum of digits to sum - (0 + 1) = - 1. You can try for any occasion. The analogy with integers is clear.

We reach the following conclusions:
All rational numbers that satisfy the condition: ∀ x / x Q \ [- 9; 0] when added to the number 9 give as a sum such a number whose sum of digits is equal to the sum of the digits of the adder.
The assertion that the sum of digits does not change when the number is added to the number 9 is not true when the sum has the opposite sign to the adder.
Let us note if the same conclusions result for the other nine-digit numbers as 99; 999; 9999; etc. For this let's look at the amounts
215 + 99 = 314 sums 2 + 1 + 5 = 8; and 3 + 1 + 4 = 8 are equal
567 + 99 = 666 sums 5 + 6 + 7 = 18; 1 + 8 = 9 and 6 + 6 + 6 = 18; 1 + 8 = 9 are equal
802 + 999 = 1801 sums 8 + 0 + 2 = 10; 1 + 0 = 1 and 1 + 8 + 0 + 1 = 10; 1 + 0 = 1 are equal.
2354 + 999 = 3353 sums 2 + 3 + 5 + 4 = 14; 1 + 4 = 5 and 3 + 3 + 5 + 3 = 1384; 1 + 4 = 5 are equal.
5781 + 9999 = 15780 sums 5 + 7 + 8 + 1 = 21; 2 + 1 = 3 and 1 + 5 + 7 + 8 + 0 = 21; 2 + 1 = 3 are equal.
209136 + 99999 = 309135 sums 2 + 0 + 9 + 1 + 3 + 6 = 21; 1 + 2 = 3 and 3 + 0 + 9 + 1 + 3 + 5 = 21; 2 + 1 = 3 are equal.

Someone reading this study might ask why this knowledge of nine-digit numbers is necessary. Let's summarize these reasons as follows.
The reason why such knowledge of nine-digit numbers is needed:
Having described the sum of 9 rational numbers and pointed out some important conclusions let us clarify: Why do we need such knowledge? Why should teachers, students and anyone else know this? When can we apply these conclusions?

B) Nine-fold number of powers of ten.
A nine-digit number of tens of powers is called those numbers that have the first digit 9 and the other digits 0. Ex. 90; 900; 90000, etc. Written short 9 · 10n, where n N.
C) Addition of any numbers with a nine-fold number of powers of ten.
Before answering the above questions, let's look at some other actions. Let's look at the sums of any number with a nine-fold number of powers of ten.
For example, note the amounts:
342 + 90 = 432; The sum of the digits of the adder is 3 + 4 + 2 = 9 and the sum of the digits of the sum is 4 + 3 + 2 = 9. We note that they are equal.
215 + 900 = 1115 The sum of the digits of the adder is 2 + 1 + 5 = 8; the sum of the digits of the sum is 1 + 1 + 1 + 5 = 8. We note that they are equal.

The same with other examples 561 + 9000 = 9561 sums of digits 5 + 6 + 1 = 12; 1 + 2 = 3 and 9 + 5 + 6 + 1 = 21; 2 + 1 = 3 are equal.

So, we came to this conclusion:

Statement 4: If we add a rational number c to a number

- n digits of nine (a = 10n - 1) provided that the adder a is such that a ∉ [- (10n -1); 0] or
- nine times the power of ten (b = 9 · 10n-1) provided that b ∉ [- 9 · 10n-1; 0], where n N

give as many a number such that the sum of the digits of which is equal to the sum of the digits of the adder.

Proof of assertion.

Proof: The sum of the digits of a number does not change when added to a nine-digit number.

Let us prove the above assertion for both cases.

a) For number of digits-nine

b) For the nine-fold numbers of the powers of ten.

c) For multi-digit numbers formed by combinations of digits 9 and 0.

For this let a = a1; a2; a3… an be any number nine natural digits and Sn = a1 + a2 + a3 +… + an the one-digit sum of its digits. A one-digit sum of the digits of the number a can be one of the numbers from 1 to 9, because any digits added to the one-digit sum have no value other than the values 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7 ; 8; 9. A value of 0 can never reach a one-digit sum because there is no possibility that the sum of digits where at least one would be different from zero (because otherwise it would not be natural) becomes zero. The smallest natural number is the number 1, where the sum of the digits is 1. The number is added to the nine-digit digit number 99… 9.

= an or S = a1; a2; a3… an + 999… 9. Let S = b1; b2; b3;…; bn… bm. The purpose of the paper is not to care about the number of limits of the sum S but for the paper the value of the digits and the sum of the digits of S. matters. Let Sn; 9 be a sum -cipher of the digits of the sum S. Therefore, to prove the assertion let us analyze the sums in turn. At first glance it seems that verification in this case is difficult. To alleviate this difficulty let us reason: What value can a one-digit sum of collector digits have? What value can a one-digit sum of collector digits have?

It is clear that the one-digit sum of the digits of a number whether this collector or the sum takes one of the values: 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9. The sum of digits can't be 0 because the sum of digits, each of the digits is actually a positive number, can't give zero because it is known that the sum of some positive numbers can never become zero. It is clear that respectively such values of the sum collected with the number 9 or digit nine will give an amount, the value of the sum of the digits of which does not change. For example, if the sum of the digits of the sum is 1 when added to 9 gives 10. The sum of the digits is also 1 because 1 + 0 = 1. Yet another case if the value of the sum of the digits of the adder is e.g. 9 added to 9 gives the sum of 18, the value of the sum of the digits of which is also 9.

You can try for any occasion you want or doubt!

If a case is found that does not substantiate the assertion then it can be said that the above conclusions are wrong, which as proven and proven above proves the veracity of the conclusions.

D. Subtract any number by a number of digits-nine.

In mathematics when we perform the subtraction operation there is a property called "The property of the invariance of subtraction" (Shkoza, Z. & Starja, D. 2018, 29). In this section, we will bring some new knowledge, and techniques on how to perform faster, more accurately and self-check the conclusions found when we enter any number with a nine-digit number.
Let's study the subtraction of any number with a nine-digit number, 10n - 1

For this let us study whether similar conclusions are reached as the collection.
a) For this let us look at the subtractions with a number of digits-nine. We check the sums of the vertices at the denominator and at the variance.
1. The first case: number am > 10 n - 1 where m is the number of digits of the denominator, n N and m > n

10-9 = 1;	1 + 0 = 1 as much as the difference 1	
15-9 = 6 ;	1 + 5 = 6 as much as the difference 6	
47-9 = 38;	4 + 7 = 11 (1 + 1 = 2)	3 + 8 = 11 (1 + 1 = 2)
52-9 = 43;	5 + 2 = 7;	4 + 3 = 7
993-99 = 896;	9 + 9 + 5 = 23;	8 + 9 + 6 = 23
3758-999 = 2759;	3 + 7 + 5 + 8 = 23;	2 + 7 + 5 + 8 = 23
45678-999 = 44679;	4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 = 30;	4 + 4 + 6 + 7 + 9 = 30
40683-9999 = 30684	4 + 0 + 6 + 8 + 3 = 21;	3 + 0 + 6 + 8 + 4 = 21

You can try any subtraction of natural numbers with nine-digit numbers to give us the difference such that: The sum of the digits of the difference is equal to the sum of the digits of the subtraction.
Conclusion: From the operations performed above we reach this conclusion that when we subtract a positive m-digit number with an n-digit number of nine such that am > 10 n - 1 where m is the number of digits of the denominator, n N, and m > n. Alternatively, we can formulate the conclusion as follows: When we subtract a natural number from a nine-digit number by at least one digit less than the natural number, it turns out that the sum of the digits of the variable is equal to the sum of the digits of the denominator.
So: The difference is a number whose sum of digits is equal to the sum of the digits of the denominator.
2. Let us now look at the case when the number 0≤ a≤ 10n - 1. We check the sums at the denominator and the variance. Ex:

9 - 9 = 0	$9 \neq 0$	
8-9 = -1	$8 \neq -1$	
5-9 = -4	$5 \neq -4$	
0-9 = -9	$0 \neq -9$	
5-99 = - 94	$5 \neq 13$	(9 + 4 = 13)
99-99 = 0	9 + 9 = 18	(1 + 8 = 9); $9 \neq 0$
998-999 = - 1	9 + 9 + 8 = 26	(2 + 6 = 8); $8 \neq 1$

1. When we subtract a one-digit non-negative number (zero or positive) with 9 variables, we get a number whose sum of digits is whatever.
2. When we subtract a non-negative two-digit number (zero or positive) with 99 variables we get a number whose sum of digits is whatever.
3. Notice that the denominator and the variable have opposite signs.

In summary, we have reached the conclusion:
1. When we subtract a non-negative n-digit number (zero or positive) with an n-digit number of nine
(10n - 1) the difference is a number whose sum of digits is any different from the sum of the digits of the denominator. So, the sums of the variables and the denominators are not equal.
2. Subtraction and variance have opposite signs.
3) Let us study the third case when the number a<0. We check the sums of the vertices at the denominator and at the variance regardless of the sign. Ex:
- 1 - 9 = - 10 1 as the sum of the digits of the variance 1 + 0 = 1
- 2 - 9 = - 11 2 so that the sum of the digits of the variance 1 + 1 = 2
……………………………………………………………… ..

- 10 - 9 = - 19	1 + 0 = 1 and 1 + 9 = 10	(1 + 0 = 1)
- 13 - 9 = - 22	1 + 3 = 4 and 2 + 2 = 4	
- 35 - 9 = - 44	3 + 5 = 8 and 4 + 4 = 8	
- 641- 99 = -740	6 + 4 + 1 = 11 as 7 + 4 + 0 = 11	
- 539 - 99 = - 638	5 + 3 + 9 = 17 as 6 + 3 + 8 = 17	
- 135 - 999 = -1134	1 + 3 + 5 = 9 as 1 + 1 + 3 + 4 = 9	
- 3056 - 9999 = - 13055	3 + 0 + 5 + 6 = 14 as 1 + 3 + 0 + 5 + 5 = 14	

……………………………………………………………… ..
From the above actions we came to this important conclusion:
1) When we subtract a negative n-digit number from a nine-digit n-digit number (10n - 1) the difference always results in such a number where the sum of the digits of the variance is equal to the sum of the digits of the denominator.
2) The denominator and the variable have the same signs.
E. Subtraction of any number by a nine-fold number of powers of ten, by an = 9 · 10n-1
Subtraction of any number by a 9-digit power of ten. {In other words, the subtraction of a number bn with a number of form, 9 · 10n-1. In other word we are interested in the discounts of the form bn-(9 · 10n-1), where n N
According to the definition, the 9-digit numbers of the power of ten, an = 9 · 10n-1, for n = 1; 2; 3; 4… are respectively the numbers: 9; 90; 900; 9000; etc.
We again distinguish three cases:
First case: b>9 · 10n-1. Let's look at some examples of the sums of the digits in the denominator and the variance:
12-9 = 3 the sums of the digits 1 + 2 = 3 and 3 are equal
134-90 = 44 the sum of the digits 1 + 3 + 4 = 8 and 4 + 4 = 8 are equal
571-90 = 481 the sum of the digits 5 + 7 + 1 = 13 and 4 + 8 + 1 = 13 are equal
3006-900 = 2106 the sum of the digits 3 + 0 + 0 + 6 = 9 and 2 + 1 + 0 + 6 = 9 are equal
74385-9000 = 65385 the sum of the digits 7 + 4 + 3 + 8 + 5 = 27 and 6 + 5 + 3 + 8 + 5 = 27 are equal
Second case: 0≤b≤9 · 10n-1. Let's look at some examples of the sums of the digits in the denominator and the variance:
3-9 = - 6 digits 3 and -6 are not equal
28-90 = - 62 the sums of the digits 2 + 8 = 10 and - (6 + 2) = - 8 are not equal
457-900 = - 443 the sums of the digits 4 + 5 + 7 = 16 and - (4 + 4 + 3) = - 11 are not equal

Conclusion: When the number 0<b<9 · 10n-1 is subtracted from the 9-digit numbers of the tenth power we notice that:
1. The sums of the digits to the denominator and the difference are not equal to and
2. Amounts have opposite signs.
Third case: b < 0. Let us look at some examples of the sums of the digits in the denominator and the variance:
-3-9 = -12 the sum of the digits -3 and - (1 + 2) = -3 are equal
-56-90 = -146 sum of digits - (5 + 6) = -11and - (1 + 4 + 6) = - 11 are equal
-430-900 = -1330 sum of digits - (4 + 3 + 0) = -7 and - (1 + 3 + 3 + 0) = -7 are equal
8754-9000 = -17754 the sum of the digits - (8 + 7 + 5 + 4) = - 24 and - (1 + 7 + 7 + 5 + 4) = - 24 are equal
Conclusion.
When the number b<0 varies with the 9-digit numbers of the tenth power we notice that:
1. The sums of the digits to the denominator and the difference are equal to and
2. Amounts have the same signs.
Let us write the conclusions reached step by step differently in a concise way:
When we subtract any number with a nine-digit number:
1. The sum of the digits of the subtractable and the variable does not change when a ∉ [0; 10n - 1]
2. The sum of the digits of the denominator and the variable changes when a [0; 10n - 1]. In this case, they have different signs.
When we subtract any number with a nine-digit number to the power of ten:
1. The sum of the digits of the denominator and the variable does not change when b ∉ [0; 9 · 10n-1]
2. The sum of the digits of the denominator and the variable changes when b [0; 10n-1]. In this case, they have different signs.
In closing the notes on the subtraction action the curious can prove that the same conclusions are reached by the subtraction action of any number with the numbers formed by any combination of the digits 9 and 0.
Task for you: Try the differences 3045 - 909; 23156 - 9090; 769832 - 90990; 4698513 - 909009; 123456789 - 9090909! 123456789 - 900009
Do the sums of the digits in the denominator and the variance differ? Bring and try other similar examples!

3. Summary conclusions.

From the presented work the following conclusions are reached:
1. The techniques presented in this paper are proposed to be used to perform the addition test with nine or number of digits-nine until the time when the subtraction operation has not yet been learned because it is known that subtraction is always learned after addition.
2. When we add every number to a nine-digit number with opposite signs, it is observed that the sum of the digits of the sum is preserved or is equal to the sum of the digits of every number whenever the absolute value of the number is less than the nine-digit number.
3. The techniques we presented in this paper help students and especially students with dyscalculia, with difficulty in mathematics such as addition and subtraction as quickly, accurately, and safely.

4. The techniques presented can be applied by teachers to quickly test the veracity of the conclusions of actions performed by students.
5. When we add a two-digit number with consecutive digits in ascending sense with 9 it turns out that the sum digits are in descending sense.
6. When we add a number of any x with a number of digits-nine, the sum of the digits of the sum is equal to the sum of the digits of the number of any x provided that x ∉ [- 9 · 10n-1; 0], where n N, n is the number of digits of the nine-digit number.
7. When we add a number of any x with a number of digits-nine, the sum sign is the same as the sum of the digits of the number of any x provided that x ∉ [- 9 · 10n-1; 0], where n N.
8. When we subtract a number whatever x with a number of digits-nine the sum of the digits of the variance is equal to the sum of the digits of any number x provided that x ∉ [0; 9 · 10n-1], where n N, n is the number of digits of the nine-digit number.
9. When we subtract a number any x with a number of digits-nine, the sum sign is the same as the sum of the digits of the number any x provided that x ∉ [0; 9 · 10n-1] by n N.

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VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Abstract.

Family is considered the essential core of any healthy society. A healthy individual, a happy childhood, and life cannot be imagined without a family. Usually, people who run afoul of the law are people who come from problematic families. Domestic violence is one of the main concerns of every society today. As a negative phenomenon, it dates back to ancient times, since the existence of human society, and unfortunately, it has spread not only in Kosovo but everywhere in the world. Violence appears in all social categories, regardless of social, educational, economic status, etc. It constitutes one of the most serious forms of violation of human rights. It is necessary to identify all forms of domestic violence, the driving factors, and the drafting of preventive policies because most people still think that such problems should remain in the family, and not be presented to the relevant bodies. But on the other hand, some reasons restrain people from reporting violence, such as fear, threats, blackmail, etc. The responsibility of each state is to undertake concrete preventive measures for the victimization of children, women, and the elderly in the family, as the most sensitive category of our society, and the most exposed to violence. The most frequent forms of violence subjected to this category are physical, psychological, economic, and other forms of violence. The purpose of research of this paper is to reflect on domestic violence, its types, causes as well as the measures that must be taken to prevent this societal phenomenon. The Kosovo legislation regulates the issue of domestic violence with the law on protection from domestic violence, which foresees a series of protective measures, as well as governmental and non-governmental mechanisms that deal with domestic violence.

Keywords: Violence, Children, Women, The Elders, The Law.

1. Introduction

Domestic violence is undoubtedly considered one of the most adverse and widespread phenomena in our society. Such violence constitutes a serious violation of human rights.

Nowadays, Kosovo is facing many challenges affiliated with an increase in the number of cases of domestic violence. According to the Law on protection from domestic violence, domestic violence is defined as one or more intentional acts or violations that a person does to the other person with whom he is or has been in a family relationship. It includes not only the use of physical force or psychological pressure exerted on the other member of the family, but any other action of a family member that may cause or threaten his/her rights, that will cause physical pain and mental suffering, but that will also cause a feeling of fear, personal danger or violation of dignity, physical attack without considering the consequences, insulting, cursing, calling offensive names and other forms of rude disturbance, the constant repetition of behavior intended to humiliate the other person, sexual intercourse without consent and sexual abuse, unlawful restriction of the freedom of movement of the other person, damage or destruction of property and threatening to do so, putting the other person in a position of fear for the physical, emotional and economic condition.[1] The provisions related to protection from domestic violence in Kosovo are provided by the Criminal Code of Kosovo, the Law on protection from domestic violence, the Criminal Procedure Code of Kosovo, the Juvenile Justice Code, the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, the Law of the Kosovo Police, so forth. Some of the institutional mechanisms that deal with domestic violence are the Kosovo Police, Victims' Defender/Office for Victim Protection and Assistance, State Prosecutor, Courts, Centers for Social Work, Free Legal Aid Agencies/Regional Offices for Legal Aid, Offices regional offices of the People's Advocate, etc., while non-governmental supporting partners dealing with domestic violence are: shelters and non-governmental organizations.[2]

1.1 Forms of domestic violence

1.1.1 Women as victims of domestic violence

Violence against women is the most widespread form of violence in society, and it represents a serious concern due to the alarming increase in this form of violence.

This form of violence has its roots in the earliest times and is related to the disrespect men show towards women and the existence of some traditional patriarchal views and stereotypes, which have made it difficult for men and women to be equal.

Violence against women and domestic violence manifests in a continuum of multiple, interconnected, and sometimes repeated forms - physical, sexual, psychological, and economic harm and suffering. Unlike other victims of crime, experiencing gender-based violence is extremely traumatic. Studies show that a significant number of victims of gender-based violence against women suffer from significant mental trauma, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, feelings of social isolation, and low self-esteem.[3] Violence against girls and women, taking into account the international and national statistics that have the same trend, is mainly perpetrated by the intimate partners of girls and women, be it ex/boyfriend, ex/partner, ex/fiancé, or ex/husband.[4] On average, about 70% of cases of violence against women involve intimate partners. Violence against women in the family has negative consequences not only for the woman but also for the children. Children who witness violence in their homes often suffer from physical, social, and developmental problems (e.g., learning problems, impaired social skills, extreme depression or anxiety, and/or exhibit violent, dangerous, or illegal behavior). Most women who experience domestic violence are reluctant to speak up. Several factors force women to remain silent, such as they do not believe that things can improve, do not know where to ask for help, are afraid that if the case is reported, this may damage the good name of the family, are afraid that the abuser(s) will beat them more, they think or know from experience, that they will be blamed for their victimization, are afraid that if they ask for help, it will lead to the dissolution of the marriage or will end the marriage/relationship, feel that they will not be trusted or taken seriously, people may even laugh at them, are afraid of losing their children and perceive violence as a normal part of

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[1] Law on protection from domestic violence, no. 03/L-182, dt. 01.07.2020, article 2, paragraph 1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 1.2.6, 1.2.7, 1.2.8, 1.2.9, 1.2.10, 1.2.11, 1.2.12.

[2] Standard action procedures for protection from domestic violence in Kosovo, Agency for Gender Equality, Prishtina, 2013, pp. 19, 21.

[3] Eileen Skinnider, Ariana Qosaj-Mustafa, Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Training Manual for Trainers for Prosecutors and Judges, 2020, p.23.

[4] Elda Canaj, Albania, How has the reporting of cases changed from year to year, 2021.

marriage, therefore they have no reason to complain, they do not feel comfortable asking for help because their ability to understand their legal rights is limited.[5] A vast number of women do not know their rights as victims, therefore the most necessary step should be campaigning for raising awareness and information. Shelters also have an important role in terms of protection and provision of help, and rehabilitation of women as victims of domestic violence. Shelters for victims of domestic violence are specialized support services that enable the protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration of victims. They have been shown to be effective in helping women to leave abusive relationships.[6]

1.1.2 Children as victims of domestic violence

Children are our future. They are the most sensitive and vulnerable social category. Therefore, all children should enjoy their basic rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universal law on children's rights. The provisions of the Convention require that the economic, social, legal, and institutional conditions be created to guarantee children their rights.[7]

Child abuse and violence are one of the most serious forms of violation of human rights. The most frequent acts of child victimization are abandonment and neglect of newborn babies and very young children, leaving them in shelters and hospitals. Also as forms of violence are beatings, physical abuse, various bodily injuries, forcing them to do hard physical work, forcing them to beg, sexual abuse, neglect of health protection and recovery, threats, blackmail, intimidation with an attack on life and body, and so forth.

Child victimizers are the natural parents, who are married or cohabiting.[8]

According to UNICEF, children who are exposed to domestic violence can suffer a range of serious and long-term effects. Children who are exposed to domestic violence may have learning difficulties and limited social skills. They exhibit violent, dangerous, delinquent behavior, or suffer from severe depression or anxiety.

Violence against children continues to be a largely hidden problem that few countries, communities, or families face openly. Children, as the most potential victims of domestic violence, can be better protected and supported in passing these situations only through the reporting of cases.[9]

1.1.3 The elderly and parents as victims of domestic

The elders and parents are considered precious treasures of every society. Therefore every request and need of them is the responsibility of all of us. The phenomenon of victimization of the elderly in our society has unfortunately increased compared to times past because the care and respect have been significantly greater compared to the present time.

Some of the forms of victimization in this category are: not feeding, not fulfilling the basic needs for living, beating, causing bodily injuries, neglecting clothing and basic care of their body hygiene, and so on.

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[5] Robin N. Haarr, Domestic Violence in Albania: A National Population-Based Survey, 2013, p. 55, 56.

[6] OSCE, Shelters for victims of domestic violence in Kosovo, 2019, p.4.

[7] Anniki Lai, The future of the integrated child protection system in Albania, 2016, pg.8.

[8] Ragip Halili, Victimology, Prishtina, 2007, pp. 77, 80.

[9] www.suharekaonline.com/tjera/shendetesi/influence-of-violence-in-the-family-on-children

But who are the victimizers of the elderly? In the first place victims of this social category are family members and shelters or nursing homes, whether public or private.[10]

Actions that should be taken to prevent the victimization of the elderly are:

1) the development of social services, including medical, legal, psychological, and financial assistance, housing assistance, and the like services that are offered to abused and neglected people.[11]
2) the organization of educational campaigns to raise public awareness to stop neglect and abuse, informing doctors and the general public about the different types of abuse, how to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and where to get help, as well as mediums can also be a possible tool for changing attitudes and reducing stereotypes about older people.

1.1.4 Men as victims of domestic violence

Violence against men is present, but it constitutes a dark or hidden number of crimes. Because of the environment in which they live, many men are reluctant to report the violence they experience. When men are victims of domestic violence, they are mainly victims of violence against other male family members, father against son, uncle against nephew, and vice versa. Violence against men by women is not a phenomenon. As a practice they have no roots in any society, nor is it in vogue. They should be treated legally just like any other case of any form of violence.[12]

Attention in Kosovo is more on the treatment of violence against women.

But despite this, men are also subject to violence, not only by their wives but also by other family members, most of the same sex. In Kosovo, there are dozens of Non-Governmental Organizations that deal with the protection of women from violence, but there is not even a single state or non-state institution that comes to the aid of men.[13]

1.2 Factors affecting the appearance of domestic violence

We must identify the driving factors in order to determine the causes that push people to apply violence, as the only way to solve problems.

A complex of cultural, social, economic, and personal factors makes the Albanian family vulnerable to violence. More specifically, factors such as:

1) individual causes related to personality characteristics and problems such as emotional dependence, immaturity, poor self-control, feelings of inferiority, jealousy, sexual impotence, intellectual, professional, and educational competition, and so on,
2) stress worries at work, professional disability, economic problems, problematic relationships, alcohol and drug addiction, unwanted pregnancy
3) family history,
4) isolation,

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[10] Ragip Halili, deed. quoted, page 81

[11] https://www.psikologjia.com/pdf/keqperdorimi%20i%20pesonave%20te%20moshuar.pdf

[12] Shqipe Gjocaj, For violence against men, 2017.

[13] Jeton Musliu, JNK Newspaper, Men Vulnerable to Domestic Violence, 2012.

5) gender inequalities, and so forth.[14]

2. Methodology

The study in this paper is based on the treatment of domestic violence, its forms, and the factors that influence the appearance of this negative phenomenon as well as preventive measures. Some of the methods I used for researching this phenomenon were: statistical methods, comparative methods, as well as descriptive methods, as the most adequate method for reflecting this phenomenon in the Republic of Kosovo.

3. Results and discussions

Domestic violence is a phenomenon that is quite widespread in Kosovo. It is worrying that despite the high presence of this negative phenomenon in our society, the reporting rate is quite low. It is necessary to make society aware that violence is unacceptable and should not be justified in any way, and even less with traditional opinions such as "If he loves you, he beats you", "Man and Woman cannot be equal", and the like opinions which violate women's lives very dearly. Experiencing violence on the victim leaves devastating consequences throughout their lives.

Table 1: Domestic violence - Cases with criminal reports in the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kosovo

Criminal charges			
Year	*Court cases*	*Resolved court cases*	*Unresolved court cases*
2016	*4,249*	*3,240 (76.24 %)*	*1,009 (23,76 %)*
2017	*2,480*	*1,832 (73,87 %)*	*649 (26, 13 %)*
2018	*1.920*	*1,335 (69.53 %)*	*585 (30,47 %)*
2019	*2,416*	*1,611 (66,65 %)*	*805 (33.35 %)*
2020	*2,925*	*1,812 (61,95 %)*	*1,113 (38,06 %)*
Total	*13,990*	*9,830 (70,26 %)*	*4,160 (29,76 %)*

Table no. 1 shows the cases of filing criminal charges for domestic violence in the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kosovo over five years. According to the data presented during the year 2016, we can see the largest number of solved cases with 76.24%, while the year 2020 is the year with the lowest number of solved cases with 38.06% compared to the five years reflected.[15]

4. Conclusion

Domestic violence is one of the most serious forms of violation of basic human rights, which continues to be a challenge for our society today. The mentality that domestic violence should stay in the family, and should not go outside the family, must be changed. In this context, it is very important to report violence to the relevant justice bodies. The cooperation of all state actors, sensitization, public awareness, organization of awareness campaigns, and awareness of positive parenting for preventing domestic violence is necessary. Everyone should understand that the proper treatment of domestic violence will reduce this phenomenon, and it will create a safer and more normal environment for all members of society. Informing the victims about

[14] Mark Marku, Elda Berisha, Eglantina Gjermeni, Irena Shtraza, Domestic violence in the focus of the media Guide, Gender Alliance for Development, Tirana, Albania, 2008, pp. 21, 22.

[15] Gramos Zekaj, Scary statistics: Over 14 thousand cases of domestic violence in 5 years, 2022.

their rights, and enabling them to receive compensation, and proper and professional treatment by the relevant bodies would have helped to improve the position of the victim in society and will protect the victims from secondary victimization. It is also necessary to judge and pronounce the punishment deserved by the perpetrator of the criminal offense. Ensuring rights, ensuring adequate protection for victims of domestic violence, should be a priority of every state because in this way it guarantees the protection of their human rights.

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THE IMPACT OF COVID19 ON THE ECONOMY, REMITTANCES AND GDP - THE CASE OF KOSOVO

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Abstract.

Remittances sent by the Kosovo diaspora have been and remain an important source of income for families in Kosovo. The paper deals with the issues related to the remittances of the Kosovar diaspora and the Gross Domestic Product, including the analysis of their economic effect before and during Covid19. To achieve the objectives, the analysis method, tabular and graphic separately, comparative method was used, analyzing the dynamics of the issue of remittances and GDP in the Republic of Kosovo. Through this study, the results and recommendations given are considered to be taken into account by the relevant institutions in the Republic of Kosovo. Since the post-war, Kosovo continues to have a low level of economic growth, a high unemployment rate and a high trade deficit. Economic growth is considered among the main macroeconomic objectives of the country's government and represents the overall increase in the production of an economy. Taking into account this indicator, the economy of Kosovo, especially family economies, continue to depend to a large extent on remittances sent by the Kosovar diaspora. In different periods, remittances from the diaspora have played an important role in the economic aspect, especially they remain an important source of financing for family economies in Kosovo. Given that Kosovo after the last war remains among the countries with a low level of development and high unemployment, the special importance and economic effect of remittances from the Kosovar diaspora has been and remains of special importance, affecting consumption and well-being of families in Kosovo. Diaspora plays an important role in the economy of Kosovo through the sending of remittances, presenting an important potential not only for family economies but also for the economy of Kosovo in general. To send their funds, the diaspora uses different ways, which are generally the formal and informal ways of sending money.

Keywords: Remittances, BPV, Kosovo diaspora, Covid19.

1. Introduction

In the framework of the paper, issues related to the remittances of the Kosovar diaspora, their importance for the family economies in Kosovo, the forms of sending and the economic effect before and during the Covid 19 Pandemic are addressed. The impact of remittances in Kosovo is important because they constitute an additional source of income for host families.

The Kosovar diaspora is distributed in different countries, most of them are concentrated in the countries of Western Europe. Remittances from the diaspora undoubtedly remain an important source of finance for households in Kosovo. The sending of financial means from the diaspora to Kosovo comes through different routes that generally used formal and informal ways of sending money.

I take into account the low level of development in the country, the high rate of unemployment, the deficit in the trade balance, the importance and economic effect of the remittances of the Kosovar diaspora has been and remains of special importance mainly in the consumption and well-being of the receiving families in Kosovo. Remittances to Kosovo during 2021 have reached over 1 billion euros (Central Bank of Kosovo-CBK, Monthly Statistical Bulletin, 2022) (1). The greatest support of remittances remains in the social aspect of the country, especially for families who have the only source of income.

In Kosovo, one of the main factors affecting immigration is the high unemployment rate in Kosovo, according to the results of the Labor Force Survey (LFS) for 2021, the unemployment rate is 20.5% while the employment rate is 30.0 % (Kosovo Agency of Statistics-KAS, 2022) (2).

The paper presents a theoretical overview of the role of remittances in the economy, the effect of remittances in the economy before and during the Covid19 pandemic, the progress of remittances over the years including the time period from 2010 to 2021, correlations between GDP and remittances and conclusions, recommendations and references, which are presented at the end of the paper.

2. Literature review

Remittances strongly influence the increase in household income and also the increase in the standard of living of the population in the beneficiary country (Taylor & Wyatt, 2006) (3). The origins of modern immigration date back to the early 19th century and are widespread today. All factors and motives that lead to immigration are divided into push factors and pull factors. The push factors are the reasons that motivate people to leave a certain country, where one of them may be economic difficulties, bad political situation, unemployment, natural conditions, etc. The pull factors are those causes that drive and motivate people to move to a particular destination.

For many Kosovars, the unfavorable political and economic conditions were an incentive to emigrate to other countries. Emigration from Kosovo began in the late 60s and early 70s and can be divided into four phases: (Riinvest Institute, 2007) (4).

1) 1960-1988;

2) 1989-1997;

3) The group of refugees of the war of 1998-99 and

4) 2000---.

Most of the immigrants are concentrated in the countries of the European Union and in other more developed countries of Europe and the world. Immigrant remittances have an impact on the economic and social processes in Kosovo, especially on the consumption value of the population (Limani. Musa, 2013) (5). Diaspora plays a very big role in the economic development of Kosovo, through material contribution (remittances) and other forms of aid. (Limani. Musa, 2013. Macroeconomics) (6). Diaspora represents an important potential and supporting factors for the sustainable development of Kosovo in the future. To send their funds, immigrants use different ways that are generally divided into two main groups: formal and informal ways of sending money (Central Bank of Kosovo-CBK, 2013) (7). During the transfer through unofficial channels, immigrants have used two main ways: they have sent their means personally during visits to their homeland, or another way through their relatives and friends (Central Bank of Kosovo-CBK, 2013) (8).

The research questions of this study include:

H0: The impact of remittances on the economy before and during the covid19 pandemic in Kosovo?

H1: What is the effect on the economy and the participation of remittances in GDP in Kosovo?

3. Methodology

Official data from local and international institutions were used to conduct this study. This article provides a theoretical overview of remittances and remittance trends in Kosovo, from 2010 to 2021.

For the finalization of this paper, the presented material has support including scientific literature, as well as reports and publications from the Central Bank of Kosovo, the Statistics Agency of Kosovo, which deal with issues related to remittances, namely the impact and economic effect of remittances in Kosovo before and during the Covid19 Pandemic. The methodology of the study is based on a broad dimension in the review of theoretical and empirical literature. In order to achieve the main objective of this article, different sources of data were used as well as the method of analysis, comparative method, econometric analysis which is presented through correlative analysis. Also, the relationship between the independent variable of remittances and the dependent variable of GDP is presented, which is presented through correlational analysis. Through the work and analysis carried out regarding remittances and the effect of remittances in the economy before and during the Covid19 pandemic, including the correlation between GDP and remittances, at the end of the work, the relevant conclusions and recommendations are given.

4. Results and discussions

Remittances in Kosovo have been and continue to be one of the most important contributors to the country's economic and social development, with estimates suggesting that a quarter or more of households have a family member living abroad. According to the International Monetary Fund ,,Remittances represent household income from foreign economies arising mainly from the temporary or permanent movement of people to those economies" (International Monetary Fund, (2009). Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, Sixth Edition) (9).

Remittances are considered an important contributor to the well-being of Kosovar families. Remittances represent an important source of private investments and constitute a very important element of aggregate demand, influencing the growth of consumption. In other words, not focusing on complex empirical analysis, including the importance and effects of remittances in the economy of Kosovo, the following table shows the progress of remittances in the period 2010-2021.

Table 1: Progress of remittances and Gross Domestic Product in Kosovo in the period 2010-2021

- in million euros

Vitet	Remittances	Gross Domestic Product	Remittance/GDP report (%)
2010	584.3	3,788.7	15.4%
2011	492.5	4,285.7	11.4%
2012	516.4	4,633.9	11.1%
2013	573.4	5,053.4	11.3%
2014	622.3	5,241.1	11.8%
2015	655.5	5,640.1	11.6%
2016	691.0	5,990.5	11.5%
2017	759.2	6,328.6	11.9%
2018	800.6	6,572.9	12.1%
2019	851.7	6,988.8	12.1%
2020	980.0	6,679.3	14.6%
2021	1,153.4	7,484.5	15.4%

Source: Central Bank of Kosovo, Monthly Statistical Bulletin No. 248, Pristina, 2022, p. 96.

Kosovo Statistics Agency, Series 5: National Accounts Statistics, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) according to economic activities and with the expenditure approach 2008-2020, Pristina, 2021, pg, 7. Kosovo Statistics Agency, National Accounts Statistics , Gross Domestic Product Q1 2022, Pristina, 2022, pg,7.

Figure 1: Progress of remittances sent to Kosovo in the period 2010-2021

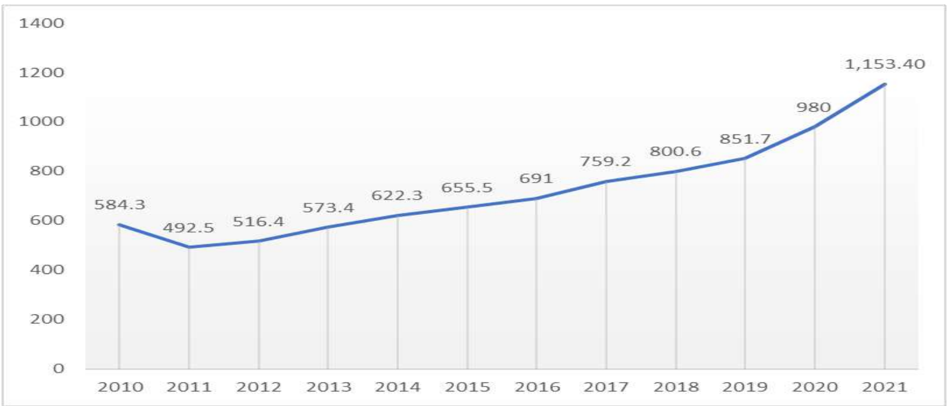
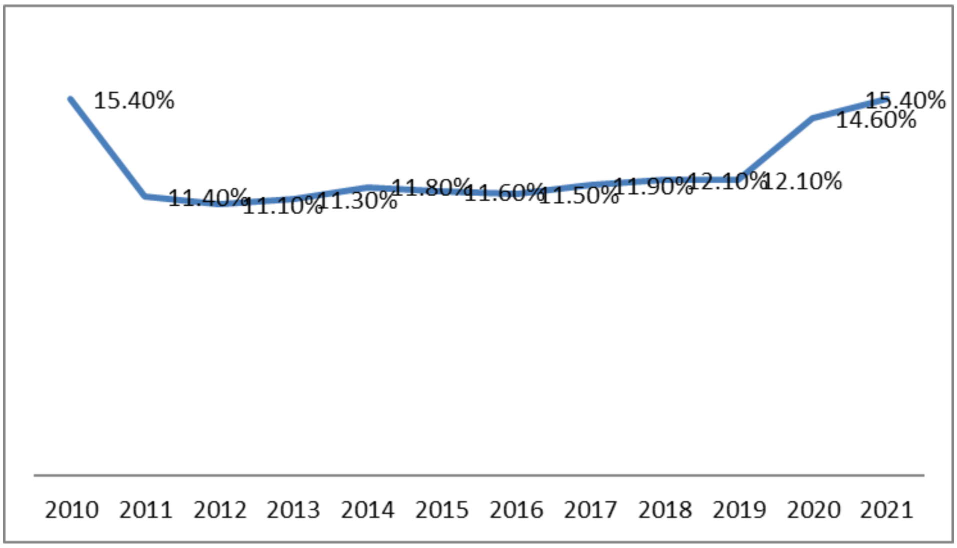


Figure 2: Remittance/GDP ratio (%)



The table and figure show the progress of remittances sent to Kosovo and the remittance/GDP ratio including the period 2010-2021. In 2010, the remittances sent to Kosovo were in the amount of 584.3 million euros, having a trend of decline in 2011, while in the following years the trend of growth, reaching in 2021 a value of 1.1 billion euros, compared to the previous year 2020 , remittances had an 18% growth rate. It is also observed the progress of the gradual increase over the years of the participation of remittances in GDP. In 2021, the share of remittances in GDP was 15.4%.

Taking into account the situation and economic development in Kosovo, remittances have served as a very important pillar for the country's economic development and social development. Kosovo's economy has seen positive growth rates in the last decade, despite the challenges posed by the fluctuations in the global and especially the European economy. According to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) data for 2021 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) we notice that in 2021 was Euro 7,484.5 million (Kosovo Agency of Statistics-KAS, 2022) (10).

Regarding the origin of remittances, the main contributing countries are Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and the USA. Of the total remittances sent to Kosovo in 2021, the remittances are received from Germany 14.0%, Switzerland 7.0%, Italy 2.0%, Austria 2.0% and the US 3.0%. (Central Bank of Kosovo-CBK, 2022) (11).

In order for remittances to have a greater positive effect on the country's economy, it is important for them to be invested in opening new businesses, expanding existing businesses, and so on. Remittances in Kosovo are, in most cases, used for consumption and have a direct impact on meeting the daily needs of the country's population.

Remittances and their effect on the economy before and during the Covid 19 Pandemic in Kosovo.

The capital of the diaspora has played and plays an important role in the financial resources of the population of Kosovo, as they send a part of their savings to their family members in Kosovo. Remittances represent a very important source of income for the population of Kosovo. Remittances in Kosovo have been and continue to remain an important source of income for households in Kosovo, from which they provide a large part of final consumption. In this context, remittances (remittances from the diaspora) represent a certain value of private investments, constituting an important element of aggregate demand, because they influence the growth of consumption. Undoubtedly, the Kosovar emigrants distributed in different countries of the world through remittances (financial means) sent to families in Kosovo, influence the increase in consumption and the standard of living, in the alleviation of poverty and the reduction of social problems, as well as through economic investments in the development economic of Kosovo. So, the Kosovar diaspora in different periods has played an important role by providing an important source of finance for the economy of Kosovo. There is no doubt that the diaspora has been and continues to be an important and supportive potential in economic developments in Kosovo.

Since the post-war, Kosovo continues to have a low level of economic growth, a high unemployment rate and a high trade deficit. Taking into account this indicator, the economy of Kosovo, especially family economies, continue to depend to a large extent on remittances sent by the Kosovar diaspora.

Remittances are usually sensitive and affected by the economic conditions of the countries from which they originate, which may be loosely related to events in the recipient country. Obviously, remittances tend to increase (decrease) when conditions in recipient countries worsen (improve). In other words, from an economic point of view, remittances are directly dependent on economic flows and other conditions in the recipient country. The Covid19 pandemic started in China at the end of 2019 and which involved almost all the countries of the world at the beginning of 2020, so Kosovo was also involved in this pandemic starting from March 2020. Based on this, the Covid19 Pandemic of spread all over the world, it has undoubtedly affected the financial situation of Kosovar emigrants by directly affecting the remittances (financial means) sent by the diaspora to Kosovo.

In Kosovo, with the decision of the Government of Kosovo, the first emergency measures to prevent the spread of the Covid19 Pandemic were taken in March 2020. The table below reflects the remittances sent to Kosovo before the Pandemic (2019) and during the Covid19 Pandemic (2020 and 2021).

Looking at the remittances sent to Kosovo in the period 2019-2021 (the period before the Covid19 pandemic and during the Covid19 pandemic), it is observed that despite the measures of restrictions in the economy of different countries, the remittances sent to Kosovo had a growth trend in 2020 compared to the year 2019 before the start of the Covid19 pandemic. So, in 2019 before the start of the Covid19 pandemic, the remittances sent to Kosovo were 851.7 million euros, while during the period of the Covid19 pandemic the remittances sent increased, so in 2020 they were worth 980.0 million euros, while during in 2021 to 1.1 billion euros (Central Bank of Kosovo-CBK, 2022) (12).

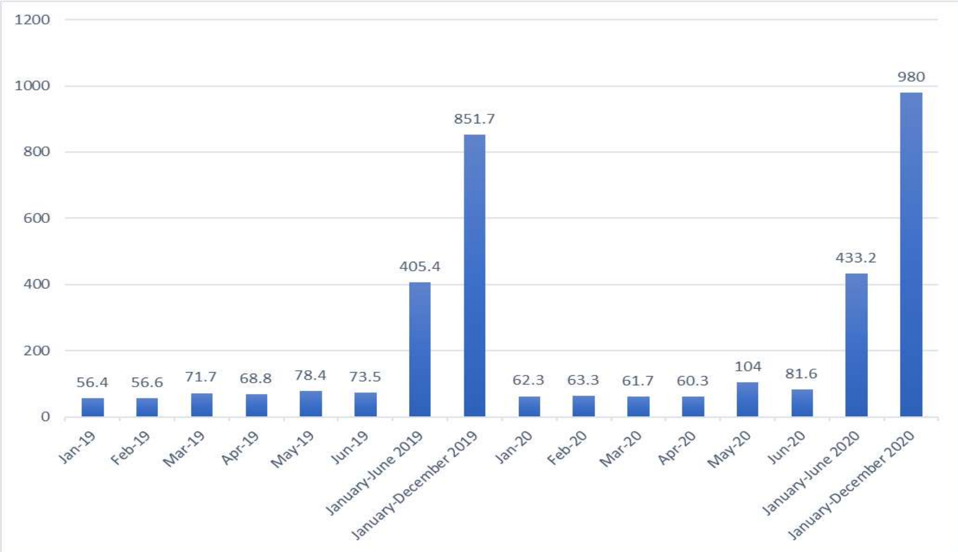
Table 2: Remittances and remittance channels for the period 2019 (before the Covid19 pandemic) and 2020 (during the Covid19 pandemic)

-in million euros

Year	Total	Commercial Banks	Money transfer agencies	Others
January 2019	56.4	9.0	27.0	20.4
February 2019	56.6	5.6	30.5	20.5
March 2019	71.7	9.1	36.6	26.0
April 2019	68.8	9.4	34.5	24.9
May 2019	78.4	7.6	42.4	28.4
June 2019	73.5	9.9	37.0	26.6
January-June 2019	405.4	50.6	208.0	146.8
January-December 2019	**851.7**	**123.0**	**420.1**	**308.5**
January 2020	62.3	10.1	29.6	22.6
February 2020	63.3	5.9	34.5	22.9
March 2020	61.7	7.3	41.2	13.8
April 2020	60.3	8.8	51.5	---
May 2020	104.0	15.4	88.6	---
June 2020	81.6	11.3	59.0	---
January-June 2020	433.2	58.8	304.4	59.3
January-December 2020	**980.0**	**141.3**	**672.0**	**166.6**

Source: Central Bank of Kosovo. (2020). Monthly Statistical Bulletin No. 224, Pristina, pg, 99; Central Bank of Kosovo. (2020). Monthly Statistical Bulletin No. 226, Pristina, pg, 99; Central Bank of Kosovo. (2020). Monthly Statistical Bulletin No. 212, Pristina, pg, 99; Central Bank of Kosovo. (2022). Monthly Statistical Bulletin No. 248, Pristina, pg, 96.

Figure 3: Progress of remittances for the period 2019-2020



Analyzing the remittances sent by the Diaspora to Kosovo and comparing the same period of 2019 with the period of 2020, table No. 3 reflects the progress of remittances sent to Kosovo for the period January-December 2019 (before the Covid19 pandemic) and January-December 2020 (during the Covid19 pandemic). Remittances sent to Kosovo in the period January-June 2019 were worth 405.4 million euros, while in the period January-December 2019 they were worth 851.7 million euros, while in the period January-June 2020 they were worth 433.2 million euros and in the period January -December 2020 were worth 980.0 million euros, with an increase in remittances sent to Kosovo. In 2020, before the start of the Covid19 pandemic in Kosovo, during the months of January-February 2020 there was an increase in remittances of 11% compared to the same period of the previous year (2019) January-February 2019, while in the month of March 2020 there was a decrease of remittances of about 14%, compared to the month of March 2019. Remittances in the month of March 2020 were 61.7 million euros against 71.7 million euros in the month of March 2019. This decrease, which may be the result of the beginning of the Covid19 pandemic in Kosovo and the impact of it in other countries and in the economy of the countries where the Kosovar diaspora lives and works, having an effect on the sending of remittances from the diaspora to Kosovo in the period of the beginning of the Covid19 pandemic.

5. Correlation between gross domestic product and remittances

Remittances are an important economic and social parameter. Remittances are a key issue in economic discussions and at the same time an extremely intensive area of research. Correlational analyzes were used in this article to measure the strength of the relationship between the independent variable Remittance (X) and the GDP dependent variable (Y). The result of the correlational study is obtained by the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient values are between - 1 and + 1. Its + 1 value indicates that both variables are in complete linear relation and in the same direction which means that all points lie in a straight line with coefficient positive angle. Whereas the value - 1 of the correlation coefficient indicates that the variables are in complete linear relation and in the opposite direction. For correlation analyzes, it has been argued that the correlation coefficient is a summary measure describing the degree of the statistical relationship between two variables; the dependent variables and the independent variables (Leroux, 2009). Indicators of the Correlation Analysis of Remittances and GDP are presented by the Correlation Coefficient (r), the Determination Coefficient ($\boldsymbol{r2}$) and Alliance / the Contingency Coefficient (ka). On the basis of correlational analyzes we analyze the impact of Remittances on GDP. For Remittances and GDP, the correlation analysis covers the period from 2010 to 2021.

Table 3. Data are expressed in EUR millions over the period 2010– 2021

Vitet	*Remitenca X1*	*GDP Y1*	*X1-X*	*(X1-X)²*	*Y1-Ȳ*	*(Y-Ȳ)²*	*(X1-X)*(Y1-Ȳ)*
2010	*584.3*	*3,788.7*	*-139*	*19,321*	*-1,935.2*	*3,744,999.04*	*268,992.8*
2011	*492.5*	*4,285.7*	*-230*	*52,900*	*-1,438.2*	*2,068,419.24*	*330,786*
2012	*516.4*	*4,633.9*	*-206*	*42,436*	*-1,090*	*1,188,100*	*224,540*
2013	*573.4*	*5,053.4*	*-149.9*	*22,470.01*	*-670.5*	*449,570.25*	*100,507.95*
2014	*622.3*	*5,241.1*	*-101*	*10,201*	*-482.8*	*233,095.84*	*48,762.8*
2015	*655.5*	*5,640.1*	*-67.8*	*4,596.84*	*-83.8*	*7,022.44*	*5,681.64*
2016	*691.0*	*5,990.5*	*-32.3*	*1,043.29*	*266.6*	*71,075.56*	*8,611.18*
2017	*759.2*	*6,328.6*	*35.9*	*1,288.81*	*604.7*	*365,662.09*	*21,708.73*
2018	*800.6*	*6,572.9*	*77.3*	*5,975.29*	*849*	*720,801*	*65,627.7*
2019	*851.7*	*6,988.8*	*128.4*	*16,486.56*	*1,264.9*	*1,599,972.01*	*162,413.16*
2020	*980.0*	*6,679.3*	*256.7*	*65,894.89*	*955.4*	*912,789.16*	*245,251.18*
2021	*1,153.4*	*7,484.5*	*430.1*	*184,986.01*	*1,760.6*	*3,099,712.36*	*757,234.06*
Total	*723.3*	*5,723.9*	*2.4*	*427,599.7*	*0.7*	*14,461,219*	*2,240,117.2*

$$\mathrm{r} = \frac{\sum(\mathrm{X1}-\mathrm{X}) * (\mathrm{y1}-\bar{\mathrm{Y}})}{\sqrt{\sum(\mathrm{X1}-\mathrm{X})2 * \Sigma(\mathrm{Y1}-\bar{\mathrm{Y}})}}$$

$$r = \frac{2{,}240{,}117.2}{\sqrt{427{,}599.7\ x\ 14{,}461{,}219}} = \frac{2{,}240{,}117.2}{2{,}486{,}687.13} = 0.90$$

Covariance- The covariance of choice is defined as follows:

$$S\ xy = \frac{\sum(\mathrm{x1}-\mathrm{x}) * (\mathrm{y1}-\bar{\mathrm{Y}})}{\mathrm{n}-1}$$

$S\ xy = \frac{\sum(\mathrm{x1}-\mathrm{x})*(\mathrm{y1}-\bar{\mathrm{Y}})}{\mathrm{n}-1}$ =2,240,117.2/12=186,676.42

Correlation coefficient

The correlation coefficient is $\mathbf{r = 0.90}$ From this we see that we have a positive average correlation, and that there is a positive average correlation between Remittances and GDP.

Determination coefficient:

$\boldsymbol{r^2 = (0.90)^2 = 0.81}$ From here it results that **81.00%** of the Remittances variation is explained by the variation of GDP.

Alliance coefficient:

$\mathbf{Ka = 1 - \boldsymbol{r^2} = 1 - 0.81 = 0.19}$ It results that **19.00%** are other unexplained factors affecting Remittances.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Remittances continue to be of great importance to households in Kosovo. Considering that Kosovo has a low level of local production and economic growth, as well as a high rate of unemployment, in this context the importance and effect of remittances has been and remains of special importance for family economies and the economy in general in Kosovo.

In the framework of the work and analysis we have done regarding the impact and economic effect of remittances before and during the Covid19 pandemic in Kosovo, we present some of the conclusions and recommendations:

Remittances remain an important financial source and an important influencing element of aggregate demand, influencing the level of consumption and the standard of living of households in Kosovo.

Remittances represent an important source of income for family economies, having influence and effects on the economy of Kosovo.

Remittances to Kosovo should be mainly focused on investments in the economy and development projects.

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KAFKA, LITERATURE AND THE LAW

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Abstract.

"Legal professionals as writers" is a new indicated topic in the field of law as well as literature, the topic itself was not enough researched and this in the first place points out the fact that it is about different kinds of writing. As legal professionals must be careful and consult the law and above all the reality when it comes to implementing their profession, writers, on the other side, let themselves roam freely in their imagination and phantasy, meaning they are allowed to include grotesques, utopias and ecstasies in their writings.

The perfect junction of these two dissimilar topics is Kafka, the expressionist and the lawyer. What also makes Kafka the best fit for the above-mentioned topic are the intersections between his professional life and his art.

Most of Kafka's writings have law and justice as the main backdrop. This paper argues that law is the plot of Kafka's literature, that there is a potential link between the legal profession and literature and that the writer Franz Kafka was a great artist as well as a great acknowledger of law.

On drafting this paper and in arguing the main objectives, the following methods were applied: The method of analyzing the literary texts, the method of comparative literature and comparative methods in general.

Keywords: Franz Kafka, Law, Literature, Expressionism, Study Methods.

1. Introduction

The impossibility highlighted in the daily life of society as a collective community is what pushes this collective being only towards the possible. Utopian realism, this fantastic ideal is aimed and brought to the highest level by philosophy and literature.

Europe in the years after the first World War, the consequences and the socio-political situation were decisive in the drastic developments of the 19th century. In search of salvation, the great social revolutions have usually produced artists and special artistic spirits.

The history of German literature since the 70s has been characterized by many young authors who, among other things, with revolutionary intensity aimed not only at a new style in the way of writing but also a new way of living.

One of these "intensities" is expressionism, a revolt which is the last and at the same time the most intense among the revolts of this type.

Expressionism and the term as such defines as much as the modern revolution of literature of this period as well as other aspects of enormous importance for the society of that time. Expressionism was a big target of the leaders of that time who claimed to be against "degenerate art "and "cultural Bolshevism". The very fact that expressionism can be considered the antithesis of Nazism orients us toward the complex range of this movement. (see. "The Writer in Extremis" Walter Soccer 1959, Stanford, California. pg. 2)

If it is at all possible to find the inclusive character of the expressionist movement then it will have to be sought in the relationship to society; in the opposition of expressionists of all colors and persuasions to the civic world.

In principle, the essential element that defines this period is the conflict of generations, what is the "world of the fathers" in conflict with the "world of the sons".

This generational war combines difficulties and strong barriers for both sides against each other. Expressionists aim to break and fight these barriers through art, hoping for the creative message of art, they want to remove conventional restraints and release human emotionality from any kind of imposed coercion. (See History of World Literature, Fifth Edition, 1969, Zagreb. pg 221-222)

In the 'making' of expressionism, nothing is impossible, neither utopianism, nor ecstasy, nor the grotesque itself or even such kinds of war, as the son-father war.

2. Franz Kafka-The Expressionist

One of the most eminent authors of expressionism is the author Franz Kafka.

Kafka, whose stories survived only giving credits to his friendship with Max Brod, is still today among the most unique authors in existence.

Enigmas, allegories and his way of writing make Kafka and the ways of interpreting his works and writings to be countless. It can rarely be said that one interpretation is better than the other, or that Kafka's works can fill or be enough only with one interpretation. The greatness of his works is never enough for one or two interpretations.

According to the History of World Literature, Fifth Edition, 1969, Zagreb, the criticism in the interpretation of his texts until today sought to come with the help of psychoanalysis, mythology, psychology, religious or even structural analysis, since the texts are mysterious texts and mysteriousness theirs constantly prompts new interpretations.

Kafka deeply experienced the contradictions, because his personal ethnic and social position was a question of resources and concerns, therefore it is not difficult that his works are interpreted as a symptom of his personal and social antinomies.

The "son-father" conflict, also expressed in the author's life, causes his works to be influenced thanks to that conflict, which was also characteristic of expressionism as a period, and "Letter to the father" serves as an important argument for this issue.

Kafka was noted for his characteristic writings which in essence often have the law and above all have a pessimistic approach to the problems and issues raised by himself in his works.

Within his literary creativity, we can find different legal shades and conspiracies which are manifested in Kafka's works.

Being an expressionist through literature and linking it with the law and justice system is what makes Kafka a great topic for both of the above-mentioned fields.

3. The Language of Literature and the Language of Law

Language and law, in order to exist, both need a basic cell, their basic element, the medium of language. (cf. Catherine Harwood "Franz Kafka's Literature and Law" pg. 4)

Kafka considered that the term "Literature" is as dignified as it is insulting because it has gradually become a "catch" for all ideas, and this term as such deprives others of the proper perspective. (Introduction 3 August 1917, Franz Kafka Diaries 1914-1923 Max Brod (ed) (Schocken, New York, 1949) 174 [Kafka Diaries].

According to him, the nature of writing should be of a more defined nature and be distinguished as "high literature". Whether he thought his writings fit this second definition is uncertain.

The legal language and that of lawyers is a different languag, because while literature aims to convey a message to the reader by doing so through empathy, lawyers aim to make a clear interpretation through the language and words chosen, or t influence a issuan. There is not necessarily an intersection between the above-mentioned issues, the meeting is evident and the best example for thofis the author Franz Kafka.

A famous quote informs: 'Only lawyers and painters can turn white into black and black into white.'

Recognizing the emotional effect that literature causes and the goals that advocacy achieves through words, we rightly come tconcludelanguage and words are the most powerful tools that man has as a separate being with the characteristic of consciousness. According to Harwood, the intersection between law and literature is as imprecise as it is present because the law is described as both a rival and a brother of literature.

Not infrequently, we witness the facts that great writers have taken up or studied law and at the same time have been quite special writers, regardless of whether they have included their "legal" knowledge in their texts.

Being a lawyer is not enough only with general knowledge but also with: "thinking like a lawyer" (Hooward, pg 8)

Not necessarily studying law should be reflected only in that limitation, legal knowledge guides in the political one, which influences perceptions in our daily life and in our other activities that do not necessarily have to do with the law. But with representation in the fields other of more general ones.

The danger that exists when we are at this point, is what can be done to this research, as Hooward marks; "The danger in investigating the connections between an author's legitimacy, his livelihood, and his literature is the tendency to overestimate the connections."

The works of the author Franz Kafka, counting on the part of his being that belongs to justice, can rightly be interpreted within this context. It seems that Kafka was aware of both of these eminent impacts on people's lives: Literature and Justice, and had decided to use them only towards noble goals.

Kafka should rightly be singled out for his ability to use the language of the law to confuse, put in labyrinths and transform the reader of his literature, regardless of whether this reader is a lawyer or not.

4. The political system and the 'Kafka being'

The social system is what produces the artists, writers and philosophers of every period.

If we return to the social aspects and analyze the general political and social situation since shortly before the year of the birth of the author Kafka, around 1880, we notice a multitude of developments that guide the understanding, to a certain extent, of being Kafka.

One of the greatest personalities of the 19th century, Karl Marx asserted that all historical changes occur as a result of class conflicts, the cause of which he saw as a contradiction between the methods and relations of production, i.e. the dispute between the form of material production and of the consumption of produced wealth. He also claimed that the bourgeoisie, which controlled all commerce, had left no bond between people except "bare selfishness and the coldness of payment in money." People were once valued for what they were but the bourgeoisie had turnee human value into an exchange value. Moral feelings had been left aside because the priests and jurists themselves had turned into paid "argots".

According to him, the analysis of the economic basis of any society is also the philosophy, art, and laws of that society. (See 198-199 The Big Book of Philosophy)

The revolution and social issues were further fueled by the philosophy of Henry Thoreau, whose philosophy was used also by Mahatmama Gandhi to influence his campaign against discrimination in South Africa.

Thoreau raises the issue "Should the citizen submit his conscience to the Legislature?"

That such a thing should not happen is also argued by Franz Kafka with his "The Trial" in which a person goes through a process of meaning matters only for his legislator.

Thoreau believed that it was the individual's duty to protest against unjust laws, and by allowing those laws to be enacted he way justifying them.

In principle, the ideas of the philosopher Thoreau and their implementation in society were completely different from what Marx envisioned as a leader of violent social revolutions. Thoreau's ideas were applicable, more reasonable and acceptable and were "embraced" by leaders of various movements such as Martin Luther King or even Mahatama Gandhi.

Marxist ideas took off later around the 1930s, becoming the official philosophy of the Soviet Union and many other communist countries.

Continuing with this analysis from 1880, in 1907 the work "Creative Revolution" by the philosopher Henry Bergson describes reality not as a state but as a process. This writting of his once again brings to mind Kafka's "Trial", a process for which the main figure is not able to leave this process or to have full awareness of why he was part of that process, and that reality as a process more than as a state constitutes one of the new interpretations of the work "The Trial".

As much analysis as to the social and political situation from Kafka's birth to his literary "production" should also be devoted to the analysis of the Habsburg monarchy, which stands out for the traces it has left in Europe.

The Habsburgs were a family who were "landlords" more than leaders, they would allow anything but this epithet to disappear, and this epithet, this resistance was exactly what destroyed them.

The theory of the Habsburg leaders was that it is a "royal organization" and not a state, and to be part of Austria means to be away from any kind of national feeling. (see Page 22, The Habsburg Monarchy.)

The 19th century was followed by a change in the royal issue, traditional patriotism was replaced by modern nationalism and traditional rights were transformed into what is known as liberal principles. In 1804 the Habsburg Empire took the name "Austrian Empire".

After the revolutions of 1848, the Austrian Empire included three main cities: Budapest, Vienna and Pra,gue, of which Vienna had the most inhabitants and was known as the city with a modern character.

In Budapest, after the Paris Revolution, the first initiatives began, a group of students were the forerunners of the "Laws of March", laws which contained three elements: the constitutional, liberal and national element, and the same served as the basis for the creation of the laws of Hungary today.

This rise in Budapest also served as a starting point for the rise of intellectuals in Prague, who created their own program. Finally, but most importantly, the revolution in Vienna, where the main power of the dynasty was, began entirely as a judicial conspiracy. and as a result it was required that the measures be included in this matter. After the 80s, at the beginning of the 1900s in the Austrian empire until about 1908 reigned what is known as the "Indian summer" for the empire.

In the period from 1908 to 1914 in Vienna there was a 'spirit' of action. The weakening of the monarchy was continuous and the bureaucracy was the only method by which the monarchy was kept afloat.

Based on the principle that man is a product of society and the environment in which he lives, Kafka, who lived in a difficult period for humanity that included wars, a period which was also characterized by bureaucracy and "repressive" state organization gives us the signal that the author Kafka lived in a period which determined to a considerable extent his creativity.

5. Kafka, Before the Law

"*Before the Law*" is a story by the author Kafka in which a man, specified as a native, seeks to enter the gate of law and knowledge. Such a thing is prevented from him by the gatekeeper who guards this gate which the man wants to pass because according to the local man, the law is and should be open to everyone.

The gatekeeper announces that he is powerful and that after him, at each subsequent gate, there is a guard more powerful than this first one.

The story ends with the death of the man and the closing of this gate which was made only for this man.

"A guard stands before the law" In this sentence, the author guides us towardstowardgument that the law is guarded by someone, a guard appointed for this matter.

Consequently, from the legal point of view, what preserves the law and its functioning is the sanction, in the case of Kafka's story, the author guides us to a more powerful segment that preserves this "law" because further on in the story this gatekeeper says *"I am the powerful, but the smallest in the hierarchy"*. This sentence leads us towards the understanding that it is not about the personification of the law but of the court, in our case as a gatekeeper, guard, protectand ion mechanism of the law.

The following line can be interpreted in several ways in terms of literature as well as in terms of law *"I am powerful. And I'm just a little gatekeeper in the hierarchy. And from one chamber to another of the law there are gatekeepers who are one more powerful than the other. I can't even bear a third glance."*

In the hierarchical organization of courts, seen from the point of view of contemporary legal systems, it is known that courts have a hierarchical scale according to which they judge depending on the weight of the case. In the simplest case, the simplest basic court, sometimes known as the municipality court, somewhere with other naming, stands as the smallest in the hierarchy, whose decisions can be overturned and do not even "resist" a review (in Kafka expressed as "glimpse") of the court of a higher level in the hierarchy, much less a third as the highest in the hierarchy.

"He becomes like a child and, since through many years of studying the keeper he knows even the fleas on the plush coat, he begs them to help him fill the keeper's mind"

With: the fleas of the guardian of the law to whom the man begs to help him, has Kafka personified those whom society knows as the slaves of high mechanisms or has he intended to,once mo re, remind us of the "ugliness" of the juridical system,we can not surely guess or name.

This comparison is relevant when we are dealing with the contemporary legal system, and as a finding it serves as an argument for Kafka's predictions or in other words - the prophet, regarding the law, the system and the hierarchy of the regulation of the justice system.

"This door was open only for you[16]" A law for one person for one action. The law as a legal norm regulates a certain issue and everyone is responsible to the law themselves in the ratio 1:1, so one law - one individual, (two individuals can violate the same law but they are judged separately for that law precisely in this mentioned proportion) consequently this "door" and this "law" works only for him as a "culprit"

What is the emotional or mental interference that can be attached to this problem, apart from the legal issue raised by Kafka?

Thanks to this story and the above-mentioned concrete sentence, "This door was open only for you", the author wants to remind us that after a problem, the blame will be a higher and insurmountable one, and that often the human being is inclined to seek from life ambitions for which he does not have the courage to be inclined. Is this story a fault for which the author cannot find the solution because the hierarchy of fighting and recognizing this problem becomes more and more powerful?

The social and political situation in which this story was created leaves room for the interpretation of the story thanks to the policies of the Habsburg Monarchy at the time.

According to a study, for the legal aspect of the story "Before the Law" by Victor Fleming, the gatekeeper of the law, (whose importance lies precisely in the fact that he is the gatekeeper

[16] Franz Kafka,"Before the Law" 1915

of the law), presents the gatekeepers of the palaces of Prague who reflect a special insight .And from one gate to another, each one of them seems sharper than the other.

The Author, Fleming, continues further with the other character and states that in relation to the "man from the country", it has been pointed out that some translations of this phrase are phrases with which Kafka would have been very familiar, and which evoke "nickname for an ignoramus". It is all right for Kafka's man to get lost "in the labyrinth of his internal and external institutions," but members of the legal and legal profession dare not allow this to be their fate.

Could it be that Kafka has decided to consciously place his reader in interpretation games?

Or is it simply one more story in the great tangled maelstrom of Franz Kafka's unexplained feelings.

The interpretation thanks to the justice of this story orients us towards the question raised especially entirely in the work "The Trial", in which Kafka raises the issue of the connection between justice and the law.

Many of his works and writings are related and contain the element of justice in their composition. A large part of his works use the law as their main element or plot. Many authors refuse to "obey the word as written by Kafka "and assume that it is metaphorically due to justice, perhaps Kafka had simply decided to write based on justice which he was familiar with, because he was a law student, an employee in a commercial company, in court, and an agent to a workers comp insurance company.(cf. Catherine Harwood, pp. 15-16)

The story "Before the Law" according to the aforementioned interpretations further guides us that indeed the legal color is among the most accurate interpretations of Kafka's works. "The Trial" and the story within it, "Before the Law", are only two of his works in which the reader, even if a non-lawyer, can distinguish and be able to make an interpretation thanks to justice, and this as a duty mostly belongs to the law student than anyone else..

6. Kafka, Advocates

Many of Kafka's references to law and legal authority are framed in spatial metaphor.

This can be seen in several ways, in which the protagonists often resist conventional descriptions and associations – the effect, for example, of the official and bureaucratic union with the location – producing a disorientation for both the protagonist and the reader and challenging any assumed certainty of conditions.

In the short story "Advocates" the first-person narrative is seen as it wanders through the labyrinthine corridors: narrow, arched, strict and variously decorated, created for its appearance.

Likewise silence, which resembles a library or a museum more than a court.

On the face of it, this is an inappropriate place for lawyers to be looking; but there are those informal, arbitrary elements, within such "everything is the accusation, the lawyer and the decision", which are established by lawyers that should be found everywhere, outside the official environment.(See Roberto Buonamano, Kafka and Legal Criticism pp.11-12)

"I was not at all sure if I had any lawyer, I could find any record of this, every face was unfriendly, it is not sure I am not sure if I had any lawyer, I could find none of record of this, any person it is not certain, whoever is certain that it is certain that all others are so. with blue-

white stripes that covered their whole body, continues to caress the belly and sway awkwardly and pleasantly. "(Kafka, Advocates, 1922)

That Kafka did not believe in the courts of that time can be interpreted through the story "Advocates"→ "*It is not at all certain if I had any lawyers, I cannot find any definite about this (...)"*

Even this work of the author Kafka seems to be a struggle and research against the system of that time, looking for the right people to fight against the law, violations and the system. it comes to us, he also said in the work "The Trial".

"Here it is most necessary to have lawyers, many lawyers, the best possible lawyers, a living person, because lawyers are by nature hard to set in motion; yet the plaintiffs, those sly foxes, those sly foxes, those common mice, they slip through the tiniest loopholes, slip through the feet of lawyers. So be careful! That's why I'm here, I'm gathering lawyers. But I haven't found any yet, just because I can ask that it's not looking, it would put me to sleep. I'm not in the right place - I can't escape the feeling that I'm not in the right place." (Kafka, Advocates, 1922)

The uniqueness of this work is the fact that it is a work that ends with an optimistic spirit, which we are not used to seeing as a characteristic of Kafka "As long as you do not stop climbing, the stairs will not end, under your feet of ascent they will grow higher."

Kafka's distrust of the many system can be argued through the aforementioned story of how hard it is to find a good lawyer.

It seems that a number of arguments on these issues can be attributed to the contemporary legal system, which even to this day has anomalies of expression, especially in the country in transition, which are towards state-building and state-formation, and in which anomalies . of the system are more pronounced than anywhere else.

7. Kafka, In the Penal Colony

In the penal colony is a work that challenges the concept of justice and punishment in its own way, the same as in "The Trial" and in the work "In the penal colony" we are presented with an indisputable guilt, a guilt that is not convincingly argued but is so existent that the punishment is inevitable even execution.

The plot of the work is formed through a diagonal connection of four characters: an explorer, an officer, a soldier and a prisoner. The prisoner does not know the punishment and the reason for his punishment, while the explorer raises the question whether the prisoner had the opportunity to is defended, and this protest is refuted by the officer who tries to show why this is not wrong. Further in the work, the officer's obsession with the "Harrow" machine is presented, which machine has the kind of system that engraves an inscription on the body through needles of the condemned and as the inscription is carved he understands it.

According to Harwood the absence of the rule of law apparently does not matter to the proper officer because he is blinded by his 'logical' functions thereby losing sight of due The Trial and rationality. The rule of law has been violated, because no investigation or opportunity for the defense of the accused is possible. The special return of punishment from the prisoner to the officer reveals his fanatical faith in justice and The Trial. This underlines the ridiculous extent of the wrongdoing: that of power within the system, which cannot perceive its own flaws and blindly adapts to the perverse procedure. Harwood further goes on to state that the logic in punishing one who does not understand The Trial or the crime is flawed. The torturous death that awaits the prisoner seems all the more terrifying because of the complete failure to understand his fate. The lack of a common language between the officer and the prisoner ensures that this distance is maintained. This evokes in the reader the feeling that the events cannot constitute justice, even in the archaic sense. Guilt fails to be properly established in relation to the prisoners, but those who administer punishment are so absorbed in The Trial that they even deny it to themselves. justice. Kafka therefore demonstrates the irony of punishing injustice with injustice to bring about the right result.

Seen from the point of view of contemporary law, from a simple analysis, while in "The Trial" we have the violation of an element of the right which is: The accused has the right to know the reason for which he is accused, "In the penal colony" the prisoner except that he does not know the reason for his punishment, he is not even asked if he understands the guilt or not, and that in the contemporary legal system is an honor, the primary offense, because when an accused appears before the court, he is first asked if he understands and the indictment with which he himself is charged is clear.

According to Buonamano's analysis, in "Kafka and legal criticism", there is a connection between two symbols in the works of the author Franz Kafka, between the symbolism of physical and symbolic violence. Buonamano further emphasizes that in a story such as "In The penal colony", the description of physical violence is as prosaic as it is poignant, and the spectrum of domination and symbolic violence is widespread. The colonial setting, the importance of military discipline to social order, the conflict between opposing ideologies regarding the function and severity of punishment—these elements of the narrative each contribute to an analysis of the nature of legal authority, judicial power, and the culture of obedience. the punishment portrays even more the insidious method of violence. In the act, above all, it goes from a sound reasoning to reluctance to interfere in the affairs of a country to which it does not belong. The Traveler fails to stop the officer's self-imposed torture and execution, even though he witnesses the car's disintegration, but also actively prevents the soldier and the condemned man (now nominally free) from escaping and their imprisonment on the island .

Roberto Buenamono continues:

"Despite ideological differences, in fact, there is a fundamental continuity between the convict (who submits to his sentence in ignorance), the officer (who submits to tradition by upholding the legacy of the old commander), and the traveler (who accepts barbaric injustice) from the privileged point of view of the rational, dispassionate observer, proving to be as powerless to resist as others)."

An analogous work to "in the penal colony" is "The Trial", the developments, events and symbols are covered in an even more interesting plot. Both one and the other seem to be works through which Franz Kafka has presented the anomalies of the legal system through literature, knowing the "boring" language of legal officials, we assume that Kafka had the fantastic idea of implementing justice in literature and placing his character through The Triales and situations that even he himself (the character) is not clear about explains to us how many anomalies the justice system has and that man, this complex being, despite his mind, can hardly withstand systematic "strain".

It is emphasized by many authors that the works of the author Franz Kafka are somewhat unfinished and it seems as if the author ends a long event with a few words, for example "like a dog" (in The Trial). This "non-completion" can to be intentional by the author, submission to the system, laws and state apparatus is a constant thing that has existed and continues to exist in the future, to which a person can be nothing but obedient.

8. The other Justice

Other justice is the term that in this paper refers to what is morally due to the character.

We are aware of the fact that the right does not only extend to the legal aspect but also to the moral aspect, in which a person, by action or inaction, consciously or unconsciously, with or without intention, because he may be such himself or not 'can be, it causes psychological and spiritual violence to another.

This violence, for which often no help can be sought from the court or law enforcement agencies, to which people happen to be subjected without the full awareness that a certain personality constitutes 'not good' is what often determines life and the creation of personality of the individual. The impact that people and the social circle can have on the other are undeniable and always arguments of the intellectual shaping of the individual.

In this matter in which we cannot ask the court to judge the other 'why he is the way he is and is not different' we hope for another justice.

Some attribute this justice to the religious concept and their creator, some others believe in the law of attraction, while some act according to what is known today as the "boomerang" according to which every good or bad thing comes and goes.When we are at this point, it seems that the characters of our author Kafka need a somewhat longer research than that due to justice.

Where is the justice for the philosophical man when we are in the "The Trial" or the "Penal Colony" and even more so who will decide the justice for the "deviance" of the local man, whose door has no meaning and closes at the end of his life, since he has dedicated his whole life to this issue.

- Is the story "Lawyers" Kafka's answer to these questions?

That it is not possible to find lawyers despite the great searches and labyrinths, there is no one worthy who can establish justice in the country.

-Is the story "Lawyers" Kafka's next question in the justice of this matter?

"*As long as you don't stop climbing, the stairs will not end, under your climbing feet they will continue to grow higher and higher*". (Kafka, Advocates, final work)

That regardless of whether or not there is a lawyer or a creature that decides justice, the person continues to move, at least this is what these sentences among the closing sentences in “Advocates" instruct us to do.

Whether Kafka wants to have justice for his characters who are "mistreated, misled and tormented" we cannot assume for sure and it is not worth aiming against the issue that is laid before us, which has to do with the very life of the author Kafka.

"Letter to the father" is among the most important letters that Kafka may have written (at least for literature researchers), because the literature, nature and manner of this author's writings are largely defined by his very being, which we learned that everything was influenced by his unhealthy relationship with his father. In this letter he described the psychological suffering that this relationship with him had caused him, the letter which never reached the hand of Kafka's father can serve as a among the main elements that should be used for interpretations and above all in understanding the nature of this author's writings.

"*In my books it was about you, I did nothing but cry for what I couldn't cry on your chest*" (Kafka, Letter to father, 1952)

These words guide us towards new, more personal interpretations of our author, who has constantly placed his characters in judgment and guilt, and this seems to have been a personal feeling of his caused by his father.

The rude nature of his father and his ignorance have determined the personality of the author Kafka as much as his writings.

"*I have never been able to understand how you were completely insensitive to the suffering and shame you caused me with your words and judgments*." (Kafka, Letter to father, 1952).

The author Franz Kafka is aware of the negative impact and the fact that his parent's nature has nothing to do with him, this can best be argued through the following lines:

"You cannot treat a child differently except according to your nature".

(...)"Your self-confidence was so great that you didn't need to follow a line of logic to be right."

Kafka lacks self-confidence and well-being in his life, according to the letter he expresses as follows:

"at an adult age with the forces that remained from my childhood"(...) "the greatness of my failure has been at the height of the effort."

This letter in which Kafka expresses the suffering and psychological violence that his father has caused him is the letter that informs us of the 'moral debt' that his father had to him, this debt and this injustice that he caused could not be judged by anyone normal court "The Trial", from no machine that engraves the prisoner's guilt and the sentence happens to be taken by the orderer "In the penal colony", from no decent lawyer in sight "Advocates", even more so this injustice is sensational that "from one stronger than the other cannot be resisted "Before the law".

Opposite point of view:

This debt caused to him is:

- in the form of an undeniable guilt; it is an inevitable The Trial "The Trial" 1925 also pronounced in "Letter to Father", 1910.:

"If they hang a man, he dies and everything comes to an end. But when they force him to be present in all the preparations for the hanging (...)" or even "like a dog" (The Trial).

- A constant denial and disallowance "Before the Law"

"the villager devoted his whole life to waiting in front of the gate"

- A labyrinth in which no one is a worthy lawyer

Such debts are matters of moral justice for which not often the complex being can turn to a system that in itself (according to Kafka's time and findings) is oppressive.

It seems that Kafka has decided to combine three main elements in his creativity:

-His relationship with his father

-His knowledge about the justice system

-Anomalies of that system.

9. Conclusion

The literary creativity of this author does not end with only criticism against the system or with the "mourning" of his father's debt. His creativity includes a much wider and more complete range.

In the end we return again to the beginning, expressionism - this revolt the only one of this intensity of the kind that stands out for the special artists who acted according to the ideas and views of expressionism.

Franz Kafka, we can rightly say that he is one of the pioneers and main characters of this artistic spirit. In the History of World Literature, Fifth Edition, 1969, Zagreb, among others, we find the sentence*: "Expressionism requires ecstasy"* (p. 226), and this characteristic, this feature mostly belongs to Kafka, his closest friend Max Brod writes in his diary: *"Kafka spends his nights writing, in ecstasy."*

Franz Kafka, the lawyer and expressionist, is the best example of how justice and its elements can be implemented in one single thing: In art. In most of the works of this author, the law is the background and main color.

From the beginnings of law to Roman law, it seems that Kafka knows the science of justice quite well, this is argued with the interpretation of the author Giorgio Agamben, who suggests that the work "The Trial" is entirely about defamation as guilt and dealing with justice in of that guilt.

He justifies this suggestion with the name of the main character Jozef K., the initial "K" represents the Roman doctrine "calumnia", which was characteristic of the civil criminal procedure according to which the culprit who was charged with making baseless accusations or defamation, the letter K was engraved on his forehead and that person was identified as "Caluminator". According to many data, Cicero also referred to the principle "Caluminator" many times. In Roman law, it was foreseen that the person who was a "Caluminator" should answer before the court through which he had prosecuted the innocent persons. In the work "The Trial" the caluminator is Josef K. and it is Josef K. who represents the slanderer, simultaneously the innocent accused and the false accuser and thus reconfigures the main reason that in "The Trial" we have a proceeding for defamation against ourselves.

So this interpretation indicates that Kafka was a very good connoisseur of law and its principles.

Furthermore, his story leaves room for more than three interpretations thanks to the philosophical right, two within the historical-social aspect and some other ways related to the state regulation of the Habsburg Empire.

The other legal color within his works is quite clearly represented in the works "Advocates" and "In the Penal Colony".

His literary creativity does not stop only with the implementation of the law in his creativity, the author Kafka also stands out for other creations such as: "Metamorphosis" or "Amerika". Which are of a different nature than "The Trial" "Advocates" or "In the Penal Colony".

For a longer time,than to ever be believed,we may continue to stick to the opinion that Kafka, Law and Literature can be placed on the same common line, because this author belongs to literature as much as to law.Kafka, the expressionist and the lawyer still leaves a lot to be studied of.

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THE SEMIOTIC DREAM OF NDRE MJEDJA

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Abstract.

The language of Ndre Mjedja as a highly personal organized one also comes as a style on its own. And it is exactly the style that connects it to semiotics, where multitudes of meanings and activities are entwined. And in this paper that we are going to present, throughout the style that we glance in the text of Mjedja, with a special language in the use of literary creations, the semiotic explanation comes in hand for a more completed interpretation. Thus, by means of semiotics and not only, we will automatically notice that are created and reconstructed meanings of the literary text and in this case also reinterpretations of the works of Ndre Mjedja. From the text itself, we automatically move to the theoretical interpretation and give path to the hypotheses we intend to put forward. A work, interpretation of which is triggered by the recognition of the author as a kneader of a culture, of a worldview of its own that through language gives the atmosphere of longing and separation from the homeland, this separation in which the emphasis falls on the completely yearning spiritual conditions of the author. We will try to give a main point of view to the textual analysis of the poem "Andrra e jetës" based on the theories of the semiologist, the famous Russian culturologist Yuri Lotman. And Lotman himself would rightly call the dream as a hidden power.

Keywords: Literary Creation, Semiotics, Interpretation.

1. Introduction

Language as a code for the expression of thoughts, experiences and ideas is no longer enough just to be a code, but language is the code plus its history (Lotman. J., 2010: 21). It is precisely the historical circumstances of that time that pushed one of the greatest lyricists of Albanian literature, Ndre Mjeda, to bring such poetics through poems. The atmosphere of longing and separation from the homeland can be seen in the dramatic experiences of other poets as well. The word comes, Fan Noli, who, unlike Mjeda, who is a lyrical and elegiac orphan and a poet of pain, clothed in longing, in Noli we encounter the orphan through which he hopes to awaken the rebellion to overthrow the tyranny. Or, Ernest Koliqi, who through his writings gave prophecies about the changes in various life events that had to be made. Mjedja, before the two above-mentioned authors, clothed his poetics with longing, poetics that, when he adds other characteristic features such as metaphorical beauty or hypotyposis as an image beyond words, coincide with the features of modern lyrics (Macaj, E., 2015: 14). The variety of word images is a kind of multiplication of discourse. And at this point, according to Lotman, art approaches the dream, which has the main task of serving as a field of transformations and creating new meanings.

For clarification, the explanation of the signs left by Mjedja in "Andrra e Jetës" cannot be a religious poem, as it has been described several times. It is better suited to the name as a metaphysical poem, and one thing is certain, "Andrra e Jetës" is one of the masterpieces of Albanian poetry. Meanwhile, Mjedja also had creations in the form of religious poems, poems that were mainly published in newspaper formats, as the saying goes, the poem "Blind daughter that we don't leave". But not the "Andrra e Jetës". Connecting with the religious theme, it leads us to the explanation, which is the misfortune of this author that, if we look at the textbooks of Albanian literature, it was truncated and deformed a lot during the time of socialist realism. What we also notice is that Mjedja is missing even today in the literature that is treated in high schools, even though he is one of the greatest authors and among the greatest lyric poets that Albanian literature has had.

Most of the literature, also in the case of Mjedja, takes its theme from the real world, from what the author observes and processes with his imagination. This process is related to what is called mimesis since Aristotle. The author creates a literary text similar to the real world. This world, which the author creates, does not completely direct him and somehow does not rule him. The author is in the role of the creator, but not the ruler. Therefore, apart from what we know as real, we also have the part of the dream, for which many authors comment and give definitions. This is how Mjedja, influenced by the cultural reality of the time, by life's difficulties and poverty, built the "Andrra e Jetës" which contains both pain and misery. But we see that we have an interweaving between the real and the subjective world in the creation of the poem in question. Because when reality fades, we tend to replace it with something more functional. Thus, the author is inclined to express, as Lotman says, the linguistic reality, through the multiplication of discourse.

At this point, art, literature itself as the art of speech, approaches the dream. This in itself represents an artistic thought, which, according to Lotman, is expressed through a structural connection and does not exist beyond it. Coupling which includes text levels: from phoneme, morpheme, word, verse to stanza. Literature, which is an interpreter of codes, proves that the literary text is not only connected to the real world and to the subjective and personal world of the author, from which it derives, but it is also a derivative of other earlier codes, be they myths, or religious codes. And it is rightly asserted that it is a syncretic art, which absorbs the state of human consciousness, his intellectual and spiritual construct.

By reading the poem, we understand what we can consider as the explosion, or the boom of a certain historical period in the evaluation of high moral features in people, especially the Albanian woman, and the pain for the fate of these people. Although the environment does not agree with this reality, it does not think about the way to change this situation that they were living. In his poem, he does not bring a Deus Ex Machina to fix that reality. That reality remains so, and the improvement of the situation remains a dream.

Dream after death or before it, little matters. The dream of life (Andrra e Jetës), rightly qualifies even today as the first Albanian poem that writes the common man as a being in the face of common death (Shehri Dh., 2013: 98). The sudden death of a child is a distortion of the ordinary and itself creates a boom in the story. After the boom, usually, Lotman pointed out, we have individuals who take on more importance. In the case of the poem, the importance goes to Zoga, only after Trina dies. But this is not compared to Lotman's examples that he takes, such as: Napoleon or Ivan the Terrible. Environmental Boom is more euphemistic. The transition to eternity of an individual can also be taken as a sacrifice for the other to realize his dream. The other, which constitutes this passage, in our case is Zoga.

2. Dream in reality – as another reality and its definition in literature

The narration of dreams in culture plays a big role, because it reorganizes the system of dreams, especially, giving them a compositional timeline (Lotman, J. 2010: 196). The real dream must be distinguished from the literary dream. Real dreaming seems to consist of some kind of stimulus that tends to distort the initial images we see. Why this happens is still debated. Freud, for example, believed that unconscious desires, always trying to emerge within the conscious, are blocked by a sensor (the inhibitory function of the superego, or moral sense), and can find expression only in masked form after they have passed condensation, symbolization and displacement.

To distinguish the nature of the literary dream, and its relationship to the fantastic, it would be good to start with a real dream (Ruprecht, Carol Schreier, 1993: 33). In that case, her explanation would be too limited to a small number of words. In short and expressive sentences, not at all stylistic. However, in literature we know that almost the opposite happens. We have the presence of style, literary figures, more extended interpretation of dreams.

3. Mjedja and Lotman's Semiosphere

Dreams and their significance have been dealt with extensively by Lotman. He is the first semiologist to coin the term semiosphere. This means like a semiological sphere, where every space is subject to the world of signs.

As a demonstration, we can say that even today's format of the conference that we currently do, presents a special semiosphere, a space where there are signs. Space where we are usually the announcers of the works and the audience, who communicate through signs, through sign systems, and in our case, it is language as a means of communication.

Lotman makes a digression when he raises the question of how archaic people, in times when there was still no language, guesses how they would have understood the dream. This must have been experienced with great anxiety, when they saw dreams and language was not yet invented and therefore could neither confess it nor understand it. For this reason, Lotman says that it is very important to try to understand, say, dreams, because he insists that it is very special as it is a semiosphere detached from reality, and that the dream, he says, is the mother of semiotic processes. Here comes the desire for personal and social affirmation, through dreams as desires and not dreams only as experiences.

One of the individual dreams, which takes social dimensions, Mjedja has managed to understand and at the same time treat it in the poetic art through the poem. A poem that captures motifs and messages that are sometimes inexplicable and unclear, as powerful as a message and at the same time meaningful about the life, culture and history in which he was a part. This is how Mjedja saw the solution to the situation at that time, the dream that emerges as the voice of the repressed conscience. Besides that, it is also a microcosm of the whole human experience (Rupprecht, Carol Schreier, 1993: 9). Although we always only approach the verbal description of a dream and surrender to further explanations, the Environment seems to bring the dream to life to the end. A dream that tells more by its silence than by the number of verses conditioned by the language of its symbols.

4. Stylistics of "Andrra e jetës"

In addition to the treatment, we give to Lotman's theories as concepts where they are related to the poetic creations of Mjedja, we must certainly pay attention to their stylistic side as well. We said at the very beginning that the language of Mjedja, as a special language, also comes as a separate style. Here, in some examples, we also see the stylistics with just some of the many figures that we encounter in Mjedja.

Maria Pia Pozzato, author of the book "Semiotics of the text", highlights Lotman's study of the poetic text as relevant even today. We will briefly see the presence of stylistic codes, figures, which are as simple as they are meaningful. Mjedja is a master of verse and stanza and this poem consists of their variety. As a poem, it is written entirely in three- and four-stanza verses, and sometimes hexagrams are used (the last part, no. IV).

The first part, Trina, contains three sub-stanzas (verses), which also opens with a beautiful metaphor:

Molla t’kputuna nji deget,

Dy qershija lidhë n’nji rrfanë,

Ku fillojnë kufijt e Geget,

Rrijnë dy çika me nji nanë.

From the very beginning, we notice that the author has used a double metaphor. Just as two cherries are connected, so are two daughters connected to their mother. The other metaphor is that they are like two split apples; the branch is meant to be Lokja who brought them to life.

The figure of symbolism appears at the end of the first part with the crowing of the rooster, indicating the end of something and the beginning of something new:

Veç prej plehit gjel-kokoti

me njat za që s’ndrron kurr-herë,

ka me gjegjë se a tui ndërrue moti

se a tue çue nji tjetër erë

The figure of comparison, it is observed that it has a greater use compared to other figures in this poem:

Vijnë dallëndyshat ***porsi*** *era*

përte’ det te çerdhja e vet;

vijnë bylbylat ku pranvera

n’pyje t’veshuna po i thrret

Also, we encounter the figure of repetition, which is used to strengthen the artistic expression:

këndoni, këndoni*, veç prej stanit*

t’ardhmen Trina mbramje n’shpi,

tue blegrue nji kij mbas zanit

t’deles nanë keni me ndi.

The repetition of the word *del* and *rri* at the beginning of the verses presents the figure of anaphora that comes as an incentive for Zoga to enjoy life:

Del*, oj bij’, prej shpisë sate,*

del *prei t’vorfënit katund;*

njajo flakë në n'zemër pate
do t'përvjellin tjetërkund.
*****
Me dy cokla n'votër plaka
rri *gjith' natën e vajton;*
rri *me duer kah ndezet flaka*
porsi njeri kur uron.

In the poem we also encounter the figure of personification, which is used in the case when Lokja invites death, more specifically this figure appears in the last stanza of the poem:

përmbi plakën krahët i uli
e ngryk t'shuemen e shtrëngoi;
buzët t'shpulueme n'ball ia nguli;
u ndal drita e ajo mbaroi.

Meanwhile, the figure of the symbol appears in the heroines themselves, each of them symbolizing something. Lokja, which symbolizes the weight of pain that life brings us, Trina - an inexperienced youth and Zoga, which symbolizes the continuity of life.

During this article, we tried to highlight that the poetics of Mjedja should be known in depth, in the passage of an analysis where the poet expresses inspirations, as well as stylistics. With the latter, we get to know the way the author sees the external world and that of thoughts and feelings. In this format, the philosophy, the use and the approach to the dream in Mjedja's poetics also come to life.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to know, or re-know Mejdja from a frame that is not much talked about. From that of the real and non-real world, incorporating comparative methodology with some of Lotman's semiotic theories. In a continuous manner, we have given meaning to this writing alongside Lotman's theories, with a focus on his semiotic theories on dreams and on culture. When Lotman is attracted to historical events, he tries to analyze them as normative texts of their own kind. On the other hand, when Mjedja is concerned about historical events, he tries to leave those events with the poetic and lyrical style that distinguishes him from others. Style which definitely comes as a semiotic decomposition (Eco, U., 2007: 158).

Conclusions based on methodological approaches such as comparisons, analysis, review, interpretation, lead to where it can be said that Mjedja's poetry, in addition to sounding beautiful, turns out to be image-building as well. The interpretation of the poem "Andrra e jetës", as an example of what we said, gives another direction to the meanings of the text, the philosophical thought, the figurative articulation as a dream that gives meaning to life; it also gives meaning to death.

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MITRUSH KUTELI BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND MODERN ELEMENTS OF ALBANIAN LITERATURE

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Abstract.

He is known by the literary name Mitrush Kuteli, but his real name is Dhimiter Pasko. We can say that Kuteli remains one of the authentic writers because his creativity is closely related to popular culture. Through his creativity, the Albanian reality is presented in all its dimensions using a special form such as a folk tale with characters from the society-wide reality. In his literary creativity, there are grotesque elements through which the author can penetrate the national cultural identity and mentality. Albanian. Various folk motifs bring the erasure of temporal and spatial boundaries as a penetrating tool in treating events and characters. Kuteli uses this opportunity to capture the values forgotten and disintegrated over the centuries, but still necessary for Albania in the 20th century. In Kuteli's work, Albanian narrative prose appears with prominent features. In general, it remains realistic prose, with an apparent romantic emphasis, that shows us different variations of Albanian life. The essence of Kuteli's narratives consists of elaborate legends and stories, village customs and environments described in great detail, as well as the psychology of Albanian village families.

Keywords: Albanian Life, Authentic Writer, Forgotten Values, Narrative Prose, Popular Tales.

1. Introduction

His real name is Dhimiter Pasko. He was born in the city of Pogradec, in 1907, and he completed his primary education in his hometown. He completed his secondary education with very good results in Thessaloniki, Greece. He continued his university studies in economics in Bucharest, Romania. Dh. Pasku made excellent studies, distinguishing himself from the beginning as an exceptional element, not only through his special intellectual capacity but also through his seriousness, prudence, conscientiousness, strength for work and all his moral standing, qualities which attracted the attention, appreciation and support of his great professor of finance, Viktor Slevescu, liberal leader, former minister and governor of the National Bank. By receiving his doctorate in finance, with a thesis evaluated in superlatives, Dhimiter Pasku was given the most beautiful perspectives for the realization of an excellent career. He was considered one of the best economists in the region. Engaged first as a functionary, he managed within a short time to become the director of the National Bank, devoting himself exclusively to the demands of close professionalism, without being registered in any political party..

2. Literary work

Lyrics, Poems and Poems: Tear Attack (1943). Song and Scream from the Burning City (1944). Chestnut Forest (1958). Prose: Albanian Nights (1938); Ago Jakupi, and other stories (1943); Captain Aga of Shaban Shpata (1944); The Love of Barbarian Artan (1946); Xinxifila

(1962); Old Albanian stories (1965); in the corner of lower Illyria (1983); Great is the horror of sin (1993); Moldavian Nights (2015) Others: Lasgush Poradeci (1937); Havadan with havadan (1944); Literary Notes (1944); Journal of the Economist (2012).

3. Realism and romanticism in Kutel's narrative prose

In Kuteli's work, Albanian narrative prose appears with prominent features. It generally remains realistic prose, with an apparent romantic emphasis, which shows us different variations of Albanian life. The essence of Kutelia's narratives is made up of legends and elaborate tales, customs and village environments described in great detail, as well as the psychology of the families of the Albanian countryside.

Kuteli, together with Koliq, are considered the co-founders of modern Albanian prose and among the initiators of literary criticism with the systematic column "Literary Notes". He is even the first Albanian author to publish critical books.

4. Literary creativity for children

In Mitrush Kuteli's literary creativity for children, we distinguish two main categories related to children's literature. Thus:

The category of children's literature written for adults in the years 1924-44 where a part of it can be used by children such as the volume "Albanian Nights" of 1938

The other category constitutes genuine children's literature. This category consists of volumes of stories: " The forest of chestnuts " in 1958, "Xinxifila" published in 1962 and "Old stories Albanian", published in 1965. This last volume remains the masterpiece in Kuteli children's literature.

5. Kutel's connection with folklore

In his literary creativity, Kuteli skillfully used the popular stone, i.e. Albanian folklore, and used motifs with a clear Albanian national identity. As one of the greatest representatives of Albanian folklore, Kuteli finds exactly there the motive for his creativity. Inspired by the beauty of folk poetry, he was able to turn this folk poetry into prose, into stories that are read from a young age by children. In his stories, children are introduced to the masterpieces of our folklore. Kuteli is a very special prose writer as he has relied so strongly on national folklore. It also becomes special for the attention it has received continuously from the reader in terms of the style of telling, spirit, events and poetic details, characteristics of the characters, mythical elements, environments, actions and conflicts in which the characters interact, another characteristic of his works are also the forms of unfolding fantasy and nostalgia, the many epic and lyrical details, the flexible language, the subtle humour and irony, but also the deep humanism that evokes an old Albanian world. The researcher Astrit Bishqemi, referring to the erasure, emphasizes: "Kuteli uses this tool to use and actualize at any time the values forgotten and disfigured by the centuries. Kuteli uses this opportunity in order to capture the values forgotten and disintegrated over the centuries, but nevertheless, necessary for Albania of the 20th century" (A. Bishqemi, 2014. 486).

6. The fantastic element in Kuteli's stories

To describe how the fantastic element is reflected in Kuteli's stories, let's consider the story "Rina-Kateriniza"

In the Rîna-Kateriniza story, the fantastic element comes as a component of the character's speech. Let us recall Rina's dialogue with Kiroloi for this. In this dialogue, the narrative is spread over two levels: one tells about events in the world of the living, while the other tells about events in the world of the dead. This way of writing causes in the reader the narrator's effect of duality, of the reality that happens in the real world and of the unreal that extends into the labyrinths of the fantastic to reach the afterlife, the world of the dead. For this let us refer to the following fragment:

"... Rîna-Kateriniza, listening to Philomena, took a look from the open grave, where she had to enter together with Kirolloi, to go down further, she shrieked until the whole place resounded and came closer to the grave of her master.

The night of May is warm, but the day is warmer.

He beat his breast so that the wind would beat him.

And the wonder of the gods that it was her breast!

Cold wind and honey bee!

Her hair fell over her shoulders. Golden snowflakes on my shoulders like snow.

Kirolloi trembled dead from such beauty. He tilted his head and kissed her hair, kissed her lips, kissed her breasts without kisses! And then he remained a sinner, between two worlds..." (M. Kuteli, 2014/a. 207)

We interpret the fantastic element in this part by relying on four levels:

1. Breaking the boundaries of time and space, specifically between life and death. At this moment, the mysterious, the supernatural, the Otherworld and everything that does not have a form in the real world, everything that does not happen in the real world is drowned.

2. The interweaving of the conscious part with the unconscious part in the transformation of the character during day and night, where during the day he leads the earthly life and at night he leads until dawn he leads the married life with the Kirolloi of the Otherworld.

3. Breaking the border between the material side and the spiritual side, the soul and fantasy.

4. The intermingling of the real with the unreal is what makes the situation indeterminate.

In the narrative, we find details that describe in detail the physiognomy of Kirolloi in the world of the dead. The great details realized by the invariant folk, ballad or mythological motifs are put in relation to the all-time reality and through it to the permanent Albanian reality. In the wave below, the physiognomy of Kirolloi in the world of the dead is pointed out.

"*-How wasted you are, my lord. The clothes that have mould, your face is faded and your eyes are sunken - yes, you are so sweet and I love you so much, that I never want to be apart!"* (M. Kuteli, 2014/a. 209).

It does not give us the appearance itself, the clothes, but also the healthy feelings that connect the real with the unreal. So in this narrative, the relationship between life and death, the combination of desire and impossibility, the mother's love for her suffering

The interweaving of the real with the unreal gives the prose the characteristics of a magical style. This is also seen in the following verses:

"... Clack-clack, some boards creaked as they broke, the boards of Killoroi's kiver.

Then the soil was removed on one side and this Killoroi came out, like the old rasp: - with gelatine old shoes, with golden tirq, with a groom's jacket.

Rîna-Kateriniza liked it as soon as she saw it!

Kirollo the stud loved him as soon as he saw it!

Both of them were smitten with each other!

Even both of them were protected from above by Mrs Hena herself, who was bathed in gold and silver.

There were clouds, they were white as a free line and the nine fields of the sky were as wide as the moon where you could roam. Katerina was sitting now and then headlong, like a married bride, there and then in the open grave, with the mantle in her left hand..." (M. Kuteli, 2014/a. 209). As we emphasized above, in this part we notice the interweaving of the real with the unreal, both in the description of the environment where the events are set and in the description of the characters: Nina-Kateriniza and Korolloi. Especially the character Kirolloi, who represents much more of the unreal, is described with special typical clothes like the characters of dreams: "with gelatine old shoes, with golden tirq, with groom's jacket". The space, the environment where the events take place is described with unreal elements mixed with real elements. Thus, the Moon, an element of the real world, is described to us with unreal colours imagined as a sign of the testimony of love desired not only by the characters but also by the author himself through colourful and glittering clothes with gold and silver ("washed in gold and silver"). The description "There were clouds, they were white" shows that the love between a real and an unreal whole was not so simple, but the strong feeling of love could triumph over everything and over real and unreal divisions. With the expression "the nine fields of the sky", Kuteli wanted to emphasize that love has no limits, not only on our planet but also in our solar system and even in the universe. In this part of the story, there are many expressions that show us the high level of love, firstly in the description of Rina-Kateriniza as a betrothed bride, but also the impossibility of love happening through the expressions "head" and "handkerchief in the left hand" which shows a non-musical moment with one-word lack of enthusiasm about love. It is also noted that the strong and enthusiastic feeling of love between a real character such as Rina-Katerinza with the character of the unreal, imaginary world, the character Kirolloi appears vigorous at the beginning and then fades over time as seen through the expressions "head injury" and "handkerchief in the left hand". The fading of feelings in a broader sense shows us both possibility and impossibility, and this depends on time and space boundaries. An imaginary time and space regardless of the real elements, no matter how beautifully and finely described, will necessarily lead us to events that happen only in dreams, only in the human imagination. The reflection is beautiful and with the use of elements, no matter how small and detailed, it becomes quite.

7. The structural composition of Kuteli's tales

The fairy tale is an important part of the creativity and oral heritage of a people. In fairy tales, we have the merging of the temporal and spatial aspects, because the messages and ideas of the fairy tales are conveyed and transmitted skillfully from generation to generation, but also from one country to another. Through the forms, toponyms and styles used, each people reflects and transmits them with their own means because they have served as spiritual food for the mind and knowledge of the people who transmit it. Kuteli, using the features of timelessness and timelessness, presents a reality of all times, making the fairy tale as old as it is current. As a writing author, he puts himself in the position of a family fireside storyteller. This is an indication of the isolated Albania of the time from relations with others. There are similarities between the Kutelian narration and the fairy tale, but it is not the invariant motifs that create the idea of the retold tale, it is precisely the narrative structure, the opening formula of the narrative, the extension of the narrative time through extended phrases with conjunctions and subordinate parts, the ritual of the story and listening according to the laws of the folk tale" (B. Suta, 2004, 81). The compositional structure and the artistic construction make the narrative of Kuteli's stories special. His stories are distinguished first of all by the introductory and closing structure of the tales. Let's mention some of the introductory (opening) and outgoing (closing) forms of Kutel's tales.

8. Input forms

Mitrush Kuteli's refrains are distinguished by introductory forms. We will mention such:

1) It was a man, who was...

2) Be, don't be us...

3) What happened to us...

4) What's up, what's up,

5) It was, who was...

6) Once upon a time there was a poor man...

7) What happened to us...

8) We once had three orphaned sisters, poor but beautiful...

9) Once upon a time, I don't know how many years ago, we had an orphan girl...

10) Once upon a time there was a cunning fox in the mountain...

11) Once upon a time, we had a good man who was very fond of his son's wedding...

12 We once had a good, hardworking man...

13) Once upon a time there was a man and a woman in a village...

14) I am starting the tale. May all of you who hear it rejoice!

15) Once a man was in exile and was returning home...

16) There was a father and he had a son…

17) There were two brothers.

18) We had a king called Trojan...

19) It was, don't be...

20) There was an old beggar who begged from door to door.

21) There was a shepherd, a young man who had just grown a moustache...

22) Once upon a time there was a peasant, very poor, etc.

It is noted that the introductory forms of the narratives condition us:

• *The indeterminacy of time*

• *The connection between the events that happened once and the situation when they are told.*

So, we emphasize once again that we have broken the temporal and spatial boundaries of the narrated events.

9. Closing the stories

- The closing of Kuteli's stories aims to remove the story from the narrative plane by establishing direct connections of the character with the environment and the reader and listener. Some forms that the author uses to close his stories are:
- May you be healthy and honourable!
- She forgave them, and they inherited her beard.
- The fairy tale is over. Be healthy!
- Long live and may you sing or listen to this tale!
- Then they both shaved and inherited it.
- I wasn't there, and neither were you, so believe it or not!
- Then he lived and inherited it.

10. Interweaving the past with the present and the environment in the society of Kuteli

Kuteli's narratives of a structure are visible from the fantastical element of duality which is evident in their interweaving and their incarnations orient towards history, in the context of the Albanian national identity. According to Prof. Luciano Boçi: "...the actors of history are given the identity of a unique type: the narrative identity. Thus it becomes possible to relate to each other two parts, two sides of the collective time, the narrated story, which creates the creation of the expression of time, the conception of the real-time that has flowed. In a way, literature builds parts of this special part with time, especially it's narrative" (L. Boçi, 2015, 27-28). Kuteli is notable for outstanding oratory. In his special oratory, the fact that he is also a collector and material collector of our folklore wealth, but at the same time he is able to reflect the connections and relationships between literature and national folklore, has played a very decisive role. For this, let him bring memories to other verses from the story "Great and Tall John":

"...I thank you, good snows, for sitting and chanting this card. I apologize and I take your hand to ask you a word and I want you to answer me: have you seen or not, the bravest watch in the world? But you should know: I'm not asking you about the brave everywhere, about the deserters, from those who are as dark as the old scale and pencil, but about the real brave who eat bread alone... Whether you saw it or heard it, you're ordering. tell me - a man's word, not in slurs and slurs, from those that scratch your ear..." (M. Kuteli, 2014/b. 175)

The national identity and the village of the society appear in stories such as "My village drinks brandy", "Nights with fairy tales in the onions", "The Lugetërs of our village", "Beyond time" etc. In these narratives about the environment of the Albanian village, the mindset, Albanian history and contemporaneity, the Albanian psychology and human reality of the time when Kuteli wrote them. In the story "Nights with fairy tales in onions," Kuteli echoes the mentality of the Albanian village by subjecting himself to the psychology of the character, where from time to time he has and intervenes as a reinforcing narrative voice or as village inviting readers to follow. his wishes as follows:

"... that's why I ask the singer to keep an ear and listen to some of Aunt Njelo's dreams. Therefore, we will go together to the village of corn onions. There we will listen to fairy tales and sometimes we will laugh together..." (M. Kuteli, 2010. 414).

It should be emphasized that for all the expressive elements of Kutel's stories, today's readers and listeners must have in-depth knowledge of the stories, events, mentality and psychology of the characters of the time and what he wrote. This is much clearer in several other places:

"- My village, oh happiness, drinks the brandy with great gusto from the cradle to the grave.

- He is born with a cup in his hand, he lives with a cup in his hand and he dies with a cup in his hand.

- Brandy in the eyes, brandy in poisons, all brandy among poisons and gases" (M. Kuteli, 2015. 66). But also in the verses: "Dude, I don't know other villages, but our village is with a spoon." No spring or summer is awakened by two or three" (M. Kuteli, 2015/b 295).

Kuteli in his stories does not tell us about events and mindsets of the time, which at first glance seem to be about a village in a big world, but at the same time, looked at carefully, it is also a reflection of the time when it was written. . .

According to the writer Agim Vinca; " Seen from a spatial point of view, Kutel's prose has a strong environmental color, its events take place mainly in the space of the writer's birthplace, Pogradec" (A. Vinca, 2017. 99). Also humour is beautifully interwoven with the description of the situation, the characters, the situations, etc?

11. Conclusion

During the study of Mitrush Kuteli's literary work to prepare this seminar paper, we came to the following conclusions:

1. Kuteli, together with Koliq, are considered the co-founders of modern Albanian prose and among the initiators of literary criticism.
2. In his literary creativity, Kuteli skilfully used the popular stone, i.e. Albanian folklore, he used motifs with a clear Albanian national identity.
3. Inspired by the beauty of folk poetry, he made it possible to turn this folk poetry into prose, into stories that are read from a young age by children.
4. Kutel's way of writing causes in the reader the narrator's effect of duality, of the reality that happens in the real world and of the unreal that extends into the labyrinths of the fantastic to arrive in the afterlife, the world of the dead.
5. Kuteli, using the features of timelessness and timelessness, presents us with a reality of all times, making the fairy tale as old as it is current.
6. As the author of the writing he puts himself in the position of a storyteller near the family hearth.

7. The fact that he is both a collector and researcher of our folklore wealth, but at the same time he is able to reflect the connections and relationships between literature and the national folklore heritage, played a very defining role in Kutel's creativity.
8. Kutel's stories describe the Albanian rural environment, Albanian mentality, history and contemporaneity, psychology and the Albanian human reality of the time.

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FUNCTIONAL FOODS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CONSUMERS IN KOSOVO AND THEIR ROLE IN HEALTH

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Abstract.

Everything that a person consumes causes negative or positive health reactions in the body. Promoting healthy foods, such as functional foods, still remains a challenge. Given the role of functional foods in maintaining the health of the heart, digestive system, teeth, bones, fat and blood sugar levels, consumer awareness is needed for greater inclusion of these foods in daily diets. This study included about 500 Kosovo respondents of different age groups who were asked about the knowledge they have related to functional foods, the role they have in health and the impact of the economic situation. In general, the respondents have shown that they have little knowledge about these foods and as the best way to improve this situation it is recommended to include the education of children regarding healthy nutrition from school and to push the producers of processed functional foods to declare on the production label regarding the health benefits of consuming these products.

Keywords: Functional Foods, Health Benefits, Nutritional Diet, Consumer Attitudes.

1. Introduction

Our health depends on what we eat. Although the main role of food is to supply the organism with the necessary nutrients for daily life activities, it is also a preventive or treatment factor for various diseases. During the last decades, a group of foods with positive health responses have been identified. These foods such as omega-3 fats, plant sterols, antioxidants and probiotics have been shown to provide a wide range of health benefits such as immunity, bone and tooth health, heart and digestive system health (Scrinis, 2012).

Functional foods are fresh or processed foods which, in addition to their nutritional and energy-providing role, also play an important role in maintaining and improving human health through their rich chemical composition. Every day more and more functional foods are becoming an inseparable part of the tables of the population in Europe and this is being influenced by the acceptance by consumers and their beliefs regarding these products (Koteyko, 2010). Functional foods include foods enriched with biologically active substances (e.g., probiotics), derived food components added to conventional foods (e.g., prebiotics) and normal foods containing natural biologically active substances (e.g., dietary fiber, phytochemicals, polyphenols) (Ajayi et al., 2020). Functional foods are similar to conventional foods in terms of consumption as part of a normal diet. However, unlike conventional foods, functional foods have been demonstrated to bring physiological benefits and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases beyond the basic nutritional functions they have, including maintaining gut health (Cencic & Chingwaru, 2010).

Factors that influence the selection of one or more functional foods are age, gender, level of education, personal health status, and understanding the health findings related to these foods helps people in selecting an appropriate nutritional diet (Ozen et al., 2012). The development and promotion of functional foods remains one of the main directions in which the food industry is oriented. The presence of functional foods in the Kosovar markets is increasing more and more, and this also indicates the increase in their consumption. Therefore, the main objective of this research was to determine the impact that functional foods have on human health and to identify the level of knowledge that consumers of different ages in Kosovo have about this group of foods.

2. Functional foods and health

In recent times, maintaining health and protecting against various diseases has been consistently associated with higher consumption of functional foods. The increase in cases of non-communicable diseases worldwide has increased the interest of scientists to study functional foods and their impact on inclusion in daily nutritional diets (Madsen, 2007). It is evident the increase in cases of heart disease, depression, memory problems, diabetes and many other health problems that have reduced the quality of life. These diseases have different origins and can be the product of a combination of a number of factors, including unhealthy food. This shows the importance and need we have for the greater inclusion of functional foods in our nutrition.

Natural foods such as plant-based foods including fruits, vegetables, grains, seafood, milk and its products are rich in vitamins, fiber, minerals, antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids (Arshad et al., 2021). These components have an essential role to enable the normal functioning of the human body. Even in cases of chronic diseases, the organism needs higher amounts of certain nutrients, therefore the bioactive substances contained in functional foods are considered to have a positive impact on health (Tur & Bibiloni, 2016).

Functional foods can also be considered a solution to the problem of obesity, where body weight and appetite can be regulated and maintained through the components of these foods. Therefore, the inclusion of these foods in daily eating patterns brings numerous health benefits (Tab.1). These foods contain beneficial additives such as: vitamins, minerals and other essential nutrients. One such substance is folic acid, which reduces the risk of nerve damage (Katan, 2004).

Table 1: Some health benefits of functional foods (Shimizu, 2003).

HEALTH ASPECT	MANNER OF INFLUENCE	FUNCTIONAL FOOD INGREDIENT
Gastrointestinal health	They help the development of beneficial bacteria	Fibers, oligosaccharides
Blood pressure	Lowers blood pressure	Soy proteins, lacto-tripeptides from fermented milk, peptides from sardines
Cholesterol level	They affect the reduction of cholesterol level	Soy Proteins, Phytosterols
Absorption of minerals	They help the body absorb minerals more easily	Casein
Glucose in the blood	Useful for people with problems with blood glucose levels	Wheat albumins, L-arabinose
Lipids in the blood	They affect the reduction of triglycerides in the blood, especially after eating food	Diacylglycerols, soluble globin
Dental health	Contribute to dental health	Green tea polyphenols, maltitol, xylitol
Bone health	They function in bone strength	Vitamin K_2, milk proteins, soy isoflavones

Sometimes consumers do not accept new functional foods because they are reluctant to try new things and this slows down the process of adapting these foods into their diets (Wansink, 2005). In terms of understanding the impact of functional foods on our body, marketers also have an impact. According to a 2003 study (Parker, 2003), food marketers have given importance to the declaration of different food ingredients, but not to information about the impact on health, which is a very important aspect for buyers. Therefore, marketers should be careful in including a statement of the health impact of a food on the product label. In this way, consumers are more informed about what they decide to consume and make the right choices for themselves.

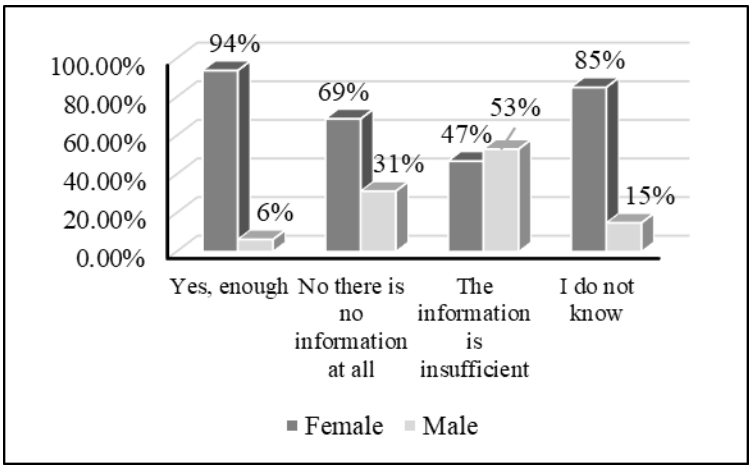
3. Material and methods

The research is focused on the territory of the Republic of Kosovo and questionnaires were used for its realization, which included a sample of 500 Kosovars of different ages. The research questions were aimed at identifying the knowledge that Kosovars have about functional foods, their attitudes regarding the purchase of these foods, the ways of informing them about the importance of consuming functional foods, the level of use and the presence of these foods in the markets of Kosovo. 292 women (58.4% of respondents) and 208 men (41.6% of respondents) took part in the survey. The data generated by the questionnaires were processed with the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics 26. To find the correlation between the variables, the Crosstabs function was used.

4. Results and discussion

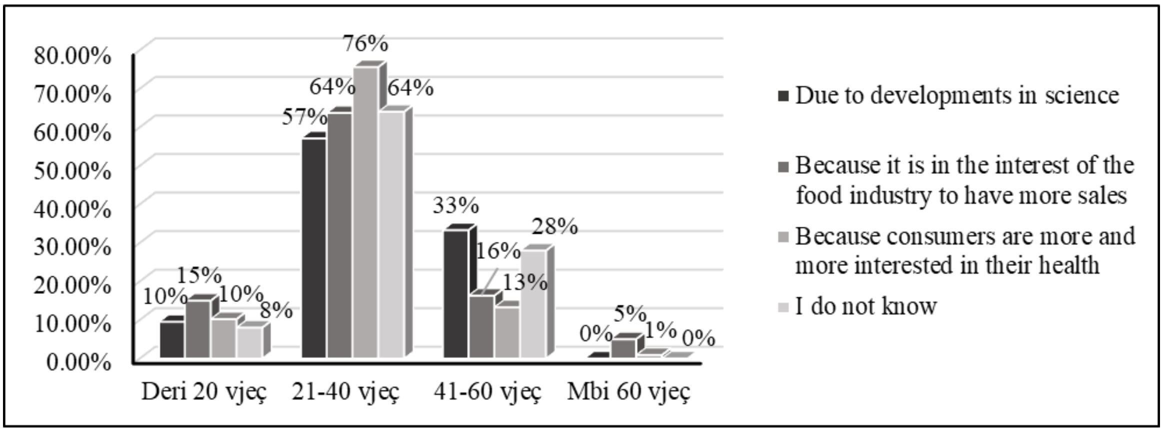
This research showed that, in general, knowledge about functional foods is lacking in the Kosovar population. Out of 500 respondents, only 47.2% of them stated that they had heard about functional foods before, while 52.8% stated the opposite. In general, it turned out that women are the ones who think that there is enough information about functional foods in Kosovar supermarkets (with about 58.4%), compared to men (with about 41.6%) (Fig.1).

Figure 1: Level of information about functional foods



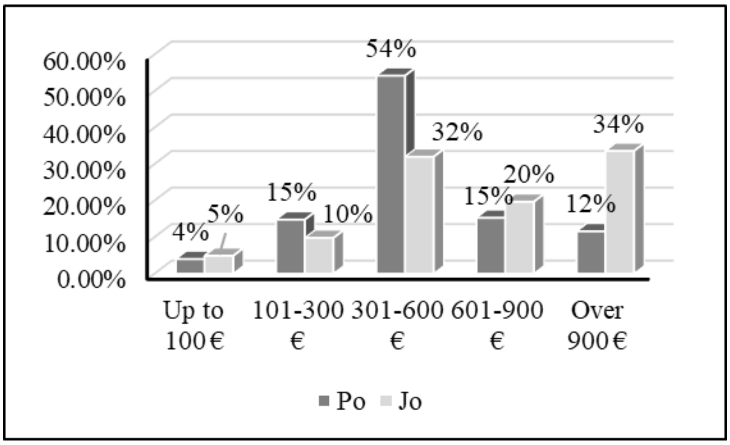
This research has included different age groups and based on the results, people up to 20 years old and those over 60 years old have stated that the reason for the increase in the presence of functional foods in the markets is due to the interest of the food industry to sell such products , age 21-40 stated that this is as a result of consumers' awareness of their health and age 41-60 stated that this is happening due to developments in science, therefore we have an increase in the presence of functional foods (Fig. 2).

Figure 2: Indicators of increasing the presence of functional foods in markets



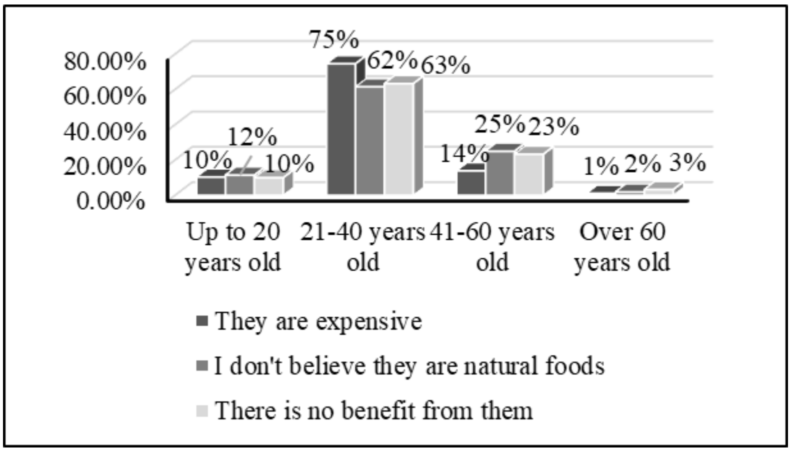
As for the economic situation, it turned out that people with an income of up to €600 think that the economic situation affects the purchase of functional foods, also stating that they consume these foods less often, while those above €600, the majority stated that the economic situation is not the influencing factor in shopping (Fig.3) and consume these foods more often.

Figure 3: The influence of the economic situation on the purchase of functional foods.



There are different consumer perceptions regarding functional foods. People up to 20 years old and those aged 41-60 years believe that they are not natural foods, therefore they do not consume them, people 21-40 years old think they are expensive foods, while those over 60 years old believe that there are no benefits from them (Fig. 4).

Figure 4: Problems related to low consumption of functional foods.



Information tools can have an impact on the awareness of the consumption of functional foods and the majority of the respondents agree with this, especially the age group of 21-40 years (Fig.5).

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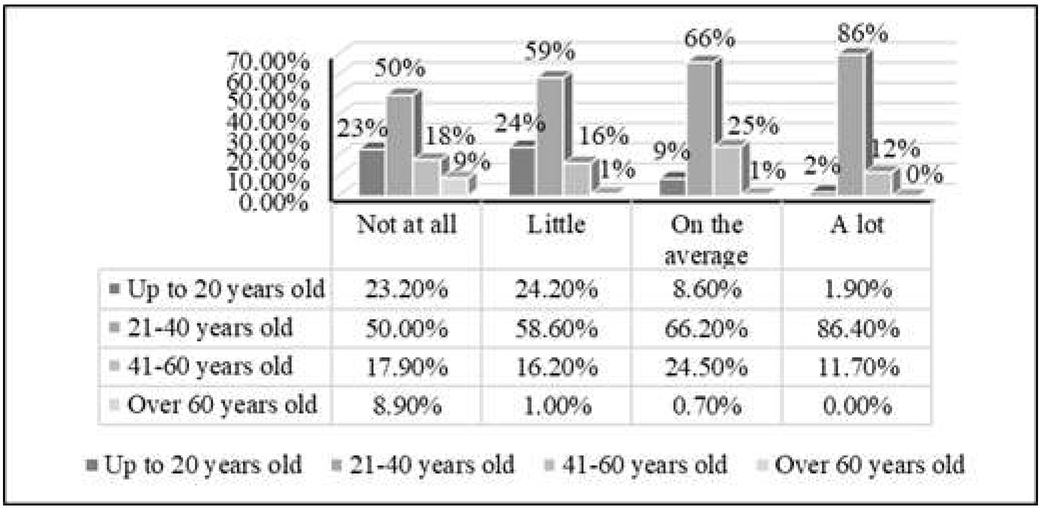
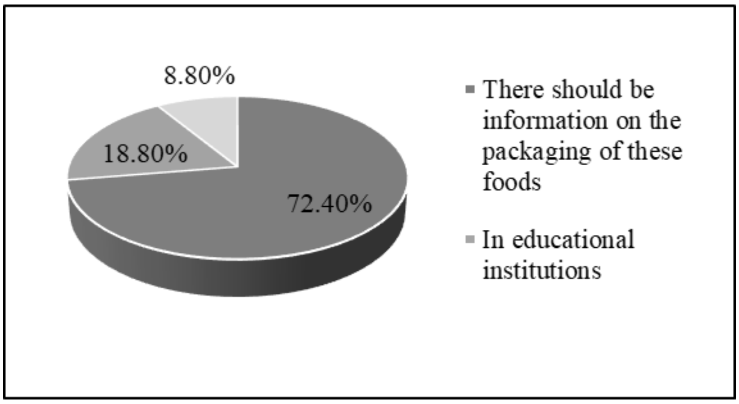
Figure 5: The influence of information tools.



	Not at all	Little	On the average	A lot
Up to 20 years old	23.20%	24.20%	8.60%	1.90%
21-40 years old	50.00%	58.60%	66.20%	86.40%
41-60 years old	17.90%	16.20%	24.50%	11.70%
Over 60 years old	8.90%	1.00%	0.70%	0.00%

Information tools can have an impact on the awareness of the consumption of functional foods and the majority of the respondents agree with this, especially the age group of 21-40 years (Fig.5). As for the best way to inform consumers, most respondents agree that information should be included on the packaging of these foods (Fig.6).

Figure 6: The best ways to learn about functional foods.



5. Conclusion

The research was carried out with the aim of identifying the knowledge that consumers in Kosovo have about functional foods. From the collected data, it can be observed that there is lack of information about this group of foods. In general, the 21-40 age group has more knowledge about functional foods. The problem related to the low inclusion of these foods in the nutritional diets of Kosovars turns out to be insufficient information about functional foods and their importance for human health, the poor economic situation and the higher price of these foods. This research can serve as a basis for other researches in the future related to raising the awareness of the population about nutrition with functional foods. The promotion of these foods and their benefits can start as early as in schools, but it is even more necessary to include information on the product label.

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THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH IN WORK PERFORMANCE

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Abstract.

The purpose of this paper is to measure the impact of psychological health on job performance. To collect data for this paper, the questionnaire method was used and the questionnaire was applied online using a suitable sample. The results of this research show that psychological health plays an important role in employees and presents a positive impact on their job performance. Due to time and money constraints, the sample was limited to questionnaire participants only. As a result, the findings of this research can not be generalized to the entire population. In addition, we have focused only on the role of psychological health in the performance of persons who are in employment. Current research shows the role of psychological health in Kosovar employees who are included in the psychological health questionnaire in job performance.

Keywords: Role of Psychological Health, Contextual Performance, Adaptive Performance, Performance at Work.

1. Introduction

The thirst for happiness is never quenched in the human heart. (Jean Jacques Rousseau, Les Confessions [1781–1788], IX). Elton Mayo and G.A. Pennock, suggest that happiness (broadly defined) should produce better job performance. Emotional intelligence plays an important role in work environments for regulating and improving emotions, attitudes and behaviors among employees and managers (Brunetto et al., 2012; Carmeli et al., 2003; Carmeli & Josman, 2006; Greenidge et al. , 2014; Lopes et al., 2006).

Employee productivity is very important to the performance and growth of the organization. More specifically for service organizations, where employee performance is a determining factor for higher growth, as customers' perceptions of service quality are reported to be influenced by their interaction with employees (Fong and Snape, 2015). Employee well-being is largely embedded in a system of social exchange between supervisors, subordinates, and peers (Kim, Lee, & Wong, 2016; Obschonka & Silbereisen, 2015). Employees' satisfaction with supervisors and colleagues allows them to gain feelings of empathy, respect, and trust (Haider, Fernandez-Ortiz, & de Pablos, 2017) which lead to greater psychological well-being (Kim et al., 2016).

In response to the growing health and productivity problems resulting from employees' lack of work-life balance, many organizations are taking serious steps to reduce their employees' work conflict (Fapohunda, 2014; Working Families, 2017). . Lazarus and Folkman (1984) believe that stress is the result of unsuccessful interaction between individuals and their environment.

Job insecurity is defined as an individual's general concern about the continued existence of their job in the future (Sverke and Hellgren, 2002). The consequences of this severe stress can be physical, psychological and behavioral (Robbins and Judge, 2011).

The purpose of this paper is to measure the impact of psychological health on performance at work. Next, the paper is structured in such a way that it begins with the review of the literature related to the concept of psychological health, the concept of employee performance, contextual, adaptive performance and performance at work, and it has been shown how psychological health affects these three factors. After the review of the literature, three hypotheses were formulated, in the subsequent part the selection of the methodology to carry out the research was explained and in the last part the statistical analysis was presented, together with the testing of the hypothesis.

2. Literature review

Health is defined by the World Health Organization as the presence of physical, mental and social well-being (Tetrick & Quick, 2003).

Job performance has been defined as "the aggregate value for the organization of discrete episodes of behavior that an individual performs during a standard time interval" (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997, p. 74). (Campbell et al., 1993) stated that performance should be explained from two perspectives: behavior and outcome. From a behavioral perspective, job performance refers to what employees do or how they behave when they are at work.

From the outcome perspective, performance refers to the results of employee behavior. In other words, performance can be defined as an evaluation of results.

Contextual performance refers to voluntary actions that help the organization maintain and improve the social and psychological environment of its core operations.

Jundt et al. (2015) defined adaptive performance as task performance-driven behaviors that individuals enact in response to or in anticipation of changes that are relevant to work-related tasks.

Based on a comprehensive review of existing studies on adaptive performance, Park and Park (2019) developed a model of the antecedents of adaptive performance with four dimensions. The first dimension is the individual characteristics that affect the adaptive performance of employees with seven elements: personality, knowledge, skills and abilities, previous experience, biological data, motivation, learning goal orientation and self-leadership. The second dimension includes job characteristics, such as decision autonomy, discretion, job insecurity, social ties, and task interdependence. The third dimension includes group characteristics such as peer and supervisor support, team learning climate, and transformational leadership. The last dimension is organizational characteristics, including clear vision, climate for innovation, organizational support and learning organization.

Psychological well-being is a complex concept that covers a variety of emotional, affective and attitudinal factors that capture the overall mental health of individuals in different contexts and measures overall psychological functioning (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). This concept has included a broad cross-section of indicators and variables including job satisfaction (an attitudinal form of psychological well-being and work-related well-being; Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Daniels & Harris, 2000; Munir et al., 2012), work-related depression and anxiety (Devonish, 2013; Kidger et al., 2016; Warr, 1990), and emotional burnout and exhaustion (Ilies et al., 2016; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Previous empirical evidence has highlighted a strong relationship between psychological empowerment and job performance (Bartram and Casimir, 2007; Kirkman and Rosen, 1999; Spreitzer, 1995). Psychologically empowered employees are said to have more absorptive capacity for knowledge (Siachou and Gkorezis, 2014) and this further enhances their performance. According to Çetin and As kun (2018), psychological empowerment generates self-efficacy and intrinsic task motivation among employees, and both of these have been found to have a positive impact on job performance.

Janssen et al. (2010) also found that emotional exhaustion, a form of psychological ill-health, was negatively related to overall role (task) performance. There is evidence that poor psychological health contributes to cognitive deficits that are relevant to work performance. These include deficits in working, episodic, and autobiographical memory, recognition and recall, learning, and executive functioning (Austin, Mitchell, & Goodwin, 2001; Burt, Zembar, & Niederehe, 1995; Dalgleish et al., 2007; Eysenck & Calvo , 1992; Hayes, Hirsch, & Mathews, 2008). Fatigue, characterized by feelings of tiredness, weakness, and a lack of strength and energy (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006), is also associated with cognitive difficulties (e.g., Jones & Fletcher, 1996) and can decrease the resources one needs to to devote to work. Depression and anxiety are also associated with exaggerated cognitive appraisals of risk and decreased self-esteem (Beck et al., 1987), which may lead to irrational choices and lower effort.

(Lucas & Diener, 2003) suggests that psychologically good people perform better (Wright & Cropanzano, 2004). Psychological well-being is a direct response to a person's positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001). Organizations' ability to minimize work-life conflicts enables them to create positive psychological capital in their employees, which enhances their creative performance (Hao, Wu, Liu, Li, & Wu, 2015).

Furthermore, the theoretical principles underlying the notion of EI suggest that emotionally intelligent employees tend to have better mental or psychological health due to their improved ability to manage their emotions and affective states, which , in turn, may influence their willingness to engage in positive behaviors at work. (Greenidge & Coyne, 2014; Greenidge et al., 2014; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Slaski & Cartwright, 2003). Positive affect has also been shown to increase task persistence through more positive valence, instrumentality, and expectancy beliefs (Erez & Isen, 2002) and through higher self-goal setting (Ilies & Judge, 2005). These results suggest that positive psychological health leads to higher work motivation.

Based on the literature review, we can propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Psychological health has a positive impact on contextual performance

H2: Psychological health has a positive impact on work performance

H3: Psychological health has a positive impact on adaptive performance

3. Methodology

Participants

Table 1 reports the descriptive data of the research participants. Using convenience sampling, a self-administered online questionnaire was applied to 210 people from the cities of Kosovo. 145 participants are women, while 65 participants are men. Most of the participants in the research are aged 20-29 years, 119 participants have completed the bachelor's level of studies. 90 participants have an income of 301-600 euros, while 72 people have less than 300 euros. 123 people are single, while 70 people are married. 150 participants work in the private sector, the rest in the public sector. 53 of the participants work in the direction of education, while 71 have 1-3 years of work experience. Likewise, 55 people, 92 others and 26 administrative employees belong to the positions at work such as Worker/Production/Constructor/Technician.

Instruments

Psychological health was measured with 6 statements adapted from Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Biswas-Diener, R., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D. W., & Oishi, S. (2009).. Contextual performance was measured with 7 statements adapted from Pradhan, R. K., & Jena, L. K. (2017). Job performance was measured with 3 statements also adapted from Pradhan, R. K., & Jena, L. K. (2017) as well as adaptive performance with 3 statements also from Pradhan, R. K., & Jena, L. K. (2017). All statements have been measured with a Likert scale from 1-I do not agree at all to 5-I completely agree.

4. Data analysis

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 1: Descriptive statistics about the sample (n=210)

Variables		**Frequency**	**Percent**
Gender	Female	145	69
	Male	65	31
Age	Under 20 years old	16	7.6
	20-29	145	69.0
	30-39	35	16.7
	40-49	12	5.7
	50-59	2	1.0
Education level	Elementary	3	1.4
	Professional high school	34	16.2
	Bachelor	119	56.7
	Master	44	21.0

	Doctorate	10	4.8
Monthly income	Under 300 €	72	34.3
	301-600 €	90	42.9
	601-900 €	27	12.9
	901-1200 €	11	5.2
	Mbi 1200 €	10	4.8
Marital status	Single	123	58.6
	Married	70	33.3
	Other	17	8.1
In which sector do you work?	Public	60	28.6
	Private	150	71.4
What industry do you work in?	Commerce	25	11.9
	Productivity	14	6.7
	Service	36	17.1
	Education	53	25.2
	Public administration	10	4.8
	Health	19	9.0
	Construction companies	6	2.9
	Other	47	22.4
How much work experience do you have?	Less than a year	63	30.0
	1-3 years	71	33.8
	4-6	32	15.2
	7-9	15	7.1
	10-12	12	5.7
	13-15	6	2.9
	Over 15 years	11	5.2
Position at work	Worker/builder/technical	55	26.2

Administrative employee	26	12.4
Executive	14	6.7
Manager	23	11
Other	92	43.8

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics regarding the research participants.

4.2. Validity and Reliability of the Measure

4.2.1. Validity of the Meter

Table 2 summarizes the results of the exploratory factor analysis. Factorial analysis was applied with 22 statements. The KMO value=0.900 indicates that the data set is very suitable for performing factorial analysis. This is also confirmed by the Bartlett test=0.000. Using the varimax method, at the end of the factorial analysis, 4 factors were obtained, as expected. These 4 factors explain 56.259% of the total variance.

The first factor consists of 7 statements. All these statements are related to contextual performance, therefore this factor is called "Contextual Performance".

The second factor consists of 6 statements. These statements are about job performance. Therefore, this factor is called "Work Performance".

The third factor consists of 6 statements, which are related to psychological health. For this reason, this factor is called "Psychological Health".

The fourth factor consists of 3 statements. It's all about adaptive performance. Therefore, this factor is called "Adaptive Performance".

4.2.1 Reliability of the Meter

Table 3 summarizes the results of the reliability analysis. Reliability analysis was applied with 22 statements. The Alpha Reliability Coefficient in the SHP, which has 6 statements, is 81.5%, which shows that this factor is very reliable. The Alpha Reliability Coefficient in KP, which has 7 statements, is 85.1%, which shows that this factor is very reliable. The Alpha Reliability Coefficient for PP which has 6 statements is 79.1%, it shows that this factor is very reliable and the Alpha Reliability Coefficient for PA which has 3 statements is 71.9%, it also shows that this factor is very reliable.

Table 2. Results of exploratory factor analysis

	Factor				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**VSH**
PK7	.759				17,744
PK8	.726				

PK6	.724				
PK10	.717				
PK5	.710				
PK3	.544				
PK4	.521				
PP5		.657			15,265
PP4		.648			
PP2		.626			
PP1		.586			
PP3		.584			
PP6		.571			
SHP1			.752		14,161
SHP2			.678		
SHP6			.670		
SHP3			.607		
SHP7			.583		
SHP5			.516		
PA7				.802	9,089
PA6				.677	
PA2				.523	
KMO					.900
Bartlett test					.000
Total explained variance					56,259

Table 3: Reliability analysis results

	Alpha Reliability Coefficient	Number of statements
SHP	.815	6
PK	.851	7

PP	.791	6
PA	.719	3

4.3 Hypothesis testing

The hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis.

Table 5: Results of linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on contextual performance.

Indepenent variables	β	t	Sig.	R	R^2	F	Model (p)
Konstantja	2.272	10.567	.000	.537	.289	84.425	.000
SHP	.474	9.188	.000				

Table 5 summarizes the results of the linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on contextual performance. The R2 value indicates that 28.9% of the variation in the dependent variable (contextual performance) is explained by the independent variable (psychological health). The value F=84,425 and the value p=0,000<0,05 show that the regression model is significant. Finally, the regression coefficient, β=0.474 and p=0.000 show that the psychological health of workers has a positive impact on the contextual performance of workers. Therefore, hypothesis H1: Psychological health has a positive impact on contextual performance is accepted.

Table 6: Results of linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on work performance.

Indepenent variables	β	t	Sig.	R	R^2	F	Model (p)
Konstantja	1.688	7.256	.000	.603	.363	118.711	.000
SHP	.600	10.895	.000				

Table 6 summarizes the results of the linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on work performance. The R2 value indicates that 36.3% of the variation in the dependent variable (job performance) is explained by the independent variable (psychological health). The value F=118.71 and the value p=0.000<0.05 show that the regression model is significant. Finally, the regression coefficient, β=0.600 and p=0.000 show that the psychological health of workers has a positive impact on the work performance of workers. Therefore, hypothesis H1: Psychological health has a positive impact on work performance is accepted.

Table 7: Results of linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on adaptive performance

Independent variables	**β**	**t**	**Sig.**	**R**	**R^2**	**F**	**Model (p)**
Konstantja	1.668	6.292	.000	.519	.269	76.704	.000
SHP	.557	8.758	.000				

Table 7 summarizes the results of the linear regression analysis regarding the impact of psychological health on adaptive performance. The R2 value indicates that 26.9% of the variation in the dependent variable (adaptive performance) is explained by the independent variable (psychological health). The value F=76.70 and the value p=0.000<0.05 show that the regression model is significant. Finally, the regression coefficient, β=0.557 and p=0.000 show that the psychological health of workers has a positive impact on adaptive performance. Therefore, hypothesis H1: Psychological health has a positive influence on adaptive performance is accepted.

5. Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to examine the role of psychological health in work performance. Psychological health is among the key factors in the performance of employees, for this reason a research was done with Kosovar participants who are in employment using the online questionnaire method and using the convenient sample method. 210 participants have completed this questionnaire, where 145 are women and 65 are men. The findings of this study showed the impact of psychological health on work performance, contextual and adaptive performance of Kosovar participants. The results of the regression analysis showed a positive impact of psychological health on contextual performance (H1), a positive impact on work performance (H2) and a positive impact on adaptive performance (H3). The findings provide evidence that Kosovar people who are in employment have positive impacts on work performance, adaptive and contextual. This finding is consistent with the findings of Diener, E., Wirtz, D., Biswas-Diener, R., Tov, W., Kim-Prieto, C., Choi, D. W., & Oishi, S. (2009) and Pradhan, R. K., & Jena, L. K. (2017), who also found that psychological health positively affects job performance.

1. Limitations of the paper and recommendations for future research

Like any research, this research also includes some limitations. The data was collected online through the link that was shared on Facebook and only those who were able to access the link were surveyed. Therefore, the data cannot be generalized for the entire population of Kosovo. In this questionnaire, the age of the persons in the work relationship that has dominated has been 20-29 years, by means of this in the future researches we can specify only the respondents in the age of 20-29 years researching the influence of psychological health on their performance.

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AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY PRICES IN TIMES OF INCREASED GEOPOLITICAL RISK

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Abstract.

One of the most important geopolitical events of the current century is the ongoing international conflict between Russia and Ukraine. On February 24, 2022, Russia began its military operations in Ukraine and invaded the country full scale. In reaction to the invasion, several countries placed economic sanctions on Russia, including limitations on imports and exports of goods and services (Tosun & Eshraghi, 2022). Moreover, the Russian attack on Ukraine has had an impact on agricultural production and prices of agricultural commodities. This study uses the non-linear ARDL model to analyse the effects of geopolitical risk on the pricing of 13 different agricultural commodities from 2 January 2020 to 29 July 2022. Among the commodities that have been specifically chosen are cocoa, coffee, corn, cotton, lumber, milk, oats, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, sunflower oil, soybeans, and wheat. We also looked at how financial instability and economic policy uncertainty affected commodities prices in our models. Our results suggest a long-term symmetric effect on cocoa pricing. Asymmetric associations were, however, verified over the long term for coffee, rapeseed, rough rice, sunflower, and wheat. Additionally, the findings show no cointegration link between the geopolitical risk, financial volatility, and economic policy uncertainty on prices of soybeans, corn, cotton, oats, or milk.

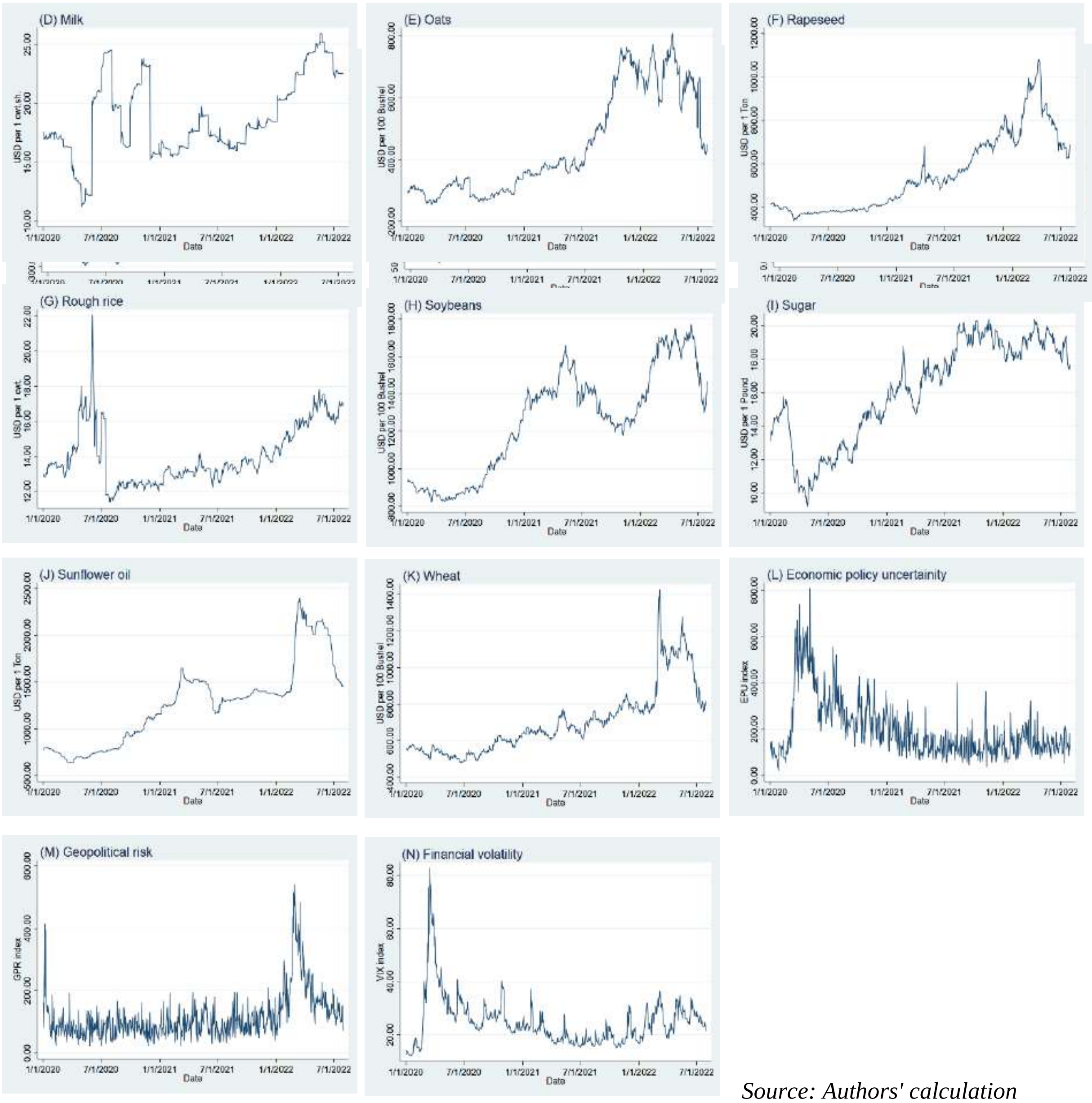
Keywords: Agricultural Commodities, Geopolitical Risk, Uncertainty, Price Volatility.

1. Introduction

The study of geopolitics has in recent years received a lot of attention from the academic community. This is due to the growth in political disputes, civil wars, international conflicts, and terrorist activities in the current century. One of the latest international conflicts is an ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war, which led to a considerable increase in the geopolitical risk index (Figure 1). Tensions between Russia and Ukraine have had a significant impact on the world economy and markets.

One of the sectors affected by the war in Ukraine is agriculture. Both countries are important producers and exporters of agricultural commodities. For instance, agricultural goods are key exports of Ukraine, comprising 41% of the nation's $68 billion in total exports in 2021. In addition to being a significant exporter of wheat, rapeseed, barley, vegetable oil, and corn, Ukraine is the world's largest producer of sunflower seeds (Gay et al., 2022). In contrast, Russia is a significant exporter of barley, sunflower seeds, and wheat, around the globe. Moreover, energy commodities and fertilizers are two other major exports from Russia (Gay et al., 2022). Due to reduced export capacity from Russia and Ukraine as well as increased energy and fertilizer prices, agricultural prices have been increasing internationally, threatening food security on a global scale (Just & Echaust, 2022). Therefore, commodity prices spiralled due to the increased geopolitical risk and uncertainty caused by the escalated conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which was already jarred by pandemic-related supply disruptions. The development of our selected agricultural commodities is shown in Figure 1 and proves that prices fluctuated over the analysed period and rose over time.

Figure 1. Development of agricultural commodity prices, geopolitical risk, economic policy uncertainty and the financial volatility index.



Source: Authors' calculation

Thus, in the era of increased geopolitical risk and uncertainty in the world due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, this paper adds to the study of the associations between commodity markets and geopolitical risk. The focus is given particularly to the world agricultural commodity markets because Ukraine and Russia belong to important producers and exporters of agricultural goods. The ongoing war has a far-reaching effect on the world economy, impacting the international commodity markets of other countries. Therefore, the primary objective of this paper is to investigate the asymmetric effects of geopolitical risk on global agricultural commodity prices. Our study's conclusions may be valuable in future decisions made by policymakers, investors, and other market participants.

Following is the breakdown of the rest of the article: section 2 provides a literature review, section 3 describes the data and methods employed, section 4 examines the findings of our research, and section 5 provides a conclusion.

2. Literature Review

Recent decades have seen an increase in the frequency of geopolitical concerns, which are crucial determinants of commodity prices. According to Su et al. (2019), unpredictable geopolitical developments may have a major impact on the supply and demand of commodities and enhance the volatility of commodity prices. In a similar vein, Umar et al. (2022) contend that geopolitical risk has both short- and long-term effects that harm financial and commodity markets directly and indirectly. Wang et al. (2022) claim that policymakers should be concerned because geopolitical events may harm food security and price stability as well as inflation rates, consumer spending, and subsequently economic activity. In other words, geopolitical events and risks are significant determinants affecting the stability of the commodity markets and price volatility.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the links between geopolitical risk and the agricultural commodity and food market. For instance, Umar et al. (2022) study the effects of geopolitical risk driven by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on international commodity markets. Saâdaoui et al. (2022) demonstrate a one-way causal connection, with geopolitical events significantly impacting the prices of fundamental agricultural goods. In contrast, using wavelet analysis, Jana & Ghosh (2023) investigate how geopolitical uncertainty and agricultural investment interact. Moreover, in the context of two European areas, namely Eastern and Western Europe, Sohag et al. (2022) assess the reaction of food prices to the aggregate and disaggregate geopolitical risk events, Russia's geopolitical risks, and world energy prices using monthly data from January 2001 to March 2022. On the other hand, Yang et al. (2022) use a TVP-VAR-SV model to examine the time-varying influences of geopolitical risks and trade policy uncertainty on commodity prices. Just & Echaust (2022) utilise the dynamic Diebold-Yilmaz and Barunk-Kehlk spill-over indices to illustrate that agricultural commodity markets got increasingly interconnected during the period when markets healed following the Covid-19 threat and at the beginning of a Russian-Ukrainian conflict. According to the findings, wheat, maize, and barley are the most effective communicators of record return spillover transmission among agricultural commodities during a period of violence. Likewise, Śmiech et al. (2017) determine that corn is the most significant agricultural commodity since it transmits such high volatility to other instruments in the food market. Hu et al. (2020) investigate the link between geopolitical risk and realised volatility of soybean futures. In contrast, the relationship between crude oil prices and prices of oats, corn, wheat, and soybeans is examined by Tiwari et al. (2021) during the period between April 4, 1990, and February 15, 2019. Authors discover significant co-movements between agriculture and energy markets that are adversely affected by geopolitical risk. The possibility of agricultural commodities, in particular corn, oats, and wheat, to operate as a hedge against a decline in oil prices brought on by geopolitical upheaval is thus suggested by the authors. Findings further support this evidence of hedging by noting that the agriculture and oil markets are adversely connected when the former is bullish, and the latter is bearish.

3. Methods

We analyse the non-linear impact of geopolitical risk and two other uncertainty indicators on the world daily prices of selected agricultural commodities. The analysed period covers data from 2 January 2020 to 29 July 2022. Geopolitical risk is the susceptibility of one or more countries to political activities in other nations The daily data about the geopolitical risk index

(GPR) were obtained from the matteoiacoviello.com website. In our model, we also included variables such as the economic policy uncertainty index (EPU), and the financial volatility index (VIX). The EPU is an index based on newspaper coverage frequency about policy uncertainty. Moreover, based on S&P 500 index options, VIX measures the expected volatility of the stock market. The data about EPU were acquired from the fred.stlouisfed.org website. The daily data of VIX were accessed from finance.yahoo.com. Daily prices of cocoa, coffee, corn, cotton, lumber, milk, oats, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, soybeans, sunflower oil, and wheat were obtained from investing.com, tradingeconomics.com markets, and businessinsider.com websites.

In order to study the impact of geopolitical risk on agricultural commodity prices we apply standard and non-linear autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL, NARDL) approach. The ARDL bounds test is used in the first step to determine the presence of a long-term link between time series. The ARDL model offers various advantages over typical cointegration approaches, including the ability to estimate long-term and short-term parameters independently. First, the usage of ARDL is appropriate for addressing the endogeneity issue. A proper formulation of the ARDL model is enough to simultaneously adjust for serial correlation and the endogeneity problem. Another advantage of the ARDL technique is that each regressor can have a varied number of delays (Pesaran & Shin, 1999). Furthermore, unlike other approaches, the ARDL process may be applied whether the time series are stationary I(0), stationary in first differences I(1), or cointegrated (Pesaran et al., 2001). Nevertheless, if the model contains I(2) variables, the derived F statistics become erroneous. The stationarity of the time series and their initial differences are tested using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller test (ADF) to confirm that none of the variables are integrated of order I(2) or higher. The ARDL bounds testing approach is then employed to determine the presence of a long-run association. The basic form of the ARDL (p, q,..., q) model is specified as follows:

$$y_t = c_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{p} \phi y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=0}^{q} \beta_i x_{t-1} + u_t \quad (1)$$

where y is the dependent variable (agricultural commodity price), x is the independent variable (geopolitical risk, economic policy uncertainty, financial volatility index), p is the number of optimal lags of the dependent variable, and q is the number of optimal lags of each explanatory variable. Following reparameterization in the form of conditional error correction, we get:

$$\Delta y_t = c_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{p-1} \psi_{yi} \Delta y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q-1} \psi_{xi} \Delta x_{t-i} + u_t \quad (2)$$

where α signifies the speed with which the dependant variable adjusts to a short-run divergence from equilibrium and ψ short-term coefficients. The e_{t-1} in equation (2) may be replaced by the linear combination of the model's lagged level variables, and equation (2) can be rewritten as follows:

$$\Delta y_t = c_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{p} \psi_i \Delta y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q} \psi_i \Delta x_{t-i} + \gamma_i y_{t-1} + \gamma_i x_{t-1} + u_t \quad (3)$$

where ψ denotes short-term effects, as mentioned earlier, and γ represents the long-run effects. For a particular degree of significance, there are two forms of critical values. The first kind assumes that all variables in the model are I(1), whereas the second assumes that all variables included are I(1) (0) (Pesaran et al., 2001). If both the estimated F-statistic and t-statistic surpass the upper limit, the null hypothesis of no cointegration should be rejected. If both the computed F-statistic and t-statistic are less than the lower bound, the null hypothesis of no long-run association cannot be rejected, and the ARDL model should be estimated without the corrective component in the first differences. In addition, many diagnostic tests should be run to ensure model stability, serial correlation, heteroscedasticity, and error normality.

Furthermore, we examine the potential asymmetric influence of the GPR, EPU and VIX index on commodities prices in this study. We employ the NARDL model. This approach allows for the testing of asymmetry by providing positive and negative shocks of independent variables. Shin et al. (2014) demonstrate that the variable may be divided into positive and negative shocks. The symmetric long-run specification of Eq. (3) may be rewritten into the asymmetric specification as:

$$\Delta y_t = c_0 - \alpha(y_{t-1} - \theta x_t) + \sum_{i=1}^{p-1} \psi_{yi} \Delta y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q-1} \psi_{xi} \Delta x_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q-1} \psi_{xi} \Delta x_{t-i} + u_t \tag{4}$$

The extent of a positive or negative change caused by an increase in the independent variable may be distinguished from the size of a positive or negative change caused by a drop in the independent variable using this approach.

The "+" and "–" notations denote the partial sum of positive and negative changes of the independent variables:

$$x_t^+ = \sum_{i=1}^{t} \Delta x_i^+ = \sum_{i=1}^{t} max(\Delta x_i, 0) \tag{5}$$

$$x_t^- = \sum_{i=1}^{t} \Delta x_i^- = \sum_{i=1}^{t} max(\Delta x_i, 0) \tag{6}$$

Post-estimation diagnostic tests will be performed to assess normality (Jarque-Bera test), serial correlation (Portmanteau test), heteroscedasticity (Breusch/Pagan test), and functional form (Ramsey RESET test).

4. Results and Discussion

In the first step of our analysis, we employ the ADF test to make sure none of our variables is integrated of the second order I(2) or higher. Results indicate that all the variables are stationary at level I(0) or stationary at the first level difference I(1)[17] and we can proceed to the ARDL bounds test to check for cointegration between time series.

The results of ARDL estimates in table 1 show that except for cocoa prices, the t statistics for all the price series are closer to zero than critical values for I(0) variables at a 10% significance level. Therefore, we cannot reject H0 of no cointegration between the commodity prices (except for cocoa prices) and uncertainty indicators. We can only reject H0 in the case of cocoa prices where both F and t statistics are more extreme than critical values for I(1) variables at a given significance level. To take into account the possible asymmetric reaction of the response variable to an increase or decrease in the explanatory variables we estimated also the NARDL model for all commodity prices. As seen from the results a long-run relationship is confirmed in the case of cocoa, coffee, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, sunflower, and wheat prices.

Table 1. Bound tests for cointegration.

Variables	ARDL		NARDL	
	F	t	F	t
lnCocoa	8.523 ***	-4.260 ***	4.364 **	-4.438 ***
lnCoffee	0.636	-1.079	4.818 **	-5.233 ***
lnCorn	1.414	-1.992	2.520	-2.260
lnCotton	6.104 ***	-1.352	2.492	-2.770

[17] Results of the stationarity test are available upon request of authors.

lnLumber	1.352	-1.992	1.236	-2.123
lnMilk	2.526	-2.914	2.384	-3.727 *
lnOats	1.563	-1.194	3.263	-3.599 *
lnRapeseed	2.635	-2.209	5.143**	-4.414 ***
lnRoughrice	2.747	-3.292	4.729**	-5.296 ***
lnSugar	10.339 ***	-3.207	4.510**	-4.275 **
lnSunfloweroil	1.136	-1.483	3.966*	-4.01 1**
lnSoybeans	0.628	-1.074	2.313	-2.379
lnWheat	3.061	-2.962	4.069*	-3.917 **

Note: ***, ** and * denote respectively the 1%, 5% and 10% significance levels.

Source: Own calculation

The long-run asymmetry and short-run asymmetry were tested using the F test (Table 2). Most of the cases show that only the long run F test is significant so there is only long run asymmetry (except for cocoa prices).

Table 2. Asymmetry testing.

Variables		**Long-run asymmetry**	**Short-run asymmetry**
		F-stat	**F-stat**
lnCocoa	lnVIX	0.214	0.828
	lnEPU	0.257	1.073
	lnGPR	0.004	0.867
lnCoffee	lnVIX	38.470 ***	2.558
	lnEPU	46.320 ***	0.135
	lnGPR	21.290 ***	1.990
lnRapeseed	lnVIX	6.564 ***	0.139
	lnEPU	4.751 **	0.139
	lnGPR	7.115 ***	0.590
lnRoughrice	lnVIX	0.5181	0.304
	lnEPU	12.390 ***	1.156
	lnGPR	6.573 ***	2.490
lnSugar	lnVIX	0.730	5.701 **
	lnEPU	0.159	0.156
	lnGPR	7.688 ***	1.130
lnSunfloweroil	lnVIX	0.044	0.117
	lnEPU	5.381 **	0.928
	lnGPR	5.840 **	0.007
lnWheat	lnVIX	3.257 *	5.947 **
	lnEPU	1.192	0.023
	lnGPR	4.610	0.079

Note: ***, ** and * denote respectively the 1%, 5% and 10% significance levels.

Source: Own calculation

There is no asymmetry confirmed in the reaction of cocoa prices to changes in explanatory variables, therefore the best approach to model cocoa prices is the standard ARDL model with error correction term (Table 4). The NARDL model is appropriate for estimating the price response of coffee, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, sunflower, and wheat (Table 5). Because there is no long-run link discovered for corn, cotton, lumber, milk, oats, and soybean prices, ARDL without error correction term, capturing only short-run impacts, should be utilised for price series estimate (Table 3).

Table 3. ARDL estimations for short run.

	lnCorn	**lnCotton**	**lnLumber**	**lnMilk**	**lnOats**	**lnSoybeans**
L1.	0.020	0.061	0.193 ***	-0.019	-0.066 *	0.034

L2.					0.079 **	
L3.					-0.066 *	
L4.					-0.177 ***	
DlnEPU	-0.003	0.002	-0.003	0.004	0.000	-0.002
L1.		0.003				
DlnVIX	-0.011	-0.037 ***	-0.083 ***	0.008	-0.028 *	-0.017 ***
L1.		-0.021 **				
DlnGPR	-0.001	0.003	0.004	0.002	-0.002	-0.001
L1.		0.001				
_cons	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001

Note: ***, ** and * denote respectively the 1%, 5% and 10% significance levels.

Source: Own calculation

Table 3 displays the findings of the ARDL models for corn, cotton, lumber, milk, oats, and soybeans. Cotton, lumber, oats, and soybeans have statistically significant coefficients of VIX, which suggests that if financial volatility rises, the prices of these commodities fall in the short run. Furthermore, the prices of lumber and oats are impacted in the short run by their historical developments. The coefficients of VIX for corn and milk are not statistically significant, indicating that expected financial volatility does not affect the pricing of these commodities. Changes in geopolitical risk and economic policy uncertainty have no immediate impact on agricultural commodity prices because coefficients of GPR and EPU are statistically insignificant.

Table 4 shows the results of the ARDL model with error correction terms for the cocoa prices. The error correction term is negative and highly statistically significant which confirms the presence of a long-term relationship. VIX coefficient is highly statistically significant meaning that anticipated financial volatility has a long-term impact on cocoa prices. When the financial volatility increases by 1% the cocoa prices fall by 0.243%. The coefficients of EPU and GPRD are not statistically significant, thus, economic policy uncertainty and geopolitical risk do not affect cocoa prices in the long run.

Table 4. ARDL-ECT estimations for the long run.

Variables	**lnCocoa**
ECT	-0.051 ***
lnEPU	0.046
lnVIX	-0.243 ***
lnGPR	0.040
cons	0.417 ***

Note: ***, ** and * denote respectively the 1%, 5% and 10% significance levels.

Source: Own calculation

We discovered that coffee, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, sunflower, and wheat are commodities that respond asymmetrically to changes in financial volatility, economic policy uncertainty, and geopolitical risk (Table 5). The error correction components are negative and statistically significant at the 1% significance level, which is preferred since it demonstrates cointegration and the rate at which the long-run equilibrium is being altered. The daily adjusting speed is 7.0% for the coffee model, 4.8% for the rapeseed model, 6.2% for the rough rice model, 5.3% for the sugar model, 1.5% for the sunflower model, and 4.5% for the wheat model. This suggests that in 15, 21, 17, 19, 67, and 23 days, the long-run equilibrium is entirely re-established.

Table 5. NARDL estimations for long run and short run.

	lnCoffee	**lnRapeseed**	**lnRoughrice**	**lnSugar**	**lnSunflower**	**lnWheat**
long-run coefficients						
VIX-	-0.302 ***	0.032	-0.013	0.211 **	-0.119	-0.274
VIX+	0.023	-0.188 *	-0.020	-0.249 ***	0.143	0.128
EPU-	-0.043	-0.132 *	-0.087 *	0.050	0.032	-0.012
EPU+	0.081	0.149 **	0.108 *	-0.052	-0.065	0.022
GPR-	0.084 *	-0.253 ***	0.012	-0.076 *	-0.409 ***	-0.272 ***
GPR+	-0.065	0.269 ***	-0.023	0.087 **	0.439 ***	0.289 ***
ECT	-0.070 ***	-0.048 ***	-0.062 ***	-0.053 ***	-0.015 ***	-0.045 ***
C	0.325 ***	0.291 ***	0.161 ***	0.148 ***	0.096 ***	0.287 ***
short-run coefficients						
dVIX-	-0.053 ***	-0.018	-0.015	-0.046 ***	-0.006	-0.038 **
L1	-0.039 **	0.003	0.031 *	-0.011	-0.008	-0.006
L2	-0.001	-0.005			-0.012	-0.004
L3					0.007	0.015
dVIX+	0.008	-0.015	0.022	0.010	-0.016	0.066 **
L1	-0.011	-0.021	-0.029	0.020	0.000	-0.002
L2	-0.001	-0.003			0.011	0.058 **
L3					-0.003	0.004
dEPU-	-0.002	0.002	-0.001	0.001	0.000	-0.001
L1	-0.005	-0.005	-0.007	0.000	0.002	-0.005
L2	0.004	-0.001			0.003	0.001
L3					0.001	0.006
dEPU+	0.000	-0.003	0.001	0.003	-0.001	-0.002
L1	0.002	-0.003	0.001	0.001	-0.002	0.004
L2	-0.010 **	-0.001			0.001	0.003
L3					0.002	-0.006
dGPR-	-0.004	0.003	0.005	0.001	0.001	0.007
L1	0.002	0.000	0.004	-0.001	-0.004 *	-0.008 *
L2	0.001	-0.001			-0.005 **	-0.002
L3					-0.001	0.000
dGPR+	0.006	0.003	-0.003	0.007 **	0.001	0.003
L1	0.006	-0.007 *	0.000	0.000	-0.007 ***	-0.001
L2	0.001	-0.001			-0.001	-0.003
L3					-0.001	-0.004

Note: ***, ** and * denote respectively the 1%, 5% and 10% significance levels.

Source: Own calculation

Over the long term, the results of the NARDL approach demonstrate statistically significant asymmetric impacts of predicted financial volatility on coffee, rapeseed, and sugar. The negative cumulative total of changes in projected financial volatility (VIX-) decreases coffee prices by 0.0302%, whereas the positive equivalent (VIX+) has no effect on coffee prices. The negative total sum of changes (VIX-) in expected financial volatility does not affect rapeseed prices, but the positive cumulative sum (VIX+) reduces rapeseed prices by 0.188%. Sugar prices are statistically affected by both positive (VIX+) and negative analogues (VIX-) of financial volatility, decreased financial volatility increases sugar prices by 0.21% whilst increased financial volatility reduces sugar prices by 0.249% in long run. Rough rice, sunflower oil and wheat are not asymmetrically impacted by changes in anticipated financial volatility.

Furthermore, we discovered that only rapeseed and rough rice are asymmetrically influenced by economic policy uncertainty in the long term, based on the findings of the NARDL model. A 1% decrease in economic policy uncertainty (EPU-) lowers rapeseed and rough rice prices by 0.132% and 0.087%, respectively, whilst a 1% rise in economic policy (EPU+) uncertainty raises rapeseed and rough rice prices by 0.149% and 0.108%. In the long term, economic policy uncertainty does not influence coffee, sugar, sunflower, and wheat prices, because their EPU coefficients are not statistically significant.

Additionally, changes in geopolitical risk have a statistically significant influence on the long-term evolution of coffee, rapeseed, sugar, sunflower, and wheat. In the long run, the geopolitical risk does not affect rough rice. When the geopolitical risk is reduced by 1% (GPR-) coffee prices rise by 0.084%, however, the positive cumulative total of changes in geopolitical risk (GPR+) does not affect coffee prices. A 1% drop in geopolitical risk (GPR-), on the other hand, decreases rapeseed, sugar, sunflower, and wheat prices by 0.253%, 0.076%, 0.409%, and 0.272%, respectively, whilst a 1% increase in geopolitical risk (GPR+) raises prices by 0.269%, 0.087%, 0.439%, and 0.289%.

In the short term, the negative sum of changes in expected financial volatility (VIX-) causes a drop in the prices of coffee, sugar, and wheat, while positive developments (VIX+) influence primarily the price of wheat and cause it to rise. Neither of the modifications in economic policy uncertainty (EPU±), whether positive or negative, has a statistically significant influence on any of the agricultural prices. In the case of geopolitical risk, positive changes in geopolitical risk (GPR+) raise mainly sugar prices, but negative shocks (GPR-) have no statistically significant influence on coffee, rapeseed, rice, sugar, sunflower, or wheat prices in the short run.

Considering our findings, we may conclude that geopolitical risk has frequently been shown to be a significant factor influencing the development of agricultural commodity prices. Given different types of commodities, our results suggest both linear and nonlinear effects of explanatory variables on commodity prices. For instance, we find that only financial volatility has a symmetric impact on commodity prices in the short as well as in the long run. These findings are in line with Obi et al. (2018) and Choi & Hong (2020). Moreover, by the application of linear techniques, none of the results indicates short or long-term links between commodity prices and geopolitical risk or economic policy uncertainties. Therefore, there is no symmetry between these explanatory variables and prices. These findings are in contrast with Hernandez et al. (2022), who find linear linkages among geopolitical risk factors, economic policy uncertainty and commodity prices. On the other hand, we also identify asymmetric impacts of geopolitical risk, economic policy uncertainty and financial volatility on commodity prices. These findings are comparable with those of Lin et al. (2019), Kisswani (2021), and Jalal and Gopinathan (2022).

5. Conclusion

In light of recent events, we explored the symmetric and asymmetric links between geopolitical risk and global agricultural and food commodity prices. First, we used the basic linear ARDL model. Only in the situation of cocoa did the results show the existence of cointegration. We discovered that financial volatility is the only element that harms cocoa prices; geopolitical risk and economic policy uncertainty have no substantial impact on price movements. Furthermore, we observed that financial volatility had a short-term negative influence on cotton, lumber, oats, and soybean prices.

Second, we used a nonlinear ARDL model to examine the presence of asymmetric relationships between uncertainty indices and commodity prices. Coffee, rapeseed, rough rice, sugar, sunflower oil, and wheat prices all showed long-run asymmetric impacts. For example, fluctuations in financial volatility for coffee, sugar, and rapeseed are statistically significant. Coffee prices are harmed as a result of a negative shock, whereas sugar prices benefit. Positive changes in financial volatility, on the other hand, hurt rapeseed and sugar prices. Second, changes in economic policy uncertainty only influence rapeseed and rough rice prices. Rapeseed and rice prices fall when there is a negative shock, whereas they rise when there is a positive shock. Third, variations in geopolitical risk are statistically important in the long term for coffee, rapeseed, sugar, sunflower oil, and wheat prices. The negative adjustment raises coffee prices while decreasing rapeseed, sugar, sunflower oil, and wheat prices. Positive moves, on the other hand, harm coffee prices while increasing rapeseed, sugar, sunflower oil, and wheat prices. Finally, financial volatility and geopolitical risk have statistically significant coefficients in the short run. A decrease in financial volatility reduces the prices of coffee, sugar, and wheat, whereas an increase in geopolitical risk raises the price of sugar. Other shifts in financial volatility, economic policy uncertainty, and geopolitical risk have a statistically small impact on commodity prices.

The findings give useful information and a wide range of options for policymakers, investors, and analysts in terms of practical applicability. Agricultural commodity investors and regulators must consider geopolitical issues, uncertain economic policies, and financial volatility. Furthermore, to design the best plans and policies for both the short and long term, policymakers must be more cautious about geopolitical risks, economic policy uncertainty, and financial instability. More research is required based on the most recent data, an evaluation of other aspects, and a focus on the individual markets where geopolitical events occur. Furthermore, additional studies may duplicate and improve on this one using alternative approaches to fill in the study gaps.

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FINANCIAL LEVERAGE IMPACT ON THE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE: CASE STUDY OF SHKODRA CITY

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Abstract.

For every company, the decisions made to achieve an optimal capital structure are very important for its life cycle and for economic gain. Optimal financed investments contribute to the creation of new wealth, which reflects an added value in the market. There are many theories and studies for capital structure and its optimal level. This was the reason that we decide to study it in Shkodra businesses. In this study we will give a panorama of financial leverage used in businesses in Shkodra city and its effects in their performance. We will value the performance of the businesses using these variables: financial report of return on assets and the size of the company. We will take the financial data from Balance sheets of 60 businesses that operate in Shkodra city and study their performance during the years 2016 till 2020. Then we will give some conclusions and recommendations about their situation.

Keywords: Financial Leverage, Return on Assets, Company Size, Business Performance, Capital Structure.

1. Introduction

When we talk about economic entities, we think about their financial structure and the main way they use debt to finance their expensive technologies and equipment. Economic entities need funds from the beginning of their activities and during their development to finance their growth, their fixed assets and their long-term projects.

In Albania economic entities don't suffer the capital absence but the effective way they use it. From the statistics we see that capital reserves per person deposited in Albanian bank system are larger than that in some post-communist countries in Balkan. The capital deposited in Albanian bank system is invested fewer in Albania than in Balkan countries. The low credit level is one of the factors of high trade deficit and effective use of capital will soften this deficit. To do this we need to study the capital structure of economic entities and its impact in the value of the business.

The optimal capital structure[18] of a company refers to the proportion in which it structures its equity and debt. It is designed to maintain the perfect balance between maximising the wealth and value of the company and minimising its cost of capital. The company's management can decrease the cost of capital, when it substitutes debt with capital. Meanwhile

[18] https://cleartax.in/g/terms/optimal-capital-structure

with the decrease of specific weight of assets financed with debt, the company becomes high-risk and the cost of debt increases, so does the cost of capital. The optimal capital structure is financed 40% of debt and 60% of equity. But this can vary according to the type of industry, where the company operates. For example,[19] the mining industry is not very suitable for debt, because its cash flow can be unforeseeable, bringing doubt in their capability to repay the debt. Meanwhile insurance and banking sectors use great amounts of leverage and their structure presupposes huge amounts of debt.

Financial leverage exists when the company uses debt financing and when the firm profits are higher than costs of debt. The capital structure of a company must be built taking care of the level of risk. The capital structure is closely related to financial risk level. Higher debt leads to higher financial leverage and financial risk. There are many factors that impact the capital structure. Here we can mention: managers conservatism, borrowers' positions, control, asset's structure, profit ratio, tax and borrowing capacity and financing flexibility.

According to (Cani A. and Cani D.; 2020) about 60% of businesses in Albania operate with debt. In this paper we will see how the financial leverage impacts the performance of businesses in Shkodra city.

2. Literature review

There are many studies and papers about the impact of financial leverage in the business performance.

According to (Peterson & Rajan, 1994) there is a significantly relationship between profit ratios and debt financing in the small businesses.

According to (Chiang et al, 2002) the paper studies the inter-relationship between profitability, cost of capital and capital structure among property developers and contractors in Hong Kong. They concluded that capital gearing is positively related with asset, but negatively with profit margins. It is also a difference between property developers and contractors.

According to (Abor, 2005) who studied the relationship between capital structure and profitability of listed companies on the Ghana Stock Exchange during a five year period. He concluded that there is a significantly positive relation between the ratio of short-term debt to total assets and ROE, but a negative relationship between the ratio of long-term debt to total assets and ROE. With regard to the relationship between total debt and return rates, the results show a significantly positive association between the ratio of total debt to total assets and return on equity.

According to (Ebaid, 2009) who studied the impact of capital structure choice on firm performance in Egypt, concluded that capital structure choice decision, has a weak-to-no impact on firm's performance.

According to (Saeedi and Mahmoodi, 2011) who studied the relationship between capital structure and firm performance on 320 listed firms on Tehran Stock Exchange, concluded that firm performance is positively or even negatively related to capital structure.

According to (Ochei et al., 2014) who studied the impact of capital structure on firm performance during 2003-2012, in six petroleum companies in Nigeria. They concluded that there is a negative relationship between leverage and firm performance and a positive

[19] https://capital.com/optimal-capital-structure-definition

relationship between three of the explanatory variables (firm's size, tax and lagged return of asset) and firm performance.

(Çekrezi, 2014) studied the impact of firm specific factors and macroeconomic factors on capital structure decision for a sample of 53 non- listed firms, which operate in Albania, over the period 2008-2011. She concluded that tangibility (the ratio of fixed assets to total assets), liquidity (the ratio of current assets to current liabilities), profitability (the ratio of earnings after taxes to total assets), size (natural logarithm of total assets) and risk (the ratio of standard deviation of sales to average value of sales) have a significant impact on leverage. Also it is found that NDTSH (non-debt tax shields) has a negative but not significant relation with leverage and GDP growth rate, inflation and interest rate have a positive but not a significant relation with leverage.

(Kuč & Kalicanin 2020) studied the determinants of capital structure in 141 largest Serbian companies during the years 2009-2017. They concluded that these companies, mostly financed by short-term debt, predominantly belong to the 'pecking order' theory. When the total leverage is split into its short-term and long-term components, the results show that short-term leverage behaviour aligns with the 'pecking order' theory, whereas long-term leverage is fully consistent with the expectations of the trade-off theory. Also, this study shows that the country-specific determinants, such as inflation and development of the banking sector, have a significant impact on the capital structure of the largest companies in Serbia.

According to (Shkreta & Meka, 2021) who studied the application of "Pecking Order Theory" of capital structure in large manufacturing companies. They concluded that this theory is widely applicable to these companies. They see also that large manufacturing companies prefer domestic and debt financing than new equity.

3. Research question

The research question of this study is:

Does financial leverage impact the business performance in Shkodra city?

4. Methodology

In this study we used secondary resources to evaluate our research question. We take data from different books, internet etc. We take the main data from published financial statements like: Balance Sheet, Income and Expense Statement, Equity Statement and Cash-Flow Statement.

In different studies there are different factors that effect financial leverage of the companies.

In this study we will use the following factors to study the relationship between financial leverage and business performance: Tangibility, Growth, Liquidity, Debt/Equity Ratio and Size.

We use Gretl program to process the database.

Our database contains panel data for sixty businesses that operate in Shkodra city during the years 2016-2020.

We use ROA (Return On Assets ratio) to evaluate Business Performance. This ratio is equal to Net Income/Total Assets. This ratio is used in industry for the first time in 1919 in Dupont company and then it is very used in other analysis in the other companies.

Tangibility is equal to the ratio Long-Term Assets/Total Assets.

Growth is equal to annual rate of sales.

We evaluate Financial Leverage from the ratio Debt/Equity where Debt includes Long-Term debt and Short-Term Debt, while Equity is total Equity of the company.

Liquidity is payment ability of the business, so the ability of the business to pay short-term debts with short term assets. We evaluate Liquidity with the ratio Short-Term Assets/Short Term Debt.

Size of a business is a reflection of force, power, stability and safety. Large businesses have sustainable monetary flows and low levels of liquidation risk. In our study we evaluate Size with Total Assets of the business.

5. Data analysis

As we discuss above, in this study we will try to answer the research question:

Does financial leverage impact the business performance in Shkodra city?

To answer the research question, we raise one hypothesis:

Financial leverage doesn't impact business performance.

We implement this hypothesis in the panel data assured from financial statements of sixty businesses that operate in Shkodra city during the years 2016-2020.

After we create the hypothesis, we follow the next steps to complete the database analysis:

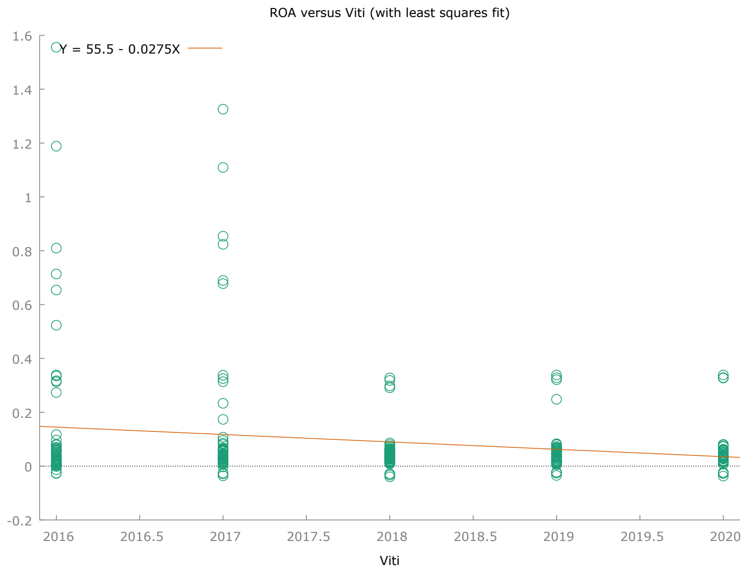
1. Place null and alternative hypotheses:
2. Collect data
3. Perform an appropriate statistical test
4. Decide whether to reject or fail to reject our null hypothesis.
5. Present the findings in our results and discussion section.

6. Results

To analyse the link between dependent and independent variable we use the the multiple linear regression analysis with ordinary least squares model.

We see the progress of financial leverage and business performance during the years and then we see their relationship. In the figure 1, below, we see the progress of ROA as a measure of business performance during the years 2016-2020. We see that ROA is decreased during the years. One factor that affected this decrease, we think that is Covid-19.

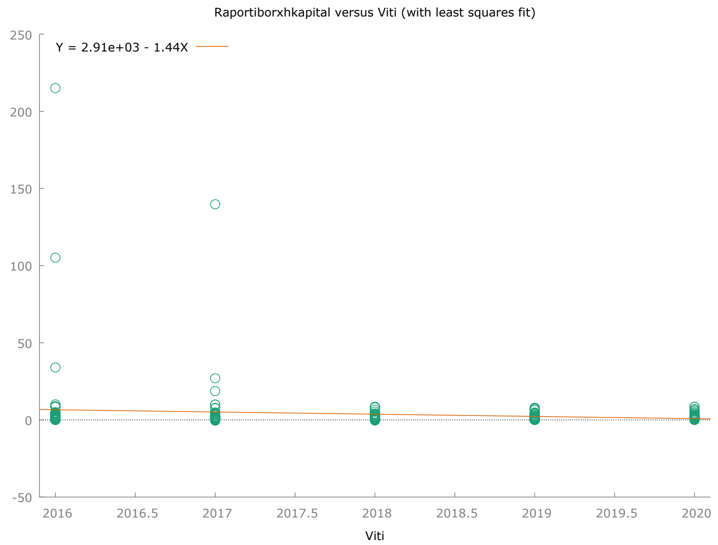
Figure 1. ROA progress during the years 2016-2020



Source: Author, Gretl Program.

As we see the progress of ROA, now in the figure 2 below we see the progress of the variable of financial leverage. We evaluate this variable with the ratio Debt/Equity. During the years the ratio decreased. This decrease came as a result of the decrease of the debt that the businesses borrowed during the years.

Figure 2. Ratio Debt/Equity progress during the years 2016-2020



Source: Author, Gretl Program.

After we see the progress of the variables, we place null and alternative hypotheses for the main hypothesis of the study:

H_0: "Financial leverage doesn't impact business performance"

H_1: "Financial leverage impact business performance"

Below in the table 1 we have a summary of statistics for all the variables, dependent (ROA) and independent (Tangibility, Growth, Liquidity, Ratio Debt/Equity and Size), that we will use in this study.

Tabela 1. Summary statistics for the studied variables.

	Average	Medial	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
ROA	0.08993	0.03835	0.1939	-0.04000	1.556
Tangibility	0.2852	0.2211	0.2343	0.0000	0.7290
Growth	0.01677	-0.05224	0.6714	-1.000	3.803
Liquidity	32.51	3.886	100.2	0.4100	674.3
Ratio Debt/Equity	3.713	1.171	16.09	-0.5000	215.1
Size	1.003e+008	4.722e+007	1.364e+008	3.813e+006	5.964e+008

Source: Author, Gretl Program.

After this we prepare the first equation of the multiple linear regression where the dependent variable is ROA and independent variables are: Tangibility, Growth, Liquidity, Financial leverage, Size. From the matrix of the correlation between independent variables, we see that we do not have problems of correlation between them, because the coefficients are out of the interval [-0.7; 0.7]. The multiple regression is as follows:

$$ROA = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 TANGIBILITY_{it} + \alpha_2 GROWTH_{it} + \alpha_3 LIQUIDITY_{it} + \alpha_4 LEV_{it} + \alpha_5 SIZE_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

After the evaluation of linear regression, the results tell us that the model is statistically significant (p = 0.000) but the independent variables like TANGIBILITY and LEV are not statistically significant. After that, we do another time the evaluation of linear regression and we see that it was statistically significant and adjusted R^2 is 13%. The significant variables in the final regression model are GROWTH, LIQUIDITY and SIZE. Below is the final linear regression model:

$$\mathbf{ROA = 0.14 + 0.11\ GROWTH_{it} - 0.0006\ LIQUIDITY_{it} - 2.47\ SIZE_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}}$$

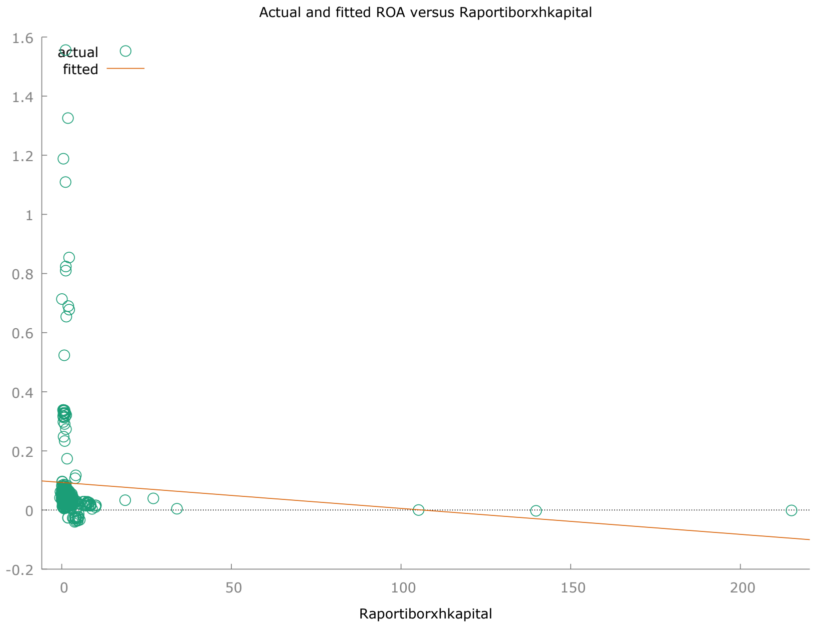
As we see from the linear regression Growth has positive relation with ROA, while Liquidity and Size have negative relation with ROA and the adjusted R^2 is low, only 13%. this means that independent variables justify only 13% of dependent variable. So there are other variables or factors that impact business performace. From the regression model we see that financial leverage is not in the final model. So we can say that financial leverage doesn’t impact the business performance.

So we study these two variables divided from the others and we firstly evaluate the multiple linear regression and it is as below:

$$\mathbf{ROA = 0.09 - 0.00087\ LEVERAGE_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}}$$

As we see from the linear regression Leverage has negative relation with ROA and the R^2 is only 0.5%. Below in the figure 3 we can the negative weak relationship between these variables.

Figure 3. The relationship between ROA and financial leverage



Source: Author, Gretl Program.

After we see the negative relationship between these two variables, we test the hypothesis. We follow five steps analysis for this:

1. Place null and alternative hypotheses:

   H_0: "Financial leverage doesn't impact business performance"

   H_1: "Financial leverage impact business performance"

2. Define the importance level:

   α=5% expectations interval 95%

3. Define control statistics

   df=n-k

4. The rule of making the decision

   $t_{critical} < t_{calculated}$ null hypothesis fail

5. Making decision

   $T_{calculated}$=β^5–β5/se(β^5)=-0.00087/0.00069=-1.26
   Let's calculate now the value of $t_{critical}$ with α = 5 % , df = 294 (300-6). The value is t=±2.042 .
   -1.26 < -2.042

   So, H_0 is not rejected, because the coefficient β_5 is not statistically significant. So we approve H_0: "Financial leverage doesn't impact business performance"

7. Conclusions

Debt financing is cheaper than stock financing, because of fiscal savings.

Businesses use different sources of capital: first they use their own capital, if not they borrow it and only as a last option, they use issue of shares as their financing option.

Small businesses have minor debts than large businesses because of larger cost of bankruptcy, lower marginal tax rates and larger asymmetric information.

The business that are studied in this paper present: performance decline during the years 2016-2020, increasing tangibility, decreasing growth, decreasing leverage and increasing size.

According to this study there is no relationship between financial leverage and their performance.

Generally, the businesses in Shkodra are financed 58% with debt and 42% with own capital.

8. Limitations

The small number of companies and their missing data during the years.

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A CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIDEROT EFFECT AND SNOOBISM IN CONSUMPTION

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Abstract

The Diderot effect is a social phenomenon which states that the individual identities of consumers are shaped by what they buy, and accordingly, the products that consumers will buy next can be predicted by their first purchases. On the other hand, the cultural codes adopted by consumers bring harmony and integrity in consumption. This, in turn, greatly affects the desire to own and purchasing behavior, and unwittingly leads to the pursuit of acquiring the whole. On the other hand, the snob effect, refers to the consumers spending to prove themselves against their environment by going beyond the limits allowed by their income without having enough income, without considering the economic situation that they are in. The middle-income person who buys that product even though he can't afford it with the snob effect, thinks that he has reached high status, while the high-income person turns to more inaccessible products as soon as he sees that people with lower incomes are using that product. Thus; Irrational expenditures made with expectations such as self-creation, self-acceptance, status and showing off can affect consumers psychologically, economically and socially, resulting in higher expenditures. These two effects have an important place in cultural anthropology, psychology and sociology in terms of explaining both the shopping desire and consumption frenzy in all times. In this study, the place of the Diderot effect and the snob effect, which is thought to be the different reasons behind consumption activities, in the consumption phenomenon and marketing discipline has been examined.

Keywords: Diderot Effect, Snob Effect, Consumption.

1. Introduction

One of the typical phenomena of the consumption culture that encompasses all areas of life is the concept of "homo economicus". The capitalist economy, which is based on the principle that limited resources meet unlimited needs, is fed by the phenomenon of more consumption. In the capitalist cycle, which continues its existence with uninterrupted profit, it is necessary to produce continuously and to ensure that the produced products are consumed. The capitalist system has tended to seek new markets since the second half of the 20th century. This new market after the colonial period emerges as media using softer equipment. A world of consumption has been created where people live to consume by the media (Çakaröz at al, 2021).

The needs of individuals and societies are transformed from physical and physiological dimensions to social, cultural and psychological needs over time. Consumption culture uses a number of indicators to shape aforementioned needs and individuals' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions (Akova & Kantar, 2019). These indicators are used to shape the pleasures, tastes and lifestyles of individuals and to increase consumption in this direction. With the change of consumption patterns, today's consumption concept leads not only to products that meet functional needs, but also to products with symbolic meanings. Human as a being who learns from the social environment, tends to conspicuous consumption in order to transfer the impression he has about the life of others to his own life (Şahin & Nasır, 2019).

The world has become a global village with increasing trade freedoms and the expansion of international travel. In the increasing shopping trend with the expansion of international markets opinion leaders and brand conscious, innovative consumers influence local and global market trends (Tsai at al, 2013).

Recent developments in behavioral economics, buying spree, referral effects, consumers' attachment styles and diversity seeking behavior show the importance of adapting consumer insights to business decision models. Among these insights, the Diderot effect and the snob effect are particularly noteworthy on issues such as increasing consumption by diversifying promotional activities during the new marketing strategy development phase of businesses (Sogo & Matsubayash, 2020).

The concepts of the Diderot and Snob effect make an important contribution to explanation of the psychological process behind this point where consumers come. The inadequacy of the studies in which these concepts are discussed and examined in the marketing literature necessitated this study. In this study, the concepts of Diderot effect and snob effect, their relationship with the consumption process, their place in the marketing discipline and other concepts they evoke in marketing are examined from a conceptual point of view.

2. Diderot Effect

The Diderot Effect is a social phenomenon which states that the individual identities of consumers are shaped by what they buy, and accordingly, the products that a person will buy next can be predicted by their first purchase (evrimagaci.org). The person who introduced the concept of the Diderot Effect to the literature is anthropologist and ethnographer Grant David McCracken. McCracken first described this concept in his book "Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities" (1988). According to McCracken (1988), the Diderot Effect is a force that encourages the individual to maintain a cultural consistency on consumer products. According to this effect, there is an interaction of a group of consumer goods that are culturally compatible, define and complement each other. This concept that McCracken mentioned was named after the French writer and philosopher Denis Diderot. Diderot who lived in the 18th century in Turkey wrote an article titled "Regrets for Leaving My Old Dressing Gown" (Çildir & Fettağlıoğlu, 2022). In the article in question, while Diderot was in great debt and his need for money was at the highest level in 1765, Russian Empress Catherine the Great, as the guardian of art and science, bought Diderot's library and left the library to Diderot. Thus, Diderot had an important amount of money. Catherine was not satisfied with this and set Diderot up as a librarian by paying his 25-year salary in advance. With this big money, Diderot bought an expensive red dressing gown, which he had been thinking of buying for a long time. The dressing gown was so magnificent for Diderot so Diderot thought that the furniture in the house did not suit it, and started to change his belongings with new ones that would fit his dressing gown. With each replacement, the inconsistency with the others increased and he began to renew the others. In the end, he replaced all the furniture in the house with new ones and fell into debt again (Eğilmez, 2019a). While this renovation would restore comfort and harmony for Diderot, the situation was not at all what Diderot had hoped. According to him, "everything was a dissonance, without unity and beauty

". His new dressing gown started the "destruction of luxury" that destroyed the unity and comfort of his old room in his life. As a result, Diderot summarized this situation in his article with the following words: "While I was the absolute master of my old robe, I became a slave to the new one" McCracken conceptualizes this process and experience Diderot lived through as the "Diderot Effect" (1988). (Page, 2020).

The Diderot effect, which explains how the personality, experiences, behaviors or cultural values of the consumers make a change on the goods they previously bought or owned, puts the consumer in the tendency and behavior to complete the purchased products with new products. Personality, which is expressed as a unique, consistent and structured pattern of emotion, thought and behavior, a form of relationship, a set of psychological and fixed characteristics, which is established by individuals with their internal and external environment and distinguishes them from other people, is actually the experissions of emotion thought and behavior patterns as a whole. Diderot also experienced a great discomfort as a result of the deterioration of this integrity and the incompatibility between his belongings as a result of the deficiencies (Gürdin, 2020). According to McCracken (1988), the search for harmony and integrity lies behind the act of consumption. For this reason, the old and the new cannot coexist in the act of consumption, and change, balance, unity and consistency emerge as important concepts. For this reason, the consumer continues to buy and consume until reaching the aforementioned integrity and harmony, which is defined as Diderot integrity (Tokmak, 2019).

There are two main emphasis of the Diderot effect in consumption such as "basic" and "interdependent". The reason for being "basic" is that the new goods and services purchased, destroy the old ones and motivate the consumer to buy new ones. The reason why they are "interdependent" is that each newly purchased good or service does not create psychological pressure on the consumer to replace the next old good or service in order to adapt (McCracken, 1988). When the Diderot effect is examined from this point of view, it represents a trend that constantly raises the consumption standards of the consumer (Çakır, 2021).

3. Snob Effect

The snobbish effect is defined as the production scarcity, under-recognition, and high price of the luxury product. Under the snob effect, the consumer feels different and special as being one of the few people who reach for a certain product. Consumers buy products that the majority do not prefer or cannot afford to achieve the satisfaction of being unique. The important thing in the snobbish effect is that the purchased products cannot be bought by everyone. In this context, the snob product is not a popular product, but a scarce and hard-to-reach product. While the snop product increases the satisfaction of being unique, the wrong person who chooses that product gives up using that product quickly. Snob consumers buy products to prove that they are different from others rather than showing their social status and pointing out their wealth (Aslan, 2019).

The Snob effect, introduced by John Maynard Keynes; is a phenomenon that expresses the situation where the demand for a particular good of individuals at higher income level is inversely proportional to the demand for a good of individuals at lower income level **(**Chen at al, 2016). For example, the X brand watch has a lower demand than normal watches because of its high price (law of demand.) On the other hand, its demand does not increase as its price decreases. Because its price is still very high compared to other watches, and those with an income below a certain income find this watch expensive and cannot buy it, even though its price has decreased. On the other hand, as the price of the watch increases, the number of people who demand this watch increases. Because those who buy this watch act by thinking that less people will have the watch and that it will provide them with an important status (Eğilmezb, 2019). The snob effect expresses the desire to have a prestigious and unique product. While the demand for a product with snobbish value is high, the number of people who own that product is low. Rare artworks, specially designed sports cars, made-to-order clothing, luxury cars are examples of this (www.finanswebde.com).

The snop effect, which is the opposite of the effect of not falling behind from others, has a significant effect on conspicuous consumption. The snop effect explains how much the purchasing demand for that product has decreased due to the consumption of the same product by other consumers. While consumers want to conform to the public image of the upper class by copying their purchasing behavior, snop consumers; tends to openly reveal their individual sophistication and superior tastes (Esmer, 2020). While examining the snob effect, if a consumer realizes that others are consuming the product he is consuming, he evaluates it according to the degree of decrease in demand for that product. This effect is expressed as being special to consumers, being different from everyone else, and separating oneself from other consumers. Such consumers want to buy products that are not consumed by many consumers with the desire to be unique. These consumers consider that the value of uniqueness is superior to the value of influencing others. For this reason, they prefer rare, limited or lesser-known luxury items, bespoke items that no one can own, or products produced in limited numbers by luxury brands (Telli Yamamato at al., 2021).

4. Results

While describing the consumer society, Baudrillard (1970) touches on the human problem in the increasingly wealthy capitalism. In societies that have become rich, people have turned from intense communication into a consumer society surrounded by commodified objects. In this transformation of commodification and objectification, the homogeneity and reproduction of the social structure takes place. Consumers are convinced that indicators of abundance and displaying them are sources of happiness and prestige.

The understanding that expresses human behavior with change and usage value is used to express symbolic change. Unlike classical production and consumption, symbolic change becomes a tool for the pretentious and wasteful spending tendency and entertainment orientation by the nature of the human being. Symbolic change accelerates the consumption of signs produced by mass media (Şaylan, 2002).

The concepts of industrial society and consumer society, as concepts that follow and feed each other, are influenced by individuals' identity, selfness, status, class belonging. While, selfness and image harmony, symbolic consumption, conspicuous consumption, luxury consumption types are closely related to snobbism in consumer tendencies; it is possible to see the Diderot effect in nostalgic consumption, utilitarian consumption and functional consumption. A product which is preferred under the Diderot effect includes the individual's way of presenting himself, being compatible with the individual's image, the individual's expectation, and motivation to achieve completion and integrity. Besides, snobism is inherently associated with the scarcity principle. Being a private individual who can access to the few, the unique, and the limited is an important factor in purchasing motivation. Snob consumers aim to reach unique and unfindable products in that reflect their social status and otherwise they aim to turn to new products after abandonment, dispensation and renunciation.

Today, with the spread of communication opportunities, consumers are exposed to non-obvious innovative methods as well as traditional promotion methods and their perceptions are shaped accordingly. In addition to their functional benefits, consumption products are loaded with symbolic meanings, causing materialistic and hedonic consumption with motivations such as social encouragement, appreciation and representation of status. While this is a factor that increases profitability for businesses in the short term, it also reflects the indicators of consumption frenzy. When considered in terms of sustainable consumption, it is known that even though purchasing provides personal satisfaction in the short term, it causes socio-economic, psychological and environmental deteriorations with the Diderot effect and the snobbish effect.

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A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE CUSTOMER INTERFACE

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Abstract

The store atmosphere is a very important issue for physical retailers. Because the store atmosphere has an impact on customers spending more time in the store, purchasing more products, enjoying being in the store, brand loyalty and brand engagement. Similarly, the customer interface is important for an electronics retailer. In short, the customer interface for an e-retailer is the store's atmosphere. A customer interface designed in a way that attracts the attention of customers will allow customers to move easily and stay longer in the virtual store. For this reason, electronic retailers should give importance to the customer interface in this period of increasing electronic commerce. The customer interface is important not only for electronic retailers but also for all businesses that provide services in the digital environment. For example, in a digital game application, users need to act quickly and easily. This will be thanks to the use of a user-friendly customer interface. This study aims to contribute to the marketing literature by examining the academic studies on the customer interface. The study will be carried out as a systematic literature review. For analysis, databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect and ULAKBİM (National Academic Network and Information Center) will be searched. The obtained data will be interpreted through the SPSS statistical package program.

Keywords: Customer Interface, Digital Marketing, E-Retailing, Systematic Literature Review.

1. Introduction

It is possible to say that the bond between technology and people is getting stronger day by day. Technologies that spread to all areas of our lives are becoming products that we encounter frequently. The interaction between humans and computers is getting stronger every day. Scientific researches in this field are rapidly increasing in line with technological developments under the title of human-computer interaction (Kahraman & Toy, 2017).

While tremendous advances in technology provide humanity with countless opportunities to benefit from machines, human herself / himself is the biggest constraint in this process at the same time. The main reason behind this is that the machine is not compatible with human users. The success of information technology projects involving the interaction between human and machine depends on the user understanding of the machine. In other words, the customer interface of the machine plays an important role in interacting with the user, creating a perception of usability and ease of use (Zain, 2020).

The use of any device with a screen relies heavily on the user interface. "Customer Interface" refers to the various methods and devices used to regulate the interaction between machines and the people who use them, i.e. users. Customer interfaces can take many forms; however, it always fulfills two main tasks; communicating from product to user and from user to product by conveying information. Customer interfaces are essentially a form of communication between the user and the program. Its main purpose is always conveying information to the user (Çeken & Şenoymak Ersan, 2019).

Work and life in general are becoming more and more dependent on the internet, web apps and mobile apps. As a result, companies see that the best way to compete on the web is to prioritize creating an attractive and efficient customer interface (UI) that optimizes the user experience (UX) (www.indeed.com). The customer interface not only focuses on aesthetics, but also maximizes a website's responsiveness, efficiency, and accessibility to the user. UI design is a very important part of not only web interface design but also mobile application design. At the same time, UI design helps companies to increase the conversion rate on their websites (www.iienstitu.com).

2. Customer Interface

The area that emerges as a result of the human-machine cooperation and where the interaction between two of them is experienced is called as the customer interface. Its purpose is to reach the user by making the use and/or operation more effective and simpler (Erten, n.d.). The Customer Interface provides the bridge between the hardware and the user, as tactile, auditory or visual, between the user and the hardware. Commands, icons, windows, buttons, and such panels are all examples of a customer interface. Almost all software programs (smart televisions, smartphones, smart watches, computers, tablets, gps or navigation devices, cash machines, driver displays, etc.) have a graphical user interface (www.userspots.com).

The customer interface is a bridge that communicates between the user and the computer system. The customer interface plays an important role in computer systems, because the customer interface affects the life and usability of the computer system or mobile application. Computer systems consist of three main parts: input, process and output. When the user sends an input signal to the system, the system changes its state in line with the incoming signal. As soon as the system gives the output, it returns to its previous state. In this context, interfaces actually include the request from the user in the process (Akyol, 2014).

It is a visual way of interacting with a computer using elements such as windows, icons, and menus used by most modern operating systems in the context of computer technologies. It enables users to process in a shorter time and each individual to use technology-based tools such as computer, tablet, smart mobile phone, etc., regardless of age by directing them. With the help of symbols, pictograms and signs, it is aimed to make the texts easier to understand and to make the interaction more urgent. Customer interface is a computer program that allows the user to communicate with the computer through symbols, visual metaphors and signs. In addition to the text that provides the interaction between the device and the user, all of the graphic images, icons and buttons which are used, represent the user interface (Meriç, 2019). The customer interface is also very important as it is the main part of creating an engaging website. People use interfaces for various purposes. They interact with the interface (www.iienstitu.com), for example, to get quick information, to perform a complex task (filling out a form for a loan application), or to play a game to pass the time.

It can be said that interfaces are a visual tool for users to access all the information they need. Because of being designed in a qualified way and their functional usage, customer interfaces increase the satisfaction of the users and enables users to learn interfaces easier. As being one of the most important tools of digital platforms; it is very important how the interfaces, which the users are in constant interaction with and provide access to the needed information, are designed (Türkmenoğlu & Atalar, 2020).

It can be said that the correct design of the interfaces will prevent all failures in user and device communication both for the users and the supplier company. Most user errors can be caused by poorly designed interfaces. A good interface for users encourages an easy, natural and interesting interaction between the user and the system, enabling users to fulfill their tasks (Sağlam & Tokat, 2018). Therefore, the used interface; should be self-explanatory, effective and user-friendly. In order for the interface designs to be successful by reaching their purpose, the purposes, habits and usage experience of the user should be taken into consideration (Sakman, 2017).

Disciplines such as ergonomics, psychology and sociology, technology and engineering affect the interface design process directly and/or indirectly. The goal of the interface design is to provide the user with an easier, more effective and user-friendly experience on the way he or she tries to achieve his goal. It is aimed that the user can reach the target point in the shortest way with minimum input during the experience (Erten, n.d.).

When the national and international studies on this subject in the literature are examined, it is seen that the subject affects different disciplines and maintains its currency. Visual communication design, information technologies, interface design, user experience, purchasing, brand image were examined and contributed to the literature. Marketing-based researches are given below.

In this research, Kim & Ay (1998) explored the possibility of designing a customer interface for electronic commerce systems that would arouse target emotions in the customer. Because of the important effect on the costumers' behaviour who use electronic commerce systems it is focused on the trustworthiness effect of visual design factors. It has been found that design factors have significant effects on the extent of emotions related to symmetry, reliability, awkwardness, and grace. It also demonstrates that it is possible to manipulate the visual design factors of the customer interface to evoke a sense of purpose, such as reliability.

Zhang et al. (1999) found in their study that among the 6Cs of the six elements of the customer interface (customer interface design for co-creation, character, choice, and customization) are important factors to influence the customer's commitment to co-creation for both casual fashion products and Aloha fashion products. In addition, it was concluded that product performance risk did not soften the relationship between customer commitment and patronage intention.

Chang & Cheng (2008) concluded in their study that customer interface quality critically affects the success of electronic commerce. It shows that the customer interface quality elements such as personalization, interaction, convenience and character contribute to creating e-loyalty, and especially convenience directly increases e-loyalty. In addition, the results show that customer interface quality positively affects replacement costs for customers with high internet experience.

Lin et al. (2010), in their study with 3PL companies found that the customer interface in logistics service designs positively affects the degree of customer participation in the service.A well-designed interface with the service offered raises customer satisfaction to the next level.

Aytekin & Yücel (2018) examined the ATM interface designs of Akbank, İşbank, Ziraat Bank, Vakıfbank and Yapı Kredi Bank, which have branches in Turkey and abroad. They determined and compared the execution times of transactions such as cash withdrawals, which is one of the most usage reasons of ATMs, and conveyed the features that should be included in a user-friendly interface. In the study, cash withdrawal and money deposit screen designs were examined in the ATMs of the banks examined. At the end of the research, it was observed that the banks made minimum effort to place importance to the interface designs. Despite all these good intentions and efforts, a desired level of interface design could not be found.

Sağlam & Polat (2018) examined how a good interface design should be made and the benefits of increased usability thanks to this design. It has been included in the expert opinions that the interface designs with high usability can make the user happy by facilitating the interaction of the users with the product and making positive contributions to this interaction, and that the sales of the company increase in line with the recommendations of the happy customers to the others.

Aksu (2019) examined existing technologies and interfaces in order to create a user-centered, motivating and efficient interface design for augmented reality applications that can be used in existing and future technological devices. As a result of the examinations, it emerges from the examined examples that the gamifying visual elements in the interface design are the most important elements that ensure the efficiency of the interaction.

Roggeveen & Sethuraman (2020) explored 128 different aspects of the shopping experience, from common elements to the latest innovations, in their research to understand the value that consumers place on technology as part of the shopping process so that companies can realize the benefits of the latest innovations in customer interface technology. The results reveal that consumers are generally satisfied with the convenience, quality, selection and value provided by retailers today, but less satisfied with the level of service provided, the availability of product information, and the speed of the shopping process.

Tafida (2022) states that modern technological innovations will increase employee performance and customer satisfaction. According to the author, hotel managers should consider this relationship. Hotels will increase customer satisfaction when they have a user-friendly customer interface so that they can easily transact and be understood by customers.

3. Conclusion

As the use of the Internet has become an integral part of life, the ease of use and speed of websites has also started to gain importance. It has become a necessity for customers who want to buy a product to interact with an interface. The customer interface, which is extremely important for e-commerce sites, affects both brand image and purchasing behavior (www.ticimax.com).

The goal of the interface design is to provide the user an easier, more effective and user-friendly experience on the way he or she tries to achieve his goal. It is aimed that the user can reach the target point in the shortest way with minimum input during the experience. Thus, the intensity of the customer's flow experience increases and a positive attitude towards the website is formed. Link failure, obligatory long forms, download delays, off-topic product descriptions, uncertainty about the next step in the site navigation are the things that hinder the flow. As a result, many customers develop a poor attitude towards the site and their purchase intentions decrease.

The customer interface is important to meet customer expectations and support the effective functionality of the site. Today's client interface designer websites offer unlimited opportunities to work on mobile apps, wearable technology and smart home devices. As long as computers continue to be a part of daily life, there will be a need to make interfaces that users of all ages, all types and technical backgrounds can use effectively.

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THE IMPACT OF FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION ON ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ALBANIA

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Abstract.

Decentralization is a long-term process that includes, within an appropriate legal framework, different components, such as political decentralization, administrative decentralization and fiscal decentralization (Boschmann, 2009). Fiscal decentralization is essentially the transfer of functions or powers from central levels of government to local institutions related to local decision-making in the allocation of financial resources (ie financial powers) and powers to impose local taxes. Even Albania, like almost all economies in transition, has started from a legacy of a highly centralized system of public finance in the government. The fragmentation of the territory, as well as the small local government units, are listed among the main reasons for the high inefficiency in the performance of public services at the local level and the failure to achieve the objectives of the decentralization reform by most of the local government units in Albania . Over the past few years, it is worth noting that it has made significant progress towards decentralization. In the literature on fiscal decentralization, its benefit in promoting economic growth is also widely discussed, thus emphasizing the potentially positive effects of fiscal decentralization. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it provides an analytical and empirical basis on the relationship that exists between fiscal decentralization and economic growth in general and in particular for the case of Albania, for the period 2000-2015.

Keywords: Fiscal Decentralization, Local Finance, Economic Growth, Albania.

1. Introduction

Decentralization is one of the main constitutional principles to ensure the best possible performance in the way of organization and operation of local government. Decentralization is the transfer of authority and responsibility of public functions from the central government to the local government or to other organizations at the local level. Decentralization and local authorities represent the basic principles of consolidated democracies. He represents the right of citizens to participate in the administration of public affairs and is convinced that at the local level this right is exercised in a direct and efficient manner.

Shifting many responsibilities to local authorities has often been seen as a way to improve central government and public management.

Many economists believe that fiscal decentralization is an effective strategy to promote economic growth. The classical theory of fiscal federalism does not clearly explain the relationship between fiscal decentralization and economic growth.

However, after the initiation of large-scale decentralization reforms in (former) socialist states in the late 1980s and early 1990s, studies on the fiscal decentralization–economic growth nexus became important (Yushkov, 2015).

Albania is a middle-income country that, over the last two decades, has made great strides in establishing a credible multi-party democracy and a market economy. After the transition from the International Development Association to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 2008, Albania has generally been able to maintain positive growth rates and financial stability, despite the ongoing economic crisis. (World Bank).

During the last 20 years, Albania has made significant progress towards decentralization.

In a research paper on Fiscal Decentralization (USAID, 2012), the main advantages in support of progress towards fiscal decentralization are the approval of the basic legal framework that describes and defines the powers and functions of local government units; the division of expenses is relatively clear with the exception of some joint functions; income from own resources is determined; unconditional grants have tried to promote equality between local government units; and the capacities of local units in drafting the budget and involving citizens have generally increased.

2. Fiscal decentralization and economic growth

The main economic reason to increase fiscal decentralization is the improvement of economic efficiency: the provision of local outputs that are differentiated according to local tastes and preferences and as a result we have higher levels of social welfare than in the case of central and uniform provision of these outputs in all jurisdictions. Miller and Russek (1997) point out that decentralization is seen as a means to produce more efficient and effective governance, to produce macroeconomic stability, and adequate growth at all levels. Bahn and Linn (1992), argue that "Decentralization comes more as a result of achieving a high level of economic development" and that the "threshold of economic development" for which fiscal decentralization becomes attractive "is significantly high". From the perspective above, it is economic development that comes first; and the fiscal decentralization that follows. There has been an ongoing debate between the theoretical and empirical literature on whether decentralization is an effective strategy to promote economic growth and development, particularly in developing countries. Theoretically, decentralization can be seen as a way to stimulate an increase in economic growth, with significant opportunities for better governance (Aisyah, 2012).

Miller and Russek (1997) point out that decentralization is seen as a means to produce more efficient and effective governance, to produce macroeconomic stability, and adequate growth at all levels. Some research findings show a positive relationship between economic growth and fiscal decentralization, while other studies show a negative relationship. The main reasons for these different findings are also related to the fact that different researchers use different measures of fiscal decentralization. Ebel and Yilmaz (2002) emphasize as the main reason precisely the inaccurate measures of fiscal decentralization. Most of the studies start from the endogenous growth model built by Barro. This model considers two sectors of the economy: the Private sector (P) and the Public sector (G) and their outputs labor (Labor-L) and Capital (Capital-K). The production functions of these sectors are as follows:

$$G = g\ (Lg, Kg) \text{ and } P = p\ (Lp, Kg, G)$$

where g and p are public and private sector inputs respectively.

The total inputs are presented as follows:

$$L_T = Lp + Lg \text{ and } K_T = Kp + Kg$$

Meanwhile, the total output (Q) consists of the outputs of P and G. Thus:

Q = P + G and as a result of what was expressed above, the equation has the following form:

$$Q = p\ (L_P ,Kp, G) + g\ (Lg, Kg)$$

The assumption of Barro's model is that public spending is undertaken by three levels of government: federal, state, and local. Thus the nature of intergovernmental fiscal agreements will affect the output of G. Thus the equation Q = L + K + G is implemented as follows:

$$Q = L + K + FD$$

Where FD (fiscal decentralization) represents fiscal decentralization and as a result the size of G depends to some extent on fiscal decentralization. As a result, the growth equation takes the following form:

$$Q = \alpha + \alpha\ L + \alpha\ K + \alpha\ FD + \varepsilon$$

Where α is the constant and ε the random error.

3. Fiscal decentralization reforms in Albania

In Albania, the decentralization reform has progressed steadily during 1999 and 2000, based on the Constitution (1998), the European Charter for Local Self-Government (ratified in November 1999) and the National Decentralization Strategy, approved in January 2000.

The most important specific step was the approval and implementation of Law No. 8652, 31.07. 2000 "On the Organization and Functioning of Local Government", which sanctions the rights and powers of local government units in accordance with the Constitution and the European Charter for Local Self-Government and was followed by other laws that regulate the activity of local government (Oshafi, 2015). The legal and institutional reforms of 2000 were aimed at creating more effective decentralized fiscal and administrative structures, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the territory and Albania as a unitary state. The objectives of the reform were to improve efficiency in the allocation of funds, in governance and increase accountability. As part of the governance decentralization reforms, the Law on the Administrative Territorial Division of Local Government Units (8653/2000) was also approved. Basically, the administrative division of the year 2000 tries to preserve the historical boundaries of municipalities, communes, districts or prefectures (referring to the beginning of the 20th century) by merging the administrative boundaries of districts with those of counties.

This package of reforms, which defined the main framework of the decentralization of governance in Albania, was built on the assumption that the local government units, which would not have the opportunity to provide the transferred functions and responsibilities on their own, would use the alternative offered from the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and the Law on the Organization and Functioning of Local Government to join each other, or to engage in international cooperation. During 2003-2005, important policies and legislative reforms were undertaken in the field of pre-university education, primary health care, economic assistance and social services. Among the most important changes are the greater involvement of LGUs in the implementation of investments for pre-university education infrastructure and primary health care facilities, the authority to hire administrative and security personnel for these facilities, the existing ownership of education facilities pre-university and primary health care, as well as full authority in the administration of economic aid funds and community work programs (Oshafi, 2015).

LGUs in Albania have historically suffered from insufficient funding. This lack of funding together with the territorial-administrative fragmentation made it difficult to provide services in accordance with the needs and expectations of LGU residents. Clearly, the problem of bad financing cannot be solved by any efficiency gains that come from territorial consolidation. And of course LGUs will need more income to meet the demands of the electorate for better services and better public infrastructure (USAID,2015). On July 31, 2014, the Assembly of Albania approved the Law on Administrative-Territorial Division. Albania already has a new territorial map, reducing 6 times the number of first-level local government units, from 373 local units to only 61 municipalities.

Reducing the number of LGUs should increase the efficiency of local government by reducing administrative costs. Concentrating human and financial resources in a small number of larger LGUs should increase the effectiveness of public services while also improving the ability of local governments to respond to their community preferences. Meanwhile, the transfer of responsibilities for the day-to-day provision of general services to LGUs allows the central government to focus more on its strategic, legal and national policy-making functions, including the objective of a balanced territorial development[20]. The administrative-territorial reform promised to improve not only the effectiveness and efficiency of local government but also the Albanian state as a whole. In order to fulfill this promise, however, the territorial reform must be accompanied by major changes in the intergovernmental finance system[21].

[20] Local Government Planning and Governance Project (PLGP) in Albania, (USAID, 2015)

[21] The Local Planning and Governance Project (PLGP) in Albania, (USAID, 2015)

4. Empirical results

The use of statistical techniques such as the sum regression model is used to model the relationship that exists between two or more explanatory variables, considered as independent variables, and a dependent variable. Each value of the independent variable x is associated with a value of the dependent variable y. Formally, the multiple linear regression model, given n observations, is:

$$Yi = ß_0 + ß_1Xi_1 + ß_2Xi_2 + \ldots + ß_pX_{ip} + \epsilon_i \qquad \text{për } i=1,2,\ldots.n.$$

In this way, in order to determine the effect of fiscal decentralization on economic growth, and how much is the effect measured in quantitative form, for the case of Albania, the econometric analysis of linear sum regression, over time series (OLS), respectively for the years 2000- 2015. The goal in a regression analysis is to estimate the mean of the dependent variable when given the values of the independent variables, the parameter (or partial parameters) must be statistically significant for the model to be good, which can be used to draw a conclusion in relation to a phenomenon or for prediction. For this reason, for a model with a higher explainability, in addition to the dependent variable: the rate of GDP (%), and the independent variable: the rate of fiscal decentralization, other additional factors that have an impact have been taken into consideration in economic growth such as: investment rate, inflation rate, human capital, labor force participation rate and trade openness rate:

The research question: *What is the relationship between the indicator that measures fiscal decentralization and economic growth in Albania?*

THE MODEL:

Dependent variable: Real economic growth (%)

• Independent variable: Inflation rate (Change at the end of the year %)

• Independent variable: Investment rate (% of GDP)

• Independent variable: Trade openness (Export+Import/GDP)

• Independent variable: Labor force participation rate (Ratio of the labor force to the working-age population)

• Independent variable: Human Capital (Registration rate in primary and secondary education)

• Independent variable: Fiscal decentralization measure (Ratio of local government's own income to total income)

Concretely, the sum linear regression model takes the form:

$$GDP = \beta 0 + \beta_1 \text{ inf.rate} + \beta_2 \text{ Inv.rate} + \beta_3 \text{ ope.tr} + \beta_4 \text{ labor.F} + \beta_5 \text{ HC} + \beta_6\text{FD}$$

The table below presents a summary of the descriptive statistics of the data:

Table. 4.1 Summary Statistics, using the observations 1 - 16

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Dev.
Real economic growth	0.044675	0.011000	0.079000	0.021627
Inflation rate	0.025975	0.016600	0.042000	0.0083513
Investment rate	0.27874	0.22870	0.33380	0.028381
Trade openness	0.75000	0.56000	0.91000	0.11355
Labor force participation rate	0.64331	0.62600	0.67100	0.016341
Human Capital	0.82333	0.71000	0.96000	0.087804
Fiscal decentralization measure	0.41869	0.23600	0.62400	0.10601

Source: Author's calculation

The first hypothesis we propose is:

H1: Fiscal decentralization measured by the ratio own income / total income of the local government affects economic growth

Through the use of the "Gretl" program, the relationship that exists between the variables taken in the study is determined, namely by obtaining the following results:

Table 4.2: Model 1: OLS analysis, no. Of observations 1-16

Dependent Variable: Real_growth_of GDP

	Coefficient	*Std. Error*	*t-ratio*	*p-value*	
const	-1.91612	0.855914	-2.2387	0.05554	*
Inflation rate	1.14433	0.467784	2.4463	0.04017	**
Investment rate	0.655403	0.179459	3.6521	0.00647	***
Trade openness	0.0824301	0.0795489	1.0362	0.33040	
Labor force participation rate	2.223	0.990765	2.2437	0.05510	*

Human Capital	0.254744	0.159904	1.5931	0.14980	
Fiscal decentralization measure	0.111979	0.0397646	2.8160	0.02263	**

Mean dependent var	0.045920	S.D. dependent var	0.021785
Sum squared resid	0.000725	S.E. of regression	0.009521
R-squared	0.890860	Adjusted R-squared	0.809004
F(6, 8)	10.88336	P-value(F)	0.001774
Log-likelihood	53.24481	Akaike criterion	-92.48961
Schëarz criterion	-87.53326	Hannan-Quinn	-92.54241

** significant indicators at 10% significance level*
*** significant indicators at the 5% significance level*
**** significant indicators at the 1% significance level.*

First we look at the values of the probabilities. From the table, we noticed that not all variables are statistically significant, specifically the trade openness index and human capital are statistically insignificant. While the variable investment rate is statistically significant at the 1% level of significance, the variables inflation rate and fiscal decentralization are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, while the labor force participation rate is statistically significant at the 10% level of significance.

To obtain a better model, we remove the non-significant variables (trade openness index and human capital) and redo the multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in the table below:

Table 4.3: Model 1 (improved): OLS analysis, no. Of observations 1-16

Dependent Variable: Real_growth_of GDP

	Coefficient	*Std. Error*	*t-ratio*	*p-value*	
const	-0.520452	0.107417	-4.8452	0.00051	***
Inflation rate	0.711281	0.339109	2.0975	0.05986	*
Investment rate	0.403683	0.096311	4.1915	0.00151	***
Labor force participation rate	0.632384	0.17014	3.7169	0.00340	***
Fiscal decentralization measure	0.0652251	0.0255565	2.5522	0.02689	**

Mean dependent var	0.044675	S.D. dependent var	0.021627
Sum squared resid	0.001132	S.E. of regression	0.010146
R-squared	0.838598	Adjusted R-squared	0.779906
F(4, 11)	14.28821	P-value(F)	0.000247
Log-likelihood	53.74483	Akaike criterion	-97.48966
Schëarz criterion	-93.62672	Hannan-Quinn	-97.29185
Rho	-0.440215	Durbin-Watson	2.655811

* *significant indicators at 10% significance level*

** *significant indicators at the 5% significance level*

*** *significant indicators at the 1% significance level.*

From the estimation we see that in our model for 16 observations in total, we obtained a fairly good R^2 (0.8385), which means that 83.85%, or approximately 84% of the variation in economic growth is explained by the explanatory variables. The inflation rate variable is statistically significant at the 10% significance level; the fiscal decentralization variable is statistically significant at the 5% significance level; while the variables investment rate and labor force participation rate are statistically significant at the 1% level of significance.

Meanwhile, the resulting model is as follows:

GDP = -0.52 + 0.71 inf. rate + 0.40 Inv.rate + 0.63 labor. F + 0.06 FD

The presented results support the hypothesis (H1) for a positive relationship between fiscal decentralization and economic growth.

Interpretation of coefficients:

1. The constant -0.52 is considered the intercept, which shows the average GDP rate when all explanatory variables take the value 0;
2. The 0.71 coefficient next to the variable "inflation rate" indicates a positive relationship between the inflation rate and the GDP rate. So an increase of 1% point in the inflation rate leads to an increase of 0.71% point in the GDP rate. This result supports the studies of Zhange and Zou (1998); the impact of inflation on economic growth can be positive or negative.
3. The 0.4 coefficient next to the variable "investment rate" indicates a positive relationship between the rate of investments and the rate of GDP. So an increase of 1% point in the investment rate leads to an increase of 0.4% point in the GDP rate, when other variables are kept constant. Since investments are a very important factor, a number of empirical studies have been developed examining the relationship between them and economic growth. According to Levine and Renelt (1992), investment is one of the factors that strongly influences economic growth.

4. The 0.63 coefficient next to the variable 'participation in the labor force' indicates a positive relationship between the labor force participation rate and the GDP rate. So a 1% increase in the labor force participation rate leads to a 0.63% increase in the GDP rate, when other variables are held constant. An increase in the labor force leads to economic growth. (Duval, Eris & Furceri 2010).
5. The 0.06 coefficient next to the "fiscal decentralization" variable, measured by the ratio of the local government's own income to total income, indicates a positive relationship between it and the GDP rate. So an increase of 1% point in the rate of fiscal decentralization leads to an increase of 0.06% point in the GDP rate, when other variables are kept constant. Some studies have found that there is a positive relationship between decentralization and economic performance according to Lin and Liu (2000), Akai and Sakata (2002), Iimi (the study was conducted for Chinese provinces and USA- 2005).

In order to assess the significance of the model, below are presented (1) Individual control for regression coefficients, (2) Global control for the coefficient of determination (R^2), (3) Autocorrelation

1. Individual control for regression coefficients

We follow the 5-step procedure:

1. Throwing out the hypothesis

Ho: b1=0 b2=0 b3=0 b4=0 (Model is not significant)

H1:b1≠0 b2 ≠0 b3 ≠0 b4 ≠0 (The model is significant)

2. We take a significance level α=0.1 (10%)

3. Determination of control statistics

t=b-B/sb (Student's distribution, which is used for cases where the sample size is smaller than 30)

4. The rule for making the decision

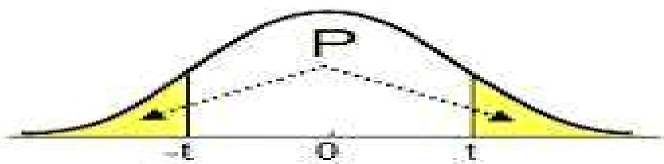
$$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Double check} \qquad\qquad \text{Ap.F} \\ \alpha = 0.1\ (10\ \%) \\ df = n - (k+1) = 16 - (4+1) = 11\end{array}\right. \Longrightarrow \quad \text{Critical value } (t_k) = 1.796$$

where:

α-level of significance

df-degrees of freedom

n-size of the choice (number of periods taken in the study) k-number of independent variables



Ho is thrown down **Ho is not thrown down** *Ho is thrown down*

5. The rule for making the decision

From the regression model we have the values: t1= 2.0975

t2= 4.1915

t3= 3.7169

t4= 2.5522

values that fall in the area where Ho is rejected, therefore X1, X2, X3, X4, X5 do not leave the regression model, because they contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable, namely. the model is significant.

2. Global control for coefficient of determination (R^2)

1. Throwing out the hypothesis

Ho:R^2=0

H1:$R^2 \neq 0$

2. We take a significance level α= 0.1 (10%)

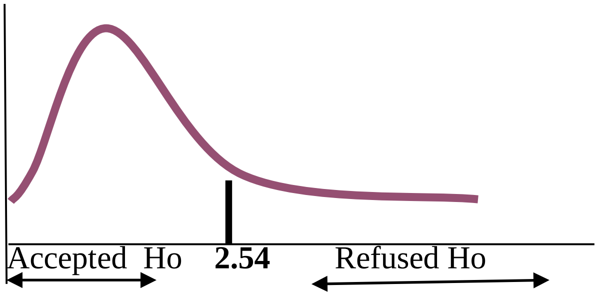
3. Determination of control statistics

$$F = \frac{R^2/k}{1-R^2/n-(k+1)}$$

4. Rule for taking the decision

$$\begin{cases} \alpha = 0.1 \\ d.fn=k=4 \end{cases} \xrightarrow{Ap.G} \text{Critical point} = 2.54$$

d.fe=n - (k+1)=16 - (4+1)=11



If the calculated F. > 2.54 is thrown down, otherwise not.

5. Making the decision

Determination of the 'F' statistic

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Regression	4	$R^2=0.84$	$R^2/k=0.84/4=0.21$	0.21/0.0145=14.48
Errors	11	$1-R^2=1-0.84=0.16$	$1-R^2/n-(k+1)=0.16/11=0.0145$	
Total	15	1		

Source: Author's calculation

Since 14.48 > 2.54, Ho is rejected, so $R^2 \neq 0$

About 84% of the variation of the dependent variable can be explained by the variation of the independent variables, while the rest remains unexplained.

3. Autocorrelation

If there is a correlation between the error terms of different series, then the problem of serial correlation or called autocorrelation appears. To study autocorrelation, that is, to find out if there is a relationship or dependence between the error terms, then we proceed with the 'Durbin-Watson' Test, d.

1. Throwing out the hypothesis

Ho: Non-autocorrelation

H1: Autocorrelation

2. We take a significance level $\alpha=10\%$

3. Control statistics

d = $\sum(et - et - 1)^2 / \sum et^2$

4. The rule for making the decision

Based on the table of appendix A-5a for n=16, = 4, and α=5% the critical values found are dL=0.734 and du=1.935

5. Making the decision

The value calculated from the regression model is d = 2.6558, which falls in the area where no action can be taken (area 4-du and 4-dl).

6. Conclusions

- Decentralization is the transfer of authority and responsibility of public functions from the central government to the local government or to other organizations at the local level.
- Many economists believe that fiscal decentralization is an effective strategy to promote economic growth.
- In Albania, the decentralization reform has progressed steadily during 1999 and 2000, based on the Constitution (1998), the European Charter for Local Self-Government (ratified in November 1999) and the National Decentralization Strategy, approved in January 2000.
- Reducing the number of LGUs should increase the efficiency of local government by reducing administrative costs. Concentrating human and financial resources in a small number of larger LGUs should increase the effectiveness of public services while also improving the ability of local governments to respond to their community preferences.
- This study provides an analytical and empirical relationship that exists between fiscal decentralization and economic growth for the case of Albania, for the period 2000-2015.
- In this paper, the regression model includes the rate of GDP (%) as the dependent variable and independent variables are the rate of fiscal decentralization, investment rate, inflation rate, human capital, labor force participation rate and trade openness rate.
- The presented results support the hypothesis (H1) for a positive relationship between fiscal decentralization and economic growth.
- The 0.06 coefficient next to the "fiscal decentralization" variable, measured by the ratio of the local government's own income to total income, indicates a positive relationship between it and the GDP rate. So an increase of 1% point in the rate of fiscal decentralization leads to an increase of 0.06% point in the GDP rate, when other variables are kept constant. Some studies have found that there is a positive relationship between decentralization and economic performance according to Lin and Liu (2000), Akai and Sakata (2002), Iimi (the study was conducted for Chinese provinces and USA- 2005).

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VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS OF RASPBERRY: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

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Abstract.

The development of agriculture has a significant role in the sustainable economic development throughout the country. And the soft fruit sector has become one of the most profitable sectors in Kosovo, with an enormous growth dominated almost entirely by raspberries. The overall goal of the study was to the cultivated area, collection centers, storage capacities, export, and other actors of the value chain of raspberry, which is leading to higher raspberry production and resulting in great success for farmers as well as for the collection centers. For the realization of this paper are used data mainly from the Green Report and the National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës", and other articles, and reports, where we want to know how the actors of the value chain can increase all the performance of this sector. The data were analyzed by using the statistical program SPSS 25. From the second date of the research findings, the results show that there is a significant relationship between exports of raspberry and purchasing price, purchase contracts, and infrastructure. And based on the assessment of the situation, the study aims to give recommendations for the areas of intervention that are related to the raspberry sector, by considering the rapid development and growth of the areas planted with raspberries in Kosovo.

Keywords: Value Chain, Analysis, Raspberry, Kosovo.

1. Introduction

The development of agriculture has a significant role in the sustainable economic development of the whole country. Agriculture in terms of contribution to GDP in 2020 has been participating with 7.4% (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, 2021). And the soft fruit sector has become one of the most profitable sectors in Kosovo, with an enormous growth dominated almost entirely by raspberries. Kosovo has favorable land and climate conditions to produce quality raspberries. Raspberry, a very healthy fruit for the human body, with high nutritional values, these features make it an extremely sought-after product in the market.

Production of raspberry in Kosovo has experienced rapid growth in the last 6-7 years. The cultivated area, storage capacities, and export are increasing, which is leading to higher raspberry production. Great interest from municipalities, MAFRD (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development), and other donors to invest and support these value chains, which has resulted in great success for farmers as well as for the collection centers.

According to the Green Report, in Kosovo, in 2011 were cultivated about 10 ha of raspberries, while, in 2020 the surface increased significantly, and reached up to 1600 ha. From 2014 – 2020 the average raspberry production showed to be 4200 metric tons annually. Almost all of this amount is dedicated to export markets, to the EU countries, especially to Germany.

Kosovo has a raspberry industry oriented, where over 90% of the cultivated area is with Polka and Mapema varieties, so with primocane cultivars, compared with the other Balkan countries which mainly cultivate floricane cultivars, Polka tends to replace with the new cultivar called Delniwa, but to be mentioned that in the mountainous areas, are cultivated mainly the floricane cultivars: Miker and Willamette (Lepaja, K. Krasniqi, N., 2020).

Analysis of the raspberry value chain has modernization opportunities, where the objective of this study is to show a comprehensive analysis of the raspberry sector in Kosovo for a period of time, including production, prices, export, the cultivated area, collection centers, storage capacities, and others actor of the value chain of raspberry, which are leading to a higher raspberry production and resulting in great success for farmers as well as for the collection centers. The relationship of these actors are so coordinated, that this affects the whole value chain performance. As a result, all actors in this sector will continue to drive Kosovo's agricultural development by building confidence in the value chain and stimulating investment in production and productivity.

Based on the assessment of the situation, the study aims to give recommendations for the areas of intervention that are related to the raspberry sector, by considering the rapid development and growth of the areas planted with raspberries in Kosovo. The study also highlights the support carried out by the government to the raspberry sector producer.

2. Literature review

Agricultural products, as sensitive products, especially when it comes to export, face more difficulties, with various challenges and many obstacles. But a new product, to meet the requirements at a large scale, has allowed or forced the producer to upgrade their capabilities more effectively (Kaplinsky, R., Morris M., 2001). Regardless of what our product is, a set of standards are necessary to reach global markets (R. Kaplinsky, 2010). In addition to the exceptional importance, especially for developing countries, where in addition to a secured market, as well as a favorable price, the standards necessarily require coordination throughout the value chain, which is perhaps often difficult to achieve (R. Kaplinsky, 2010).

For the value chain to perform in a better way, there must be clear objectives towards the way of success, but those objectives are also conditional on performance drivers such as the enabling environment, technology, market structure, firm management, inputs, and other factors, that are essential, especially for agrifood chains (Da Silva, C. A., Souza Filho, H.M., 2007). So the approach to improve the efficiency of the value chain means the approach to upgrading strategies at the chain actors as process and product upgrading; functional upgrading; horizontal coordination; vertical coordination; chain upgrading; upgrading of the enabling environment (Coles, C., Mitchell, J., 2011). Ukraine is currently one of the largest raspberry producers in Europe. Residents of Ukraine do not consume raspberries, so the entire production is exported. Therefore, the growing production in Ukraine may threaten the relative stability of the raspberry market in other countries (Wroblewska, W. Pawlak, J. Paszko, D., 2019). However, regardless of this, Kosovo, having good climatic conditions, suitable land, comes as a new competitor in this market and has high development potential in the raspberry sector.

Based on data from the "Raspberry Market Analysis in the Republic of North Macedonia" (Bojkovska, K. Jankulovski, N. Mihajlovski, G., 2020), the growth, profitability, and competitiveness of the sector should be improved through investments in all stages (production, processing, and distribution) and changes in the structure of the export, in order to create a higher profit. In the Republic of North Macedonia, agricultural producers are still not interested in growing raspberries, because it is not in accordance with the Macedonian tradition. Although in this country there are favorable soil and climatic conditions for its cultivation, raspberry remains a deficient fruit crop (Bojkovska, K. Jankulovski, N. Mihajlovski, G., 2020). Despite the high profit, farmers are not accustomed to growing raspberries. Unlike Kosovo, where the interest is high, even though this culture is consumed very little in the country.

A study related to the raspberry value chain was done five years ago for Kosovo, where the state of this sector is presented, a state with many characteristics such as: "old orchards and varieties of poor quality, lack of opportunities for irrigation, lack of storage for preservation of fruits, poor equipment on classification and packaging for trading the fruits, farmers do not have the required skills and knowledge for the appropriate technology and do not know how to use the tools for the protection of trees, in the fruit sector, the relation between fruit farmers and fruit processors is not as good as between fruit farmers and fresh fruit traders" (Gjokaj, E., Halimi, K., Xhabali, V., Imami, D., Gjonbalaj, M., 2017).

3. Data and Methodology

The data sources used for this study include the documentation and reports found for this sector such as Agricultural and Rural Development Plan-ARDP 2015-2020, MAFRD Green Report 2020, other reports and projects about this sector, conferences, and other relevant materials and documents which have been listed in the reference list.

The research was mainly focused on the analysis of the raspberry market, where we have the production, yield, prices, support, and promotion which we consider as the key segments of this sector from 2015-2020. Also, the importance of organizing and functionalizing the collection centers in terms of workforce engagement, and the various certification standards that have a great influence on the organization and further development. Clear recommendations for decision-making bodies and strategic partners, to be adopted in the interest of the sector development and consolidation, were also provided.

3.1. Presentation of Raspberry Sector in Kosovo, (Actors of Value Chain and Raspberry Market Analysis)

3.1.1. Production of raspberry in Kosovo

By 2020, it is considered that 1,661 ha were planted with raspberry, with an average yield of 3-6 t/ha, (Green Report 2021, 2021), as is shown in table 1. The causes for a low yield may vary depending on climatic conditions, the quality of planting material, or the lack of adequate agro-technical measures.

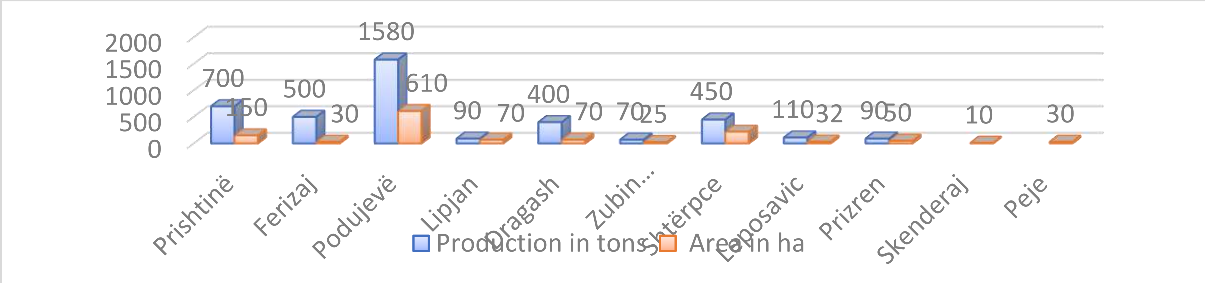
Table 1: Area in ha, production in tons, and yield t/ha during years '15-'19

Raspberries	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Area in ha	324	797	1,231	1,537	1,637	1,661
Production in ton	1,748	6,250	7,747	8,267	7,206	6,659
Yield t/ha	5.4	7.8	6.3	5.4	4.4	4.01

Source: (Green Report 2021, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development)

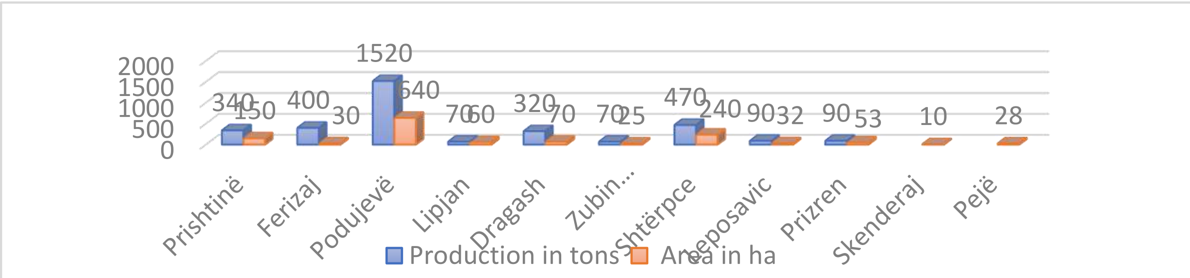
Figures 1 and 2 reveal the area and production planted with raspberries in Kosovo, according to the respective municipalities, and from the figure, we can see that more than half of the areas planted with raspberries in 2019 are only from the region of Podujeva and Shtërpce, where it covered about 50% of the total, which clearly means a significant regionalization of this fruit in these two municipalities. Whereas, in 2020 the percentage of yields in the same municipalities as mentioned above reached about 59%.

Figure 1: Production in tons and area in ha, 2019, according to municipalities



Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author)

Figure 2: Production in tons and area in ha, 2020, according to municipalities



Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author)

The raspberry value chain has experienced significant growth, especially in the last five years, resulting in the creation of jobs in rural areas, so this sector is quite profitable. We see that of the seventeen companies dealing with the collection and export of raspberry fruits, in 2019 3,250 were employed, while in 2020 the number of employees increased significantly, where there were 3,645 workers. As shown in table 2.

Table 2: Labor force and collection centers raspberries sector, '15-'20

Raspberry	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Labor force	1252	3125	5580	4500	3250	3645
Collection centers	9	13	18	18	17	17

Source: National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author

3.1.2. Export

The amount exported during 2020 was 3,370 tons, while in 2019 the export value was higher, 3,990 tons. Over the years, our country has exported raspberries in large quantities, which means that raspberries have a high potential in securing the market. Figure 3 shows the export in tons during the years 15-20.

Figure 2: Export in tons during the years '15-'20

Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" & Green Report 2020, MAFRD)

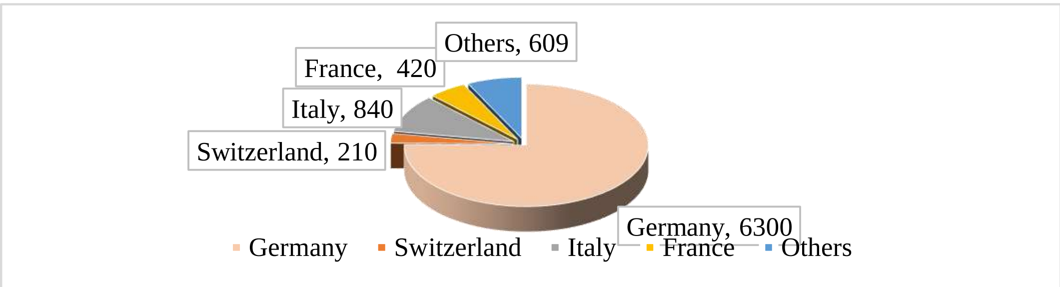
Figure 3: Export in '000 € during years '15-'20

Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" & Green Report 2020, MAFRD)

While figure 4 presents the export in thousands of euros during the years 2015-20. From what we see, the highest profit was in 2020, even though the export in tons was lower, this is because the prices influenced it to be a higher profit, which is presented in figure 4 above.

In 5 figures, the export in euros according to the estimate for 2019, so of the amount exported in 2019, the rest came from Germany (75%), and the rest from France (5%), Italy (10). %), Switzerland (3%), and other countries (7%).

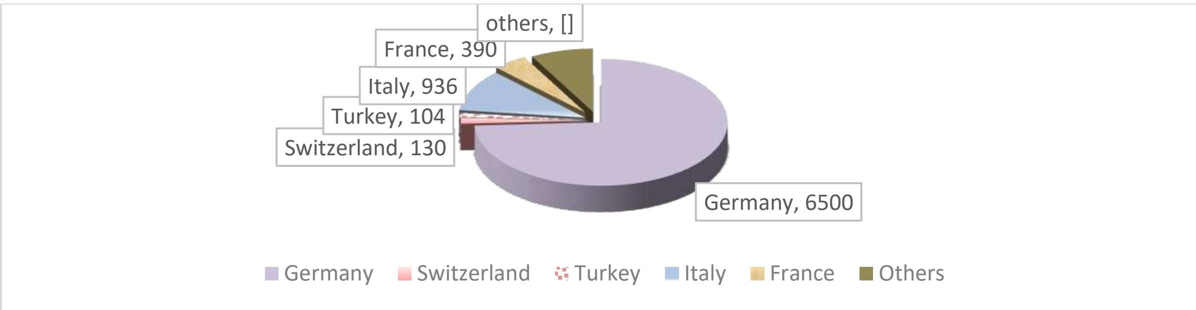
Figure 5: Export in '000 €, according countries, 2019



Source: National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author

The influence of the actors of the raspberry chain is worth 8,762 thousand euros in profit and was exported to more than six new markets in the European Union region, as well as beyond. As shown in figure 5, of the amount exported in 2020, the largest value in thousands of euros was from Germany (74%), the rest was exported to Italy (11%), France (4%), Switzerland (2%), Turkey (1%), and to other countries (8%).

Figure 6: Export in '000 €, according countries, 2020



Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author)

Companies to achieve predicted increases in export must increase production quantities by planting new surfaces, developing fresh raspberries, promoting them in international fairs, and participating in fair & sales missions, processing and increasing the value of raspberries, offering various packages, according to EU companies' requirements, diversification of the product.

3.1.3. Prices

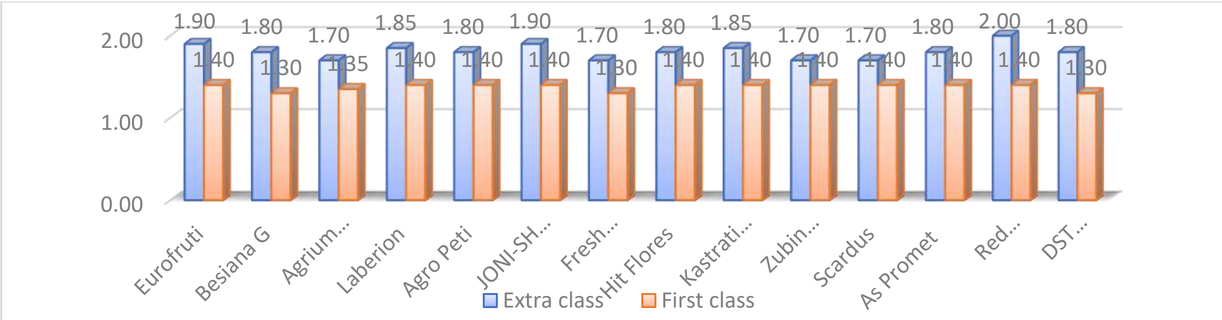
Raspberry production is available for the market from June to October, until temperatures lower than 2˚C occur, and planting of this crop can be done until the end of June (Department of Economic Analysis and Agricultural Statistics, 2019). By linking production processes with distribution abroad, the global value chain is created by price, changes in unit costs are made, and the impact is spread upstream to affect the prices of downstream producers (Yao, Z., Leung, S. C., Lai, K. K., 2008).

Figure 7: Average purchasing price of raspberry by the farmer per kg for 2019

Source: National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author

Regarding the average purchasing price of raspberry, the study showed that the selling prices of the fruits were categorized into two classes as extra class and the first class. The average purchase price in 2019 for raspberries extra class, was 1.52€ while for first-class 1.03€; whereas, in 2020, the extra class product, was purchased for 1.80€ while, the first class for 1.37€.

Figure 8: Average purchasing price of raspberry by the farmer per kg for 2020



Source: National Association of Raspberry “Mjedra e Kosovës“ processed by the author

Table 3: Average sales price of raspberry in the EU in 2019

Average sales price of raspberry in EU																
2019																
Collection Centers	Eurofruti	Besiana G	Agrium Fruits	Laberion	3 D Factory	Agro Peti	JONI-SH shpk	Fresh Fruits	Hit Flores	Kastrati Fruit	Zubin Potok	Scardus	As Promet	Red Gold	DST Product	Avarage
Extra class 95/5	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.2		2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.11
Original	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.7		1.6	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.65	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.7
Crumble	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3		1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.3

Source: (National Association of Raspberry „Mjedra e Kosovës“ processed by the author)

As seen in tables 3 and 4, the sales prices for raspberries for the extra class increased in 2020 compared to 2019; whereas, for original and crumble, the prices remained practically the same.

Table 4: Average sales price of raspberry in the EU in 2020

Average sales price of raspberry in EU																
2020																
Collection Centers	Eurofruti	Besiana G	Agrium Fruits	Laberion	3 D Factory	Agro Peti	JONI-SH shpk	Fresh Fruits	Hit Flores	Kastrati Fruit	Zubin Potok	Scardus	As Promet	Red Gold	DST Product	Avarage
Extra class 95/5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8		2.5	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.62
Original	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.7		1.6	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.65	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.69
Crumble	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3		1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.33

Source: (National Association of Raspberry “Mjedra e Kosovës“ processed by the author)

3.1.4. Standards

One of the most important factors with a dominant role in increasing the competitiveness in the market and generating exports is certification of the companies and products with certain standards, not only to increase the level of food safety and quality but, also to demonstrate adequate management in accordance with the timing of development and market demands (Instituti i Auditorëve të Brendshëm, 2012).

To improve food safety and quality is a must to raise public awareness of food safety and quality standards, build local capacity and infrastructure for technical assistance and audit services to farmers and agribusinesses on food safety and quality certification, establishing local certification bodies or local branches of European Union certification bodies, and establishing a cadre of internationally certified internal auditors to assist strategic partners in obtaining quality certifications.

In Kosovo, most of the companies that deal with the collection of raspberries are certified with standards such as HACCP, ISO 2200, Global GAP, and the German government through GIZ in 2019, supports for the first time the new standards IFS & BRC (Lepaja, K. Krasniqi, N., 2020).

3.1.5. Promotion and challenges

The raspberry crop is a culture with developing potential, where we see that every year there has been an increase in the planted area, and almost the entire production is destined for export, where the need for promotion is imperative.

Cooperation with USAID has managed to mark the raspberry promotional week "Java e Mjedrave", which is traditionally organized every year, in parallel with the peak raspberry production (Department of Economic Analysis and Agricultural Statistics, 2019).

The association „Mjedra e Kosovës" has achieved excellent results in promoting the raspberry sector, introducing new raspberry varieties in Kosovo, and building strong linkages with research institutes, regional associations, and companies in Kosovo, in the region, and in European Union. As a result of these efforts, the raspberry value chain is now a leader in agricultural export and is also leading in driving policy adjustments, exemplified in MAFRD' s modifying their subsidy program from an area basis to a unit sold basis. This association also organizes an annual conference, which international countries also participate in the conference, which necessarily plays an extraordinary role in raspberry culture. Equally important for the promotion of raspberries is the participation of producers in fairs of agricultural products that are organized every year in a row.

The main challenge raspberry producers is that they constantly face is the lack of quality seedlings produced according to high international standards, which in the absence of their quality has led to cases when entire fields planted with raspberries were destroyed, so we had a yield of low (Department of Economic Analysis and Agricultural Statistics, 2019).

Constantly dealing with climatic conditions, damages which are occasionally caused by hail and floods, and the need to secure these crops is high. Thus, with agricultural insurance, farmers are protected from these damages, so it is an effective financial instrument that offers payment to farmers who suffer losses in severity, enabling farmers' financial protection against the losses that are caused to them. The coverage period, and payment limits for raspberries, start from July 1 to August 31, where the risk period is when the temperature is greater than 29 ˚C, where the eligibility criteria are: minimum of 0.5 ha of owned land or rented, and the surface must be planted at least 10 ha undivided (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, 2019).

3.1.6. Raspberry Support

Compared to the regional countries, Kosovo has already developed an advanced structure for supporting agriculture development through the grant support, provided by Agency for Agriculture Development. Initially, the Agricultural and Rural Development Program (ARDP) was approved by the Kosovo Parliament in 2007 for the period 2007-2013, which was later updated for the period 2009-2013. Taking into account the extensive coverage of the ARDP with respect to the direct payments, involvement and follow-up objectives in the sector of sustainable agricultural and rural development, MAFRD supported by a twinning project compiled the new ARDP updated program 2010-2013. Since 2014, the Agriculture and Rural Development Program is based annually on Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy for the period 2014-2020. There is no special sub-measure to support raspberry, so they have to apply for grants under Measures 101.2, 103.3, and 302 of the Agricultural Development Program 2014-2020" (Department of Economic Analysis and Agricultural Statistics, 2019).

Intensive Grants

Within the framework of rural development measures, raspberry culture has been supported within measure 101, Investments in physical assets in agricultural economies. The specific objectives related to the fruits sector are: increasing the production of fruits for commercial purposes, modernizing farms through the use of new equipment, reducing post-harvest losses through investments in the farm, storage technology, freezing capacities, classification and packaging, production of renewable energy (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, 2018).

In the case of raspberry culture, the goal was that, since receiving the grant, the investments for 2020 would be in seedling material and in the irrigation system, that is, to help farmers to provide the drip irrigation system, and seedling material is provided to the farmer, maximum for an area of up to 50 acres (Lepaja, K. Krasniqi, N., 2020).

Direct payments

As for direct payments, these are applied by the state in order to maintain the level of income which may decrease as a result of problems in the domestic market, difficulties in the realization of exports, the application of any advanced production technology or measures agro-technical, production promotion (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, 2017).

In the raspberry crop in 2019, the support was 8 cents per kg, and the right area to benefit was 20 acres, while the critical threshold was 1500 kg, this policy of direct payments changed for 2020, making it easier for farmers to benefit, and thus bringing new farmers a beneficiary, 16 cents was the direct payment per kg, 20 acres and the area that should be planted and the critical threshold was of 1200 kg (Lepaja, K. Krasniqi, N., 2020).

3.1.7. Contracts

Contracts enable the coordination of decisions throughout the value chain, where the greatest impact is seen in the supply chain, innovation decisions, as well as in direct impact on profit (Wang, J., Shin, H., 2015).

Buying fruits and contractual relations is an important actor to the value chain, whereas table 5 is shown a contractual relationship between farmers and collection centers. Generally, farmers with contracts dominate the market, with 2055 out of a total of 3416 contracted farmers, while the other 1361 are not contracted.

Table 5: Purchase contracts

Municipality	Purchase of the raspberry 2020							
	Small Collection Centers SCC		Farmers with contracts			Farmers without contracts		
	Number of contracts with collection centers	Amount in tons	Number of farmers	Surface in ha	Amount in ton	Number of farmers	Surface in ha	Amount in tons
Prishtinë	2	360	160	48	150	503	102	100
Ferizaj	0	350	154	40	250	120	20	150
Podujevë	5	80	1015	430	1300	298	210	280
Lipjan	0	20	151	42	50	285	18	20
Dragash	2	150	79	55	205	55	15	145
Zubin Potok	0	0	50	15	35	30	10	35
Shtërpce	12	0	291	142	270	15	98	200
Leposavic	0	0	53	22	75	30	10	15
Prizren	0	0	102	45	75	25	8	15
Total	21	960	2055	839	2410	1361	491	960

Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author)

3.1.8 Infrastructure – storage capacities

Taking into consideration that is the tough competition, by the companies from the region and EU, companies in Kosovo must think strategically, in the long term, to acreage sustainable, so they must be focused on equipment and infrastructure development in their facilities as well.

The raspberry crop continues to lead the way in demonstrating smallholder capacity to meet international market demand and quality requirements, so it increased their need for freezing capacity, for an easier way to create linkages with export markets.

Table 6: Infrastructure – storage capacities in 2020

Municipality	Infrastructure-Storage capacities/2020				
	Storage Capacity		Deep freezing (shock tunnel)		
	Storage capacity per year in tons	Storage capacity in m³	Capacity in tons per hour/24 hour	Storage capacity in m³	Using of the current capacities in %
Prishtinë	600	2700	27/24 h	176	70
Ferizaj	1080	9150	17/24 h	385	65
Podujevë	8450	29616	40/24 h	1200	55
Lipjan	1200	7220	28/24 h	212	60
Dragash	720	2280	13/24 h	88	70

Zubin Potok	1800	4800	26/24 h	242	55
Shtërpce	120	360	13/24 h	33	60
Leposavic	360	840	6/24 h	88	55
Prizren	150	384	6/24 h	33	80
Total	14480	57350		2457	63.333

Source: (National Association of Raspberry "Mjedra e Kosovës" processed by the author)

The storage infrastructure at the collection centers has recently been significantly consolidated. The freezing and storage capacities are higher compared to the amounts of produced raspberries. Based on table 6, it is noted that storage capacities are almost 14,480 tons, while the volume of storage space is more than 57,350 m3. Also is shown that storage and deep-freezing capacities are over 2000 m3 with a work intensity of lines ranging from 6 to 40 tons per 24 hours.

3.2. Data Analysis

3.2.1. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive research statistics are summarized in Table 7. The statistics consist of the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, and variance values for both variables used are presented.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Export_raspberry	6	373.00	8762.00	3784.3333	3811.51065	14527613.467
Purchasing_Price	6	1.47	1.81	1.5488	.12751	.016
Purchase_contracts	6	866.00	4950.00	2472.6667	1746.82978	3051414.267
Infrastructure	6	615.00	14480.00	6008.6667	5968.24429	35619939.867
Valid N (listwise)	6					

Source: Author's calculations

From table 7, we can see that the mean of export raspberry is 3784.33, the mean for purchasing price is 1.5488, the mean for purchase contracts is 2472.67, and the mean for infrastructure is 6008.67. As for standard deviation and variance, the values can be seen, we can say that all are acceptable.

3.2.2. Results of Correlations

The findings of the correlation analysis, which was performed to assess and measure the relationship between the variables, are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlations[b]

		Export_raspberry	Purchasing_Price	Purchase_contracts	Infrastructure
Export_raspberry	Pearson Correlation	1	.700	.979**	.997**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.122	.001	.000
Purchasing_Price	Pearson Correlation	.700	1	.597	.751
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.122		.211	.085
Purchase_contracts	Pearson Correlation	.979**	.597	1	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.211		.002
Infrastructure	Pearson Correlation	.997**	.751	.964**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.085	.002	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
b. Listwise N=6
Source: Author's calculations

The correlation results revealed a strong positive relationship between the two variables: purchase contracts and export of raspberry ($r= .979, p<.01$).

In the relationship between infrastructure and the export of raspberry, the results show a positive correlation ($r= .997, p<.01$). Also a strong association was found between purchase contracts and infrastructure ($r= .964, p<.01$).

4. Conclusion

Such a rapid spread for a short period in Kosovo to the raspberry sector has been enabled by several factors: the prevalence of proper agro-ecological conditions for raspberry cultivation, very high demand in world markets, contracted sales opportunities, very high profitability, rapid return on investment, increase of labor force, increase of freezing capacities, standardization, etc. As a result of these efforts, the raspberry value chain is now a leader in agricultural export.

From the second date of the research findings, the results show that there is a significant relationship between exports of raspberry, and purchasing price, purchase contracts, and infrastructure, so we conclude that purchasing price, purchase contracts and infrastructure have a large impact on exports of raspberry. The raspberry sector has also many issues that must be addressed as a lack of diversification of raspberry varieties; many farmers that provide the product to the processors, do not have contract agreements, lack of fresh fruits for export, etc

To continue the positive trend, we recommend that the raspberry value chain must continue to receive public support as one of the key drivers of the agricultural economy, to have new varieties is a need, to continue participation in international trade fairs abroad Kosovo, participation in conferences support through training, support through lobbying and other policy issues. Whereas, concerning the potential sales contracts with export buyers, through sales missions and trade fairs, so the companies will continue the contracts with international buyers.

To be continued the support for national-level associations as they provide support to the member processors (strategic partners) with technical assistance focused on market identification, and strategic planning. Encourage the companies to collaboration with each other, by building trust among them, in order to share their knowledge, equipment, and services together in order to boost their position in tough regional and international markets.

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THE IMPACT OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH ON THE PURCHASE DECISION OF CONSUMERS

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Abstract.

Today's world trade has experienced global expansion and development, so that the movement of goods and services knows no boundaries. The global Covid 19 pandemic, on the other hand, has meant that the consumer culture of online shopping has had to adapt and evolve. Retailers have proven that it is necessary and valuable to know the online buying process and how it affects decision making to purchase intention, and the impact of virtual interaction of potential customers in the network environment of various online media, known as e-WOM (electronic word of mouth). The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of electronic word of mouth on consumers' online purchase decisions. The research was conducted with 203 randomly selected individuals. Analysis of SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) revealed that reviews and comments, as well as opinion search, have a significant and positive impact on purchase decision of consumers.

Keywords: E-WOM, Online Shopping, Opinion Search, Comments, Reviews, Purchase Decision, SEM.

1. Introduction

Since the introduction of the Internet in the early 1980s, the Internet has developed rapidly due to its unique characteristics such as flexibility, interactivity, and personalization. According to both Ko (2004) and Koyuncu and Lien (2003), the Internet is a very useful tool for communication, entertainment, education, and electronic commerce. The role of social networking is obvious in people's daily lives. For many consumers, it has become the main means by which they communicate and express their feelings, follow trends and news. They exert a great influence on the way people react, share and develop their ideas. This has helped marketing, social and political campaigns incorporate data sources from social media into predictive algorithms to understand how to target customers and consumer behavior. There is no doubt that the Internet is changing the way consumers buy products and services. According to Lim, Yap, and Lau (2010), the Internet has changed the way business is done. It allows sellers to offer unlimited choices of products and services to all consumers from all over the world at all times. They add that it can be considered the most important direct marketing channel for the global market. Social media has truly changed the way we do business and how people interact in this modern age. Social media is considered an important medium for marketers to study consumer behavior, influence it, and better target consumers (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger, and Shapiro, 2012: 261). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is a current phenomenon that is the subject of much discussion. According to Wijaya (2015), the influence of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has expanded beyond social communication and has become an influential factor in consumer purchasing decisions. Creative concepts and ideas are now part of companies' strategies to use eWOM to their advantage.

1.1 Purpose and main question of the study

The main objective of this study is to explain what eWOM is and whether eWOM has influenced customers' purchasing decisions. The research question of this study is: what is the influence of eWOM on consumers' purchase intention in Albania? Monitoring eWOM by reading reviews or through opinion surveys can enable companies to develop a marketing plan based on data that reflects user behavior. It can also help companies better understand consumers to increase profitability and market share. It can also provide instant customer feedback and post-purchase recommendations.

1.2 Main objectives of the research

The main objective of the research is to determine the impact of eWOM on Albanian customers' perception of purchase intention.The sub-objectives of the research are:

- Literature review to get clearer definitions and to know better the phenomenon of "e-WOM" as one of the most important phenomena of the century we live in. How important it is and what impact it has on consumer behavior.
- The importance of eWOM nowadays in economic terms for companies, but also in economic and social terms for customers
- The main focus will be on the development of a questionnaire and the interpretation of its results in order to know better eWOM, always with the aim of achieving the main objective of this work.

1.3 Limitations of the study

The main limitation of this study is related to the limited scope of the research, i.e. to the fact that it includes a small number of individuals, which is naturally many times smaller than the population as a whole.The study specifically includes people who have made at least one online purchase in the last 6 months, avoiding from the research individuals who have made online purchases 6 months ago.The form of launching the questionnaire through googleforms, reduces the interaction of the respondents with the leaders who lead the research, exposing the questionnaire to hasty or incorrect answers.

2. Literature review

2.1 Internet, social media and e-WOM

The 20th century is the epoch in which the greatest changes have taken place in the social, economic and political context. Besides globalization, the disappearance of borders, technological developments have profoundly influenced and changed the current rules of the business world. Nowadays, the computer and the Internet are indispensable tools for our daily life, as well as the rapid development of knowledge and technology. With the growth of this new technology, the "Internet", people have begun to seek everything they want in this medium.

2.1.1 The Internet

According to the Oxford dictionary, the Internet is an international computer network that connects networks and other computers and allows the exchange of information worldwide. A similar explanation is provided by the Cambridge dictionary, which defines it as a large system of interconnected computers around the world that allows people to share information and communicate with each other. Thus, the Internet is a global network of billions of computers and other electronic devices. With the Internet, it is possible to access almost any information, communicate with anyone else in the world, and much more. With the development of new trends in social networks, online decision support and recommendation systems, the influential role of the Internet in all stages of decision making has expanded.

2.1.2 Social media

According to Lein (2011), social media is defined as "social software platforms that enable twoway communication between one or more people for the purpose of sharing, collaboration, and interaction." Meikle (2016) discusses the definition of social media and points out that it is not only a platform for social communication, but it is also heavily used in business and corporate practice. According to Mangold and Faulds, "Consumers use social media to instantly and conveniently access information that helps them make purchasing decisions or learn more about new products or brands when and where they want. (Mangold, 2009).

Ashman also points out that "social media has spawned a 'culture of sharing' in which users network with other like-minded people to share information, follow updates, and solicit opinions and reviews on all types of products, services, and activities in a continuous loop" (Ashman, 2015) Historically, word of mouth (WOM) has been considered one of the most influential sources of information. The influence of word of mouth on consumer decision making has been widely studied in the academic literature. According to recent research, word of mouth has a greater influence on consumers than the media and other marketing tools (Cheung, 2008).

2.1.3 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is an important type of WOM that includes opinions from consumers in online and other social networks. While electronic word of mouth refers to face-toface communication between consumers about a service or product, online word of mouth (eWOM) has developed rapidly and ubiquitously worldwide (Brown, 2007, Davis & Khazanchi 2008). Several studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of eWOM communication (Cheung, 2012). Electronic WOM, regardless of format, includes positive and negative, direct or indirect recommendations about a service, product, or company. These recommendations from consumers are WOM messages that are believed to guide others in their purchase decisions.(Bickart & Schnidler,2001)

EWOM is defined as posts, comments, or even responses from consumers about a company, product, or service on any website or web application that can be read. EWOM influences customers' decisions and their willingness to purchase a product or service in the future (Casteleyn, Mottart, & Rutten, 2009; Okazaki, 2009). eWOM refers to the sharing of opinions, experiences, views, personal comments, feelings, and interactions about a product, service, or brand through social media networks and websites. Numerous studies have discussed eWOM as one of the most important factors influencing purchase decisions (Basri, Ahmad, Anuar, & Ismail, 2016; Chu & Kim, 2011; Hutter et al., 2013).

Moreover, the spread of eWOM is fast and accessible from anywhere at any time. Numerous studies have demonstrated that "when consumers generate information based on their personal experiences, that information tends to have greater influence on the attitudes of others and greater certainty than if it had been generated by corporate advertising and marketing departments." Compared to corporate communications and advertising, social media is perceived as the most reliable source of information. Consumers have now almost completely turned away from traditional media such as magazines, newspapers, and television and are turning to the latest technologies to guide their purchases (Mangold, W.G. and Faulds, D.J., 2009). The credibility of electronic word of mouth eWOM is confirmed by the fact that "other consumers have no interest in the products and no intention to manipulate readers" (Bickart & Shindler, 2002). Consumers find information shared in the most relevant and reliable social networks, as well as information that reflects the consumption of the product in real parameters by other consumers. Therefore, the quality of comments and reviews, as well as opinion search, are important components that influence purchase intention as a result of e-WOM.

2.2 EWOM-Quality of comments and reviews

The electronic form of word-of-mouth can come from both users and the market, while information on the Internet is provided by socially created websites. Websites allow people to share their views with each other by creating media content such as photos, videos, or text. Some different types of online word-of-mouth propaganda are listed in the table below:

Table 1. Different types of electronic word of mouth.

Platforms	**Examples**
Social networking sites	facebook.com, twitter.com
Online shopping sites	amazon.com, ebay.com
Online consumer review site	shopping.com
Discussion forums on the Internet	ukbusinessforums.co.uk
Blogs	Xanga.com, blogger.com

Source: The impact of electronic word-of-mouth on social media on consumer purchase intentions (2014)

The quality of reviews and ratings (Reviews & Comments) in this context is referred to as the degree of influence that the comment or review has on the reader of that comment or review to choose a brand, product or service. (Bhattacherjee& Sanford, 2006.) This means that the quality of online product reviews, which are characterized by detailed information about the products positively influence consumers'purchase intentions. Quality is influenced by many factors such as accuracy, relevance, completeness, personalization, and other factors related to online activities. Brand or product reviews are very important. Websites like Amazon.com and Alibaba.com have an easily accessible section where you can collect reviews from previous buyers. Buyers can also share photos and talk about their experiences. In this way, everyone has the opportunity to learn about the product and make their comments (Cheung, 2008). The purchase decision or the determination of the willingness and intention to purchase can be based on the factors that the consumer considers in satisfying his need for this transaction. These factors are determined by the quality of information that the consumer receives to make the purchase decision.

2.3 eWOM - Opinion Seeking

According to Chu & Kim (2019), opinion research influences consumer decision making and behavior. Opinion seekers desire and seek information from others based on personal experiences to learn about, evaluate, and make a decision about a product or service. In Engel and Blackwell's (2020) study, it was found that consumers who consider comments from users of the WOM platform after visiting it make positive decisions about the product or brand they are looking for. Therefore, one of the hypotheses tested in this paper concerns the relationship between comment quality and opinion search in reviewers' purchase decisions.

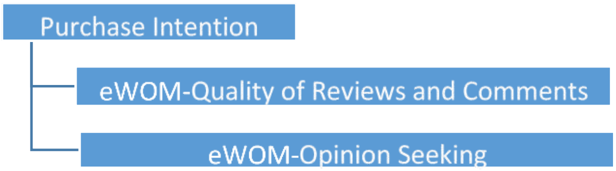
3. Methodology and data

This chapter presents the methodology used for the practical part of this study. In order to carry out this study on the impact of eWOM on the consumer behavior of Albanian consumers, the quantitative research methodology was used, through which the opinions of the respondents were analyzed in order to achieve a clear and reliable result.

The hypotheses put forward in this paper are:

H1 : eWOM quality of ratings and comments positively influences purchase intention

H2 : eWOM opinion finding positively affects purchase intention



3.1 Subjects and procedures

To test the above hypotheses, a survey with random selection of the population was made in order to have the questionnaire completed by a large and diversified number of consumers. People of different ages and sexes, with different levels of education and income were randomly invited to participate. The designed questionnaire was implemented through the Google Forms platform and distributed through social networks. A total of 203 questionnaires were completed.

3.2 Measures

In this study, following previous studies, Likert scales were used to assess the following three factors: "The quality of reviews and comments positively affects purchase intention" was adopted from Lin (2013); "Opinion writing positively affects purchase intention" was adopted from Chu and Kim (2011); "Purchase intention" was adopted from Mikalef (2013). Five response categories were defined, starting with: 1 = I disagree at all; 2 = I disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = I agree; 5 = I completely agree. In all response categories, there are extreme values ranging from a rather negative attitude (1 = I do not agree at all) to a rather positive attitude (5 = I fully agree). A questionnaire divided into specific categories was used as the measurement instrument. The questionnaire is divided into three sections; the first section asks questions about demographic data, in the second section we focus on questions about the influence of eWOM on purchase intention, and the third section contains general data about consumers' purchases. The questionnaire consists of 29 questions. This questionnaire was selected during the literature review and slightly modified to best fit our study. Each respondent was first given a brief description of the purpose of the study. It was also made clear to him/her that all data would be kept confidential. The first section of the questionnaire asked questions to collect demographic data such as gender, age, education and occupation, marital status, and monthly income.

In the second section, divided into three subsections of 6 questions each, we were asked to rate the quality of "Electronic Word of Mouth" based on ratings and comments; "Electronic Word of Mouth" search opinions and purchase intention. In the third section of the questionnaire, questions were created to collect general data about online shopping, the amount of time consumers spend online, the length of time they have been shopping online, the amount of money consumers spend on online shopping, and the products they generally buy online.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive statistics

In the first and third sections of the questionnaire, some questions were formulated with the aim of collecting demographic data and consumer behavior related to online shopping, which logically help us to better understand the model and the population.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the sample (203 respondents).

Variables		**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Gender	Mam	90	44.3
	Female	113	55.7
Age	Under 20 years old	8	3.94
	21-29	135	66.5
	30-39	48	23.64
	40-49	11	5.41
	Above 50	1	.051
Marital Status	Single	137	67.5
	Married	64	31.5
	Divorced	1	0.5
Education	Primary	2	1.0
	Secondary/Profesional	35	17.2
	Bachelor	79	38.9
	Master	81	39.9
	Phd	6	3
Employment Status	Public Sector	46	22.7
	Private Sector	84	41.4
	Unemployed	31	15.3
	Student	32	15.8
	Housewife	10	4.9
	Retired	0	.0
Monthly Incomes	Under 300 euro	82	40.4
	301-600 euro	83	40.9
	601-900 euro	24	11.8
	901-1200 euro	9	4.4

	Above 1200 euro	5	2.5

Variables		**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
How many hours do you use the internet?	1-2 hours/day	55	27.1
	3-5 hours/day	70	34.5
	Over 5 hours/day	53	26.1
	1-5 hours/day	25	12.3
The device you use to buy online	Smartphone	112	55.2
	Laptop	48	23.6
	PC	35	17.2
How long have you been shopping online?	Less than a year	47	23.2
	1-5 years	123	60.6
	6-10 years	32	15.8
	More than 10 years	1	0.5
Online shopping in the last 6 months	Once	92	45.3
	2-4 times	72	35.5
	5-8 times	20	9.9
	9-12 times	14	6.9
	More than 13 times	5	2.5
Expenses of the last 6 months for online purchases	Less than 20 euro	50	24.6
	20-39 euro	46	22.7
	40-79 euro	39	19.2
	80-159 euro	46	22.7
	160-319 euro	13	6.4
	320-639 euro	8	3.9

	Above 640 euro	1	0.5
Products we buy	Books	38	18.7
	Food	35	17.2
	Pc/Laptop	13	634
	Cosmetic	41	20.2
	Music/CDS	9	4.4
	Video/DVD	6	3
	Games/Video games	6	3
	Travel(Hotel,vacation)	41	20.2
	Clothing	54	26.6
	Shoes	51	25.1
	Services(law,insurances)	30	14.8
	Home electronics	39	19.2
	Tickets(movie,concert,theater)	22	10.8
	Autoparts	1	0.5
	Home materials	1	0.5
	Watch, bracelet	1	0.5

Table 2. contains the descriptive data of the research participants. Using the appropriate sample, an online questionnaire was sent to 203 Albanian citizens who had made at least one online purchase. The questionnaire was completed using Google forms and distributed to respondents through email, social networks and Whatsapp. From the results obtained, it can be seen that of the total participants, 90 are male and 113 are female. Most of the participants in this study are between 21and 29 years old. Most of the study participants are unmarried, 137 respondents have this status, which can be explained by the young age of most of the study participants. 166 respondents have completed higher education, which makes the questionnaire abstract and easy to understand. In terms of employment status, 130 respondents are employed, of which 84 respondents have declared that they work in the private sector and 64 respondents have declared that they work in the public sector, 31 respondents are unemployed, 32 respondents are students, and 10 respondents are housewives. In particular, participants have income in the segments 0-300 € and 301-600 €, a total of 165 respondents. It is noticeable that the highest incomes are reported by participants who are employed in the private sector.

Other important data that emerge from the research are the high amount of time that most participants spend on the Internet, 60.6% of them spend between 3 and over 5 hours per day. The study participants mainly use a phone or laptop to complete the online purchase while shopping online. Most of the participants had 1-5 years of experience in online shopping.

Mainly the amounts spent online in the last six months range from less than 20 euros to 159 euros, it is found that participants in our study are reluctant to make online purchases with high amounts. Eight people made online purchases worth 320-639 euros, depending on the segment, and only one person made online purchases worth more than 640 euros. The results of the research confirm that participants mainly buy the following products or services online: Clothing, shoes, travel (hotel, holiday), food, cosmetics, books, consumer electronics, legal services.

4.2 Reliability analysis

Table 3: Results of the reliability analysis.

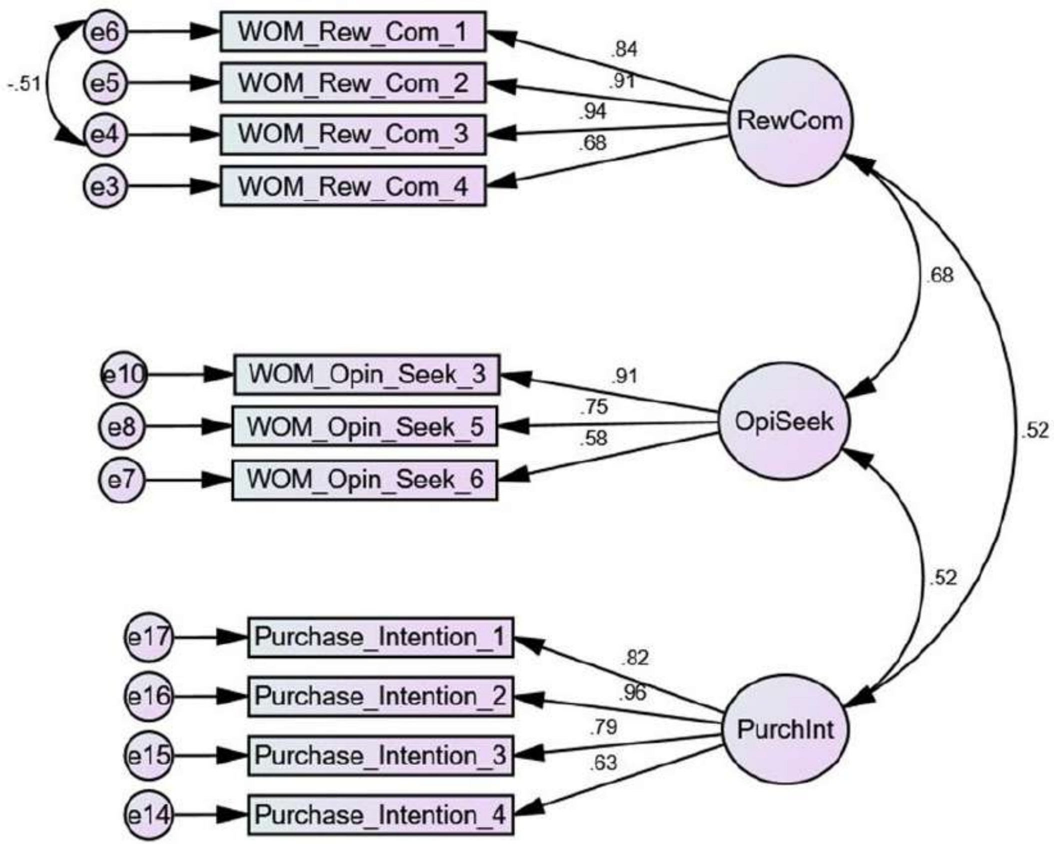
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.818	17

The table "Reliability analysis" summarizes the results of the reliability analysis. The reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha is 0.818 for the measurement of the influence of e-WOM on purchase intention assessed by 17 statements. The coefficient $0.8 < \alpha > 1.0$ means that the measurement tool is very reliable.

4.3 Confirmatory factor analysis

The following figure summarizes the results of the confirmatory factor analysis. The first factor, "online review and comments" - consisted of 6 questions, of which 2 questions were removed during the confirmatory factor analysis and only 4 questions were included. The second factor, "Opinion Formation," consisted of 6 questions, of which 3 questions were removed during the confirmatory factor analysis and only 3 questions were included. The third factor, "purchase intention," consisted of 5 questions, of which 1 question was removed during the confirmatory factor analysis and only 4 questions were considered.

Figure 1. Visual representation of confirmatory factor analysis



The above questions were eliminated during confirmatory factor analysis because they had low loadings in the respective factors. The questions that are correlated are the questions that measure intrinsic motivation. In the confirmatory factor analysis, questions e4 and e6 were found to correlate with each other, showing that they loaded on the first factor, "reviews and online comments." Figure 2 also illustrates that for each of the three factors, the weight of the respective statements exceeds almost 70%. Therefore, we say that these issues are significant in terms of evaluating the factors that form the basis for developing and obtaining research results.

Table 3: Results of confirmatory factor analysis

	Estimate	**CR**	**AVE**	**MSV**
Rew & Comm		0,800	0,580	0,457
WOM_Rew_Com_4	.678			
WOM_Rew_Com_3	.940			
WOM_Rew_Com_2	.914			
WOM_Rew_Com_1	.841			
Opinion Seeking		0,911	0,721	0,457

WOM_Opin_Seek_6	.582			
WOM_Opin_Seek_5	.754			
WOM_Opin_Seek_3	.912			
Purchase Intention		0,881	0,655	0,270
Purchase_Intention_4	.626			
Purchase_Intention_3	.793			
Purchase_Intention_2	.959			
Purchase_Intention_1	.824			

Note: CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted: MSV = Maximum Shared squared variance; ASV = Average Shared squared Variance.

Table 3 shows that the composite reliability (CR) of all three factors is greater than 0.70 and the average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.50. This again confirms the reliability of the above factors used to demonstrate the influence of e-WOM on consumer purchase decisions. The average extracted variance (AVE) is greater than the maximum squared variance (MSV), therefore we say that discriminant validity has been achieved.

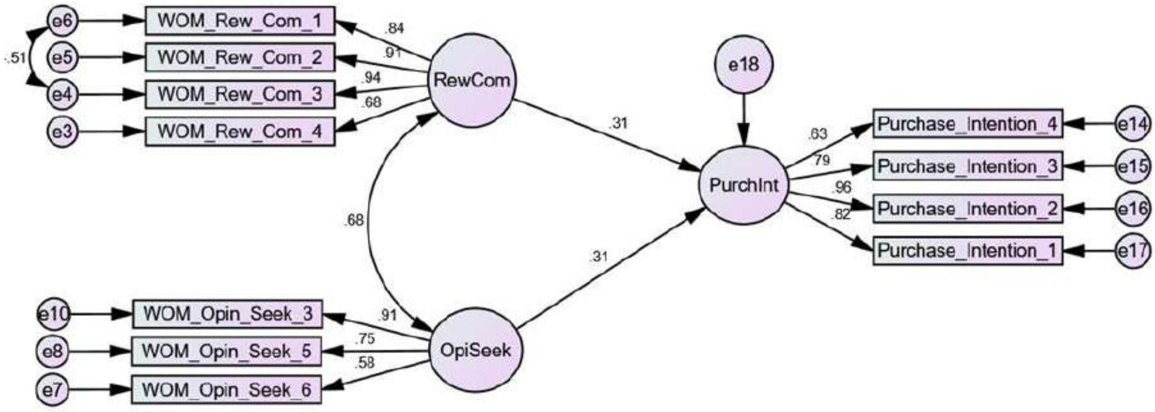
4.4 Measures of model fit

Table 4: Measures of model fit.

Measures	Evaluation	Optimal values	Interpretation
CMIN/DF	1.829	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.977	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.052	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.064	<0.06	Acceptable
Pclose	0.153	>0.05	Excellent

The results according to the metrics of Table 5 show optimal values that confirm the suitability of the model: $\chi 2$=0.977, SRMR=0.052, RMSEA=0.064, and Pclose=0.153.

4.5 Hypothesis testing



4.6 SEM Analysis results

Table 5: SEM Analysis results.

Parameter	Unst.	Lower	Upper	P	Std.	Lower	Upper	P
RevCom → PurchInt.	.268	.127	.591	.004	.312	.162	.554	.003
OpiSeek → PurchInt.	.251	.069	.492	.022	.307	.021	.489	.031

H1 : eWOM quality of ratings and comments positively influences purchase intention

H2 : eWOM opinion search positively affects purchase intention

Table 5 summarizes the results of the SEM analysis conducted with the Amos program. In this table, the standardized and non-standardized values regarding the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable are given. First of all, the influence coefficient shows that ratings and comments have an influence of 0.268 on the purchase intention and that this influence is significant $p=0.004 < 0.05$. The standardized coefficient is also significant. These data support our first hypothesis H1.

In the second part of the table, the coefficient of influence shows that the opinion research has an influence of 0.251 and this influence is significant $p=0.022 < 0.05$, also the standardized coefficient is significant at 5% confidence level ($p=0.031 < 0.05$). Based on the cited results, our second hypothesis H2 can be successfully accepted.

5. Conclusions

This study resulted in the emergence of a significant relationship between eWOM and purchase intention.Marketers and organizations, in addition to different marketing strategies and advertising methods, should consider that eWOM has a significant impact on purchase intention. EWOM has become an important tool for spreading positive information and sentiment. Service providers can create a "members recruit members " campaign to encourage existing customers to spread the good news to others. Web designers are recommended to focus on facilitating access and simplifying the content of web pages, so that the process of sharing positive experiences has a maximum impact on potential customers. The website should have a user-friendly interface that is limited to just three clicks, so that customers feel comfortable and excited when they browse it. The current study made several theoretical contributions as it showed that consumers' purchase intention may vary depending on the quality of reviews or comments and opinion seeking. Based on the results of the SEM analysis, the findings showed that the quality of reviews and comments is the most influential factor on the purchasing intention of consumers.

5.1 Practical implications

Taking into account the empirical results of the research, it turns out that Albanian citizens in the last 5 years have relatively absorbed the practice of online shopping. Therefore, merchant operators must identify the most active platforms from their potential customers, in order to collect data on their profiling and design a model with a comparative advantage that positively affects the purchase intention of consumers.In the future, research in this area may use a different sample, or further expand and enrich the research area based on the latest literature.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future study

The main limitation of this study is related to the limited scope of the research, i.e. to the fact that it includes a small number of individuals, which is naturally many times smaller than the population as a whole.The study specifically includes people who have made at least one online purchase in the last 6 months, avoiding from the research individuals who have made online purchases 6 months ago.The form of launching the questionnaire through googleforms, reduces the interaction of the respondents with the leaders who lead the research, exposing the questionnaire to hasty or incorrect answers.In addition, future researchers can study citizens' attitudes towards the use of major social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok to obtain information on a product, service, brand or commercial entity and predict their intention to purchase.

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Appendix

The following statements measure the influence of electronic wordof-mouth on purchase intent. Please indicate how much you agree with these statements: (1) Disagree at all, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) Agree completely	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Quality of "Electronic Word of Mouth" according to reviews and comments					
Online reviews and comments are helpful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online reviews and comments are understandable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online reviews and comments are clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online reviews and comments are reliable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online reviews and comments contain sufficient reasons to support opinions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In general, the quality of online reviews and comments is high					

‘’Electronic Word of Mouth’’ - Opinion Seeking					
When I consider buying a new product, I ask the contacts I have in social networks for advice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I do not need to ask contacts in social networks before I buy the product	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I want to hear the opinion of contacts in social networks before I buy a product	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I rarely ask contacts in social networks what product I should buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I feel more comfortable choosing products on which I have previously sought the opinions of contacts in social networks.	□	□	□	□	□
When choosing products, the opinions of contacts in social networks are irrelevant	□	□	□	□	□
Browsing social media					
Social Media provide a wonderful means in order to browse products/services online	□	□	□	□	□
I use Social Media to go through product/services on company hosted pages when I am online	□	□	□	□	□
I will continue to browse through products and services online via Social Media websites in the future	□	□	□	□	□
I plan to use Social Media websites in the future to browse for products	□	□	□	□	□
Purpose of purchase					
After thinking for a while, I decide to buy one or more products that I have seen on the social networks	□	□	□	□	□
buy some of the products and services I have been looking at on social networks	□	□	□	□	□
Some of the recent purchases are based on information I found on social networks	□	□	□	□	□
I buy products that I see advertised on social networks from e-stores	□	□	□	□	□
I buy the products I see advertised on social networks in stores near me	□	□	□	□	□

COMPUTER AND INTERNET IN FAVOR OF TEACHING – LEARNING

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Abstract.

The XXI – st century is considered the century of information where the life can not be imagined without computer and internet. It is said that in the 21st century you are not illiterate if you do not know how to read or write, but you are illiterate if you do not know how to use Information Technology (computer and internet). The computer, in the beginning of its use, was seen as a passive tool, and not so important, and today it is an integral part of the teaching-learning process. As in all other fields, in the field of education - respectively in the process of teaching - learning, computer and internet play an important role. The latest case, when the Covid - 19 pandemic, has involved almost the whole world, the learning process is carried out at a distance (e - learning), were created, through various platforms, the virtual classrooms and much more, where in the meantime, in addition to other technologies, the computer together with the internet occupied an important place. In this research the inductive approach was used, the mixed method was used (quantitative and qualitative). The following tools were used for data collection: *e-mail interview* with teachers and *electronic questionnaire (Google form)* with pupils in two schools, elementary and lower secondary school " 8 Dëshmorët" – village Kralan, and elementary and lower secondary school " Ukshin Miftari" – village Skivjan (include students from grades VII - IX and lower secondary teachers) in both schools, both in the Municipality of Gjakova. There are a total of 120 pupils and 10 teachers. From the results obtained from this paper we have received positive responses regarding the use of *computers and the internet* in the teaching-learning process. Answers to the first hypothesis raised, teachers and students stated that computer and the internet affect the increase of motivation during the teaching-learning process, as well as to the second hypothesis, teachers and students stated that the computer and the Internet affect the increase of teacher-student interaction during the e-learning process. So the two hypotheses raised have been validated and tested through the SPSS program. We conclude that the *computer and the nternet* affect the increase of motivation during the teaching-learning process, as well as the increase of teacher-pupil interactivity during the e-learning process.

Keywords: The Computer, Internet, E-Learning, Teaching, Learning.

1. Introduction

Advances, since the beginning of the nineties, in computers, software, telecommunications and digitalization, have led to the transmission of fast data and knowledge throughout the world. (Caslion & Kotler, 2011)

With these words taken from a book in the field of Marketing, by the most eminent professors in this field, we note the importance of using the computer and the Internet. In the field of education, certain computer-based programs and Internet-based programs have made it possible to make teaching attractive and with the student at the center. The computer and the Internet are also of special importance during the learning process with students who have different difficulties in learning, how the word sounds through colors, photos, different videos, sound, etc.

Computer-based and Internet-based programs are used by teachers in the compilation of plans, checklists, lesson management, while through Internet-based programs, the use of various videos related to the topic, various information, the use of different platforms - when it comes to distance learning, and much more. For students, the computer and the Internet help them solve various problems when compiling homework, motivate students by making the subject and topic interesting, etc.

As in any field in which there are advantages and disadvantages, here too we have the positive side as well as the negative side. However, with the help of teachers and parents, a greater management can be achieved in terms of negative phenomena, which as such are evident in children when using the computer and the Internet.

1.1 The purpose of the research

This research aims to define the importance of using the computer and the Internet in the teaching-learning process, then what are the disadvantages of using these technologies, as well as their impact on distance learning and media education - all of these based on research questions. And through the raised hypotheses, there will be an attempt to improve practices in schools, bringing data related to the motivation of students during the process of teaching - learning in the ongoing use of these technologies, as well as through certain forms to provide different information about with interactivity during the e-learning process.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The computer and the Internet in the teaching-learning process

The use of computers and the Internet has become an integral part of our daily lives. (Costley, 2014). Due to technological advancements, computers and the Internet cannot be separated from education at this time. Computers and the Internet cannot be separated from education in this time of technological advancement. (Keser, Uzunboylu, & Ozdamli, 2011) . The use of computers and the Internet makes the learning process more interesting and diverse and leads to increased cognitive activity. (Geladze, 2015). PC - Internet relationship in every school, is a reality that became the main engine of change and modernization of our education. (Bushati, 2014). The cooperative learning instructional strategy focuses on getting students to interact with each other in groups in ways that enhance their learning. (Pitler, Ross Hubbell, & Kuhn, 2012). As computers have become a part of students' daily lives, traditional teaching focused on imparting knowledge is no longer stimulating enough. Something had to change, and ICT (computers and the Internet) seemed to be the ideal means of change, as it promised to make teaching and learning more engaging. (Lim & al, 2014). However, we should see the computer and the Internet as a supplement to, not a replacement for, traditional learning. The obligation of teachers is to:

- Identify strategies for gathering information
- Determine the importance of the information they will find
- Develop problem-solving skills
- To evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the solutions. (Zdravkova & Josimovski, 2013)

The use of computer programs makes it possible to produce more interesting messages by enlivening their text with pictures, drawings, sounds and videos. A clean message and an attractive design, not only makes the material/message easier to read and understand, but also shows professionalism and commitment. (Gixhari, 2016). Norton and Wiburg (2003) cited in (Marsh, 2014), include the following examples:

- Habits computer programs, to do exercises and practice; habituation programs provide interactive learning programs, usually with immediate feedback on student performance.
- Online access to teaching/learning programs. An example is The Human Race, an interactive website that allows students to enjoy regular physical activity away from their computers.
- Simulations; many educational software publishers produce simulations—students are empowered to "play" with a model or mockup of the subject they're studying and try out the various effects of variables in that model.

Homework reflections, e-portfolio development, projects, quizzes, problem solving, are some of the innovative methods that have been shown to be successful to be implemented during the learning process. Such methods are considered as stimulating and motivating tools for greater engagement of students in the learning process. They enable students to check their understanding, perform specific tasks and at the same time be creative in solving tasks and problems with more general contexts. (Llapashtica – Lipscom, 2020)

2.2 Computer and Internet in inclusive education

Often, special educational needs education is left aside due to the difficulty of providing special systems with equipment for children with disabilities of various types. The strategy envisages that, where possible, all options will be explored to provide such equipment, although the cost is often difficult to meet. (MASHT, 2011) For a student with a learning disability whose handwriting cannot be read, computers provide the perfect handwriting, so that student can finally put his ideas on paper (actually on the screen). his. Once the ideas are recorded on the computer, the student can reorganize and improve the content of his or her writing, without the torture of rewriting it by hand. (Woolfolk, 2011). The computer allows overcoming some of the failures that the student usually encounters when working with school tools. The student can complete any activity as a whole with minimal participation of a third person, who will help them while working with the tools. Example: The student with cerebral palsy has difficulty writing with a pencil in the notebook. He experiences obstacles and failures during the realization of this activity. With the help of assistive devices and the computer regardless of writing, it is faster and happier for the successful completion of the activity. (Hajdari, 2019).

2.3 E-learning (distance learning)

In a broad sense, distance learning is often synonymous with online learning, e-learning, correspondence education, distance learning, flexible learning, and massive open online courses (MOOCs). (UNESCO, 2020). Gjokutaj, Hoti & Kadriu (2016) cited in (Azemi, 2020), emphasize that electronic learning (e-learning) is the new way of learning, enabled by communication technology. It refers to the use of electronic devices and today's technologies in teaching and learning processes.

Online teaching, or as it is sometimes called distance learning, is accomplished by distributing instruction and instruction via the Internet. (Shatri, 2016). Distance learning is a form of education, which is realized through modern communication technologies, with the aim of learning students located in different places and distances - outside the traditional learning environment (classroom). Distance learning programs enable students and teachers to interact with each other through computer tools, the Internet, artificial satellites, telephones, radios, televisions, and other technologies.(Mexhuani, 2011).

According to (ECDL, 2012), the advantages of e-learning are:

- Unlimited access to learning content in terms of time and space,
- Access to standardized and high-quality teaching materials,
- Possibilities of interaction between teachers and students,
- Etc.

2.4 Media education

The term media usually refers to mass media messages communicated through visuals, language, and/or sound that are produced for a remote audience using some form of technology. These include traditional print-based media (eg, books, newspapers, magazines, direct mail); audiovisual media (eg, radio, television, computer games, Internet, blogs, wikis). (Abdurrahmnai, Godole, & Musai, 2011). Media education refers to the use of the media to provide new and correct information, the creation and use of information, communication through traditional and digital media, criticism of the media, the language of the media and its impact on society, the expectations of citizens from the media. and their fair and safe use, etc. The subject of media education includes content related to traditional and digital media, television, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, photography, advertising and electronic games, media ethics, etc. (MASHT, 2016). Rumble (1986, 1994) cited in (Rahman, 2014) states that four media namely computer, printer, audio, television are available for learning purposes, in one technological form or another.

2.5 What are the negative forms of the impact of the computer and the Internet on students?

Today, in the contemporary standard of families, children have the opportunity to spontaneously recognize the use of the computer and the Internet, even not without consequences, e.g. wasting time in computer games, banal communications, etc. (Brada, 2010). Even worse, your children may unknowingly communicate with online predators, who use the Internet to establish social relationships with vulnerable children, whether they are their peers or an adult they can trust. trust, and later try to convince them to meet directly. (Shumadieva, 2012).

2.6 Research questions and hypotheses

1. *Does the use of computers and the Internet influence the motivation of students during the teaching-learning process?*
2. *What is the role of the computer and the Internet in the new forms of teaching-learning (e-education, media education)?*
3. *What are the negative forms of impact of the computer and the Internet on students?*

H1: The use of computers and the Internet increases students' motivation during the teaching-learning process.

H2: E-learning, based on computer and Internet, enables teacher-student interactivity

3. Methodology

To carry out this research, we used the documentation analysis method, the descriptive method and the statistical method.

Through the documentation analysis method, we have analyzed laws, various research reports and other publications related to the subject in question.

Through the method of descriptive analysis, we have analyzed and described the opinions of teachers and students.

Through the statistical method, we processed and presented the results obtained from the quantitative and qualitative research.

The research was carried out using qualitative and quantitative methodology. For data collection, questionnaires were used electronically compiled through google forms that were used by students and interviews through e-mail for teachers. In this research we deal with the open problem. (Vula, 2016)

The questions in both the questionnaires and the interview are well structured and understandable, so that students and teachers express their opinions clearly and honestly. The questionnaires will be completed individually by the students. Quality, validity, reliability, safety and workability have followed this research. (Vula, 2016)

It was requested by the DKA in Gjakovë, through a request, that I be allowed the possibility of research in the aforementioned schools. Also, through requests, I have addressed the principals of the schools in question where the research will be done, so that I have access for research to the designated staff of teachers and to the students of certain classes. And finally, through a joint request, I addressed the tutor teachers for the classes involved in the research and the teachers involved in the research.

During data collection and publication of student results, we have maintained the confidentiality of students and teachers.

3.1 Samples

Two schools were selected in the Municipality of Gjakova, (SH.F.M.U. "8 Dëshmorët" and SH.F.M.U. "Ukshin Miftari") where students from the VIIth, VIIIth and IXth grades were included in the research, as well as a part of the staff of teachers who develop the teaching process in these classes. (there are a total of 120 students and 10 teachers).

In the third phase, the data collected through the questionnaires by the students and the interviews by the teachers were analyzed and then the answers were systematized through the SPSS package and the obtained results were weighted in a tabular and graphic manner.

Table 1: Descriptive characteristics of the sample or participants (teachers participating in the research).

Nr. rendor	School	Place	Municipality	Teacher/participant	Sex F / M	Total
1	8 dëshmorët	Kralan	Gjakovë	5	1 / 4	10
2	Ukshin Miftari	Skivjan	Gjakovë	5	3 / 2	

Table 2: Sample distribution per student.

Nr.	School level	School 8 dëshmorët F / M	School Ukshin Miftari F / M	Total
1	Class. VII	14/ 11	07 / 05	37
2	Class. VIII	10 / 11	09 / 10	40
3	Class. IX	08 / 13	08 / 14	43
		32 / 35	**24 / 29**	**120**

3.2 Instruments

In this research we used the survey technique and as the main measuring instruments are: interviews for teachers and questionnaires for students, which were compiled to collect information related to the fact that the use of the computer and the Internet increases the motivation of students during the teaching process - learning, and E-learning, based on computers and the Internet, enables teacher-student interactivity.

3.3 Procedures

Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires compiled for students, while qualitative data were collected through interviews conducted with teachers and through researched literature.

In the first phase of the implementation of the research, I talked with the principals of the selected schools and after their approval, I started the application of the research in order to make it as successful as possible and to collect data. In time, I informed the teachers and students about the purpose of the research and they showed their willingness to be part of the research.

In the second phase, I distributed the questionnaires to the classes selected for research, where through the questionnaire for the students and the interview for the teachers, an assessment was obtained on the use of Google Sites and interactive platforms in the learning process. After completing the questionnaires with students, the next part was the interview with the teachers of both schools.

In the third phase, I analyzed the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, then I systematized the answers with the Microsoft Excel program and presented the obtained results graphically, while testing and validating the hypotheses was done with the SPSS application program.

4. Data Analysis and Results

Analysis is a process of working with data to gather data, describe, and explain the data in relation to the questions or hypothesis of the research project. (Matthews & Ross, 2010) We analyzed the data with the SPSS program and with the T-test or Independence Samples Test, which compared two independent samples. So the two independent samples T-test compares two different groups of samples, where the members of the two groups are separated from each other.

There are mainly three main types of statistical tests for one or two samples:

Statistical test T in one sample (One Sample t - test)

Statistical test T of independent samples (independent samples t - test)

Statistical test T of dependent (paired) samples (Depend (paired) Samples test) (Krasniqi, 2012) The most used test during applications is the test of two independent samples, which we used in this research.

4.1. Results from the interview with teachers

Teachers included in the research were 10 (ten)

Figure 1: Structure of the sample by gender.

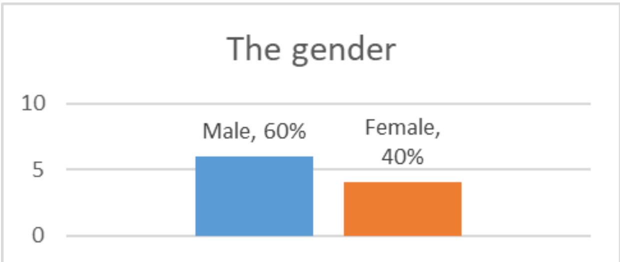


Figure 2: Level of studies.

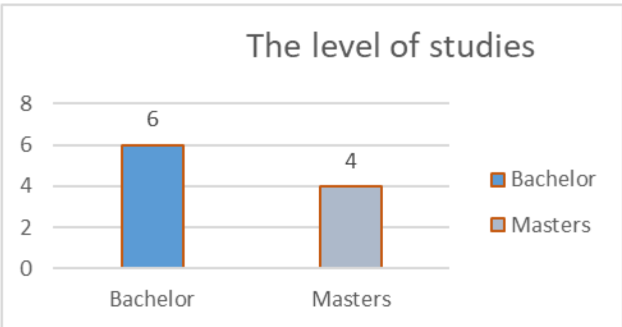
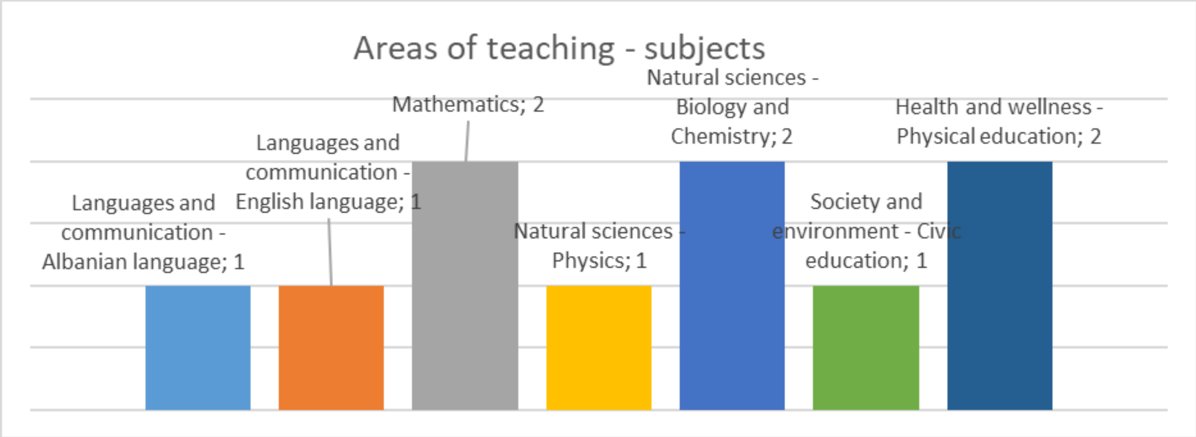


Figure 3. The division of teachers according to the field of teaching - subject.



The answers received from the teachers related to the question: Do you think that the integration of technology (computer and internet) in the classroom affects the increase of motivation among students?

The teachers in both schools participating in the research agree with the fact that the computer and the Internet influence the increase of motivation in students, while we have different and interesting answers, where the reasoning of the answers is related to several processes such as interest, influences on the results of learning, online research, student attitudes including motivation, success and self-confidence, online research, tangible teaching by alluding to pictures, events and activities, interaction and effective teaching – all based on the use of the internet and computer in the teaching-learning process.

The answers received from the teachers regarding the question: Using computer programs (Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Word and One note), do you think they can be used as simulators on the one hand and as interactive on the other hand, during the learning process?

Teachers agree that the use of advanced computer programs can be used as stimulating and interactive on the other hand, while some teachers are more specific when they relate the effectiveness of these programs to the learning outcome, different presentations, calculations, etc.

Answers received from teachers regarding the question: Do you think that technology in the classroom, in addition to textbooks, makes learning more attractive for the student?

Teachers support technology in the classroom (computer and internet), not neglecting textbooks. As a support of technology in the classroom, in addition to the textbook, teachers take as an example the combination of techniques, activities and various events through the computer and the Internet, then various researches and up to the advancement of students for the future

.The answers received from the teachers related to the question: Do you agree that Multimedia (computer and Internet) very easily attract the attention of students due to the large number (wealth) of pictures and sounds that make the lesson more fun and thus enable for students to learn the learning content more easily?

The teachers in their answers agree with that of Multimedia in this case - the computer and the Internet have an impact on entertaining and facilitating the learning process for students, *where as an example they mention the case with different photos and videos, better kept in mind as and much easier understanding of the lesson.*

The answers received from the teachers regarding the question: Do you think that working in groups affects the increase of teacher-student interactivity during the process of distance learning (e-learning)?

One teacher is skeptical about this question in the framework of the learning process in Kosovo, while others relate the work in groups to some component factors, where as such they lead to the increase of teacher-student interactivity during the e-learning process. Among these factors we distinguish: the division of tasks and responsibilities, being active, achieving results, expressing ideas and even teacher-student communication

Answers received by teachers regarding the question: E-mail, forums and social networks enable teacher-student interactivity during the teaching-learning process.

Regarding this question, a teacher is skeptical based on his experience, while others affirm the fact that E-mail, forums and social networks influence the teacher-student interactivity, where as such they relate it to the information about the lesson. and learning activities, tasks, ideas and up to teacher-student discussion.

Answers received from teachers regarding the question: Do you have anything else to say...?

Two teachers have declared NO, while the others have expressed their ideas, among other things they emphasize the importance of technology - computers and the Internet - in the teaching-learning process, among other things we have: The Connection of Technology, in this case, has to do with the constructivist approach, the results required for the subject, quality improvement, engagement in contemporary society, as well as effective teaching. Rezultatet e analizës së të dhënave nga pyetësori me nxënës.

The number of students involved in the research was 120 students, and they answered the questions of the questionnaire through Google Form, that is, electronically.

Figure 4. Sample of students by gender.

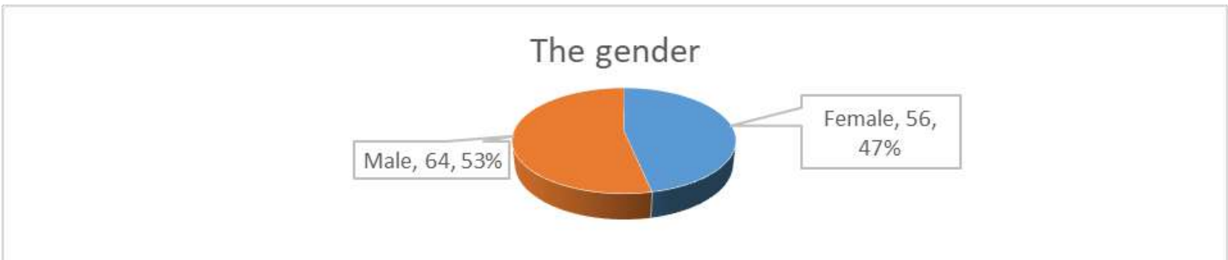


Figure 5. Distribution of the sample of students divided by class.

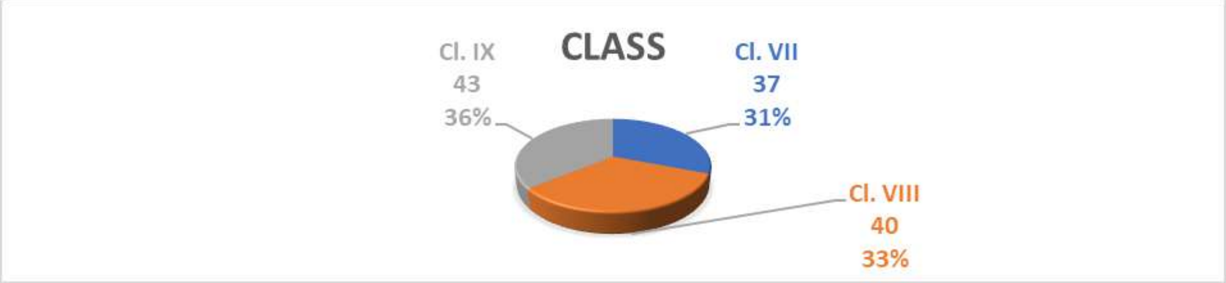


Figure 6. Sample of participants divided by school.

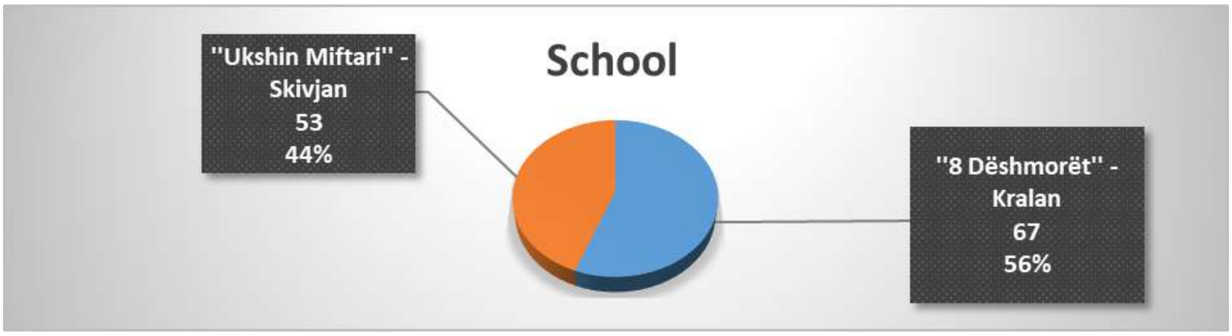
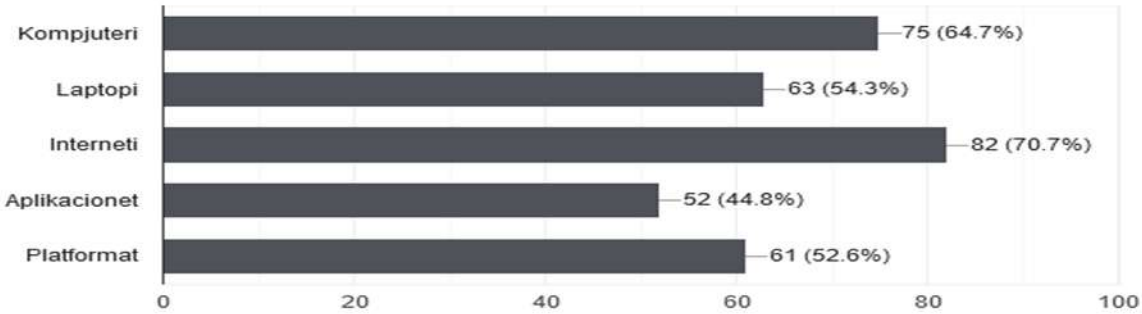


Figure 7. Students' opinion regarding what they mean by Technology in the classroom.

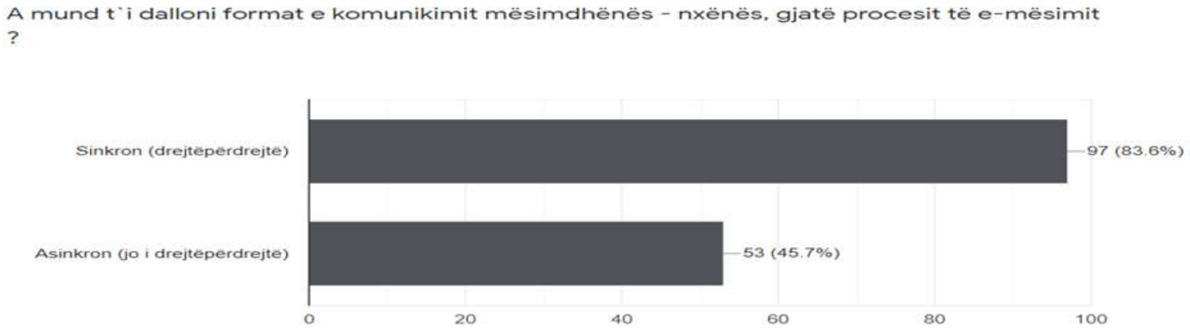


In the question posed to the students about what they mean by Technology, among other things, in the teaching-learning process, the students mostly clicked on the computer (with 74 participants - 64.3%) and the Internet (with 81 participants - 70.4%), while in a smaller percentage we have answers for the laptop - 53.9%, applications - 45.2% and platforms with 53%.

Figure 8. Students' opinion regarding e-learning.

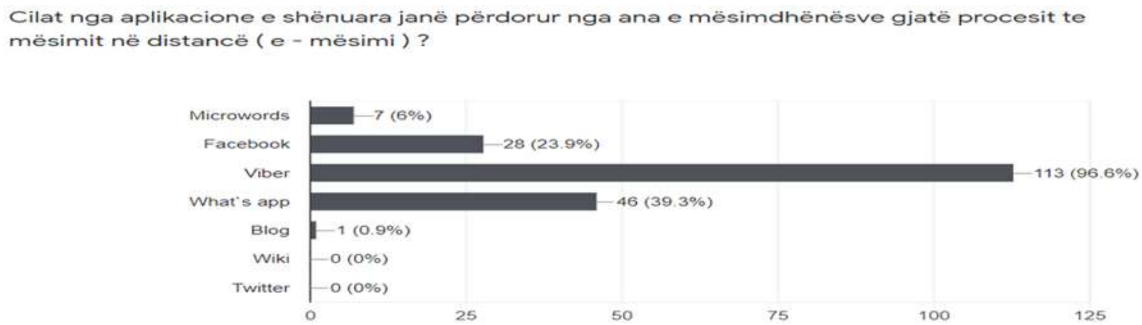
In the question presented, enabling them to choose one of the two possible options, regarding what they mean by e-learning, 97.4% of them answered yes right – so e-learning means internet-based technologies to build learning experiences.

Figure 9. Students' opinion regarding communication during e-learning.



In the aforementioned question, students from both participating schools answered in both formats, although the Synchronous format received a larger percentage. In principle, both communication formats are possible, as long as students have responded based on their own experiences.

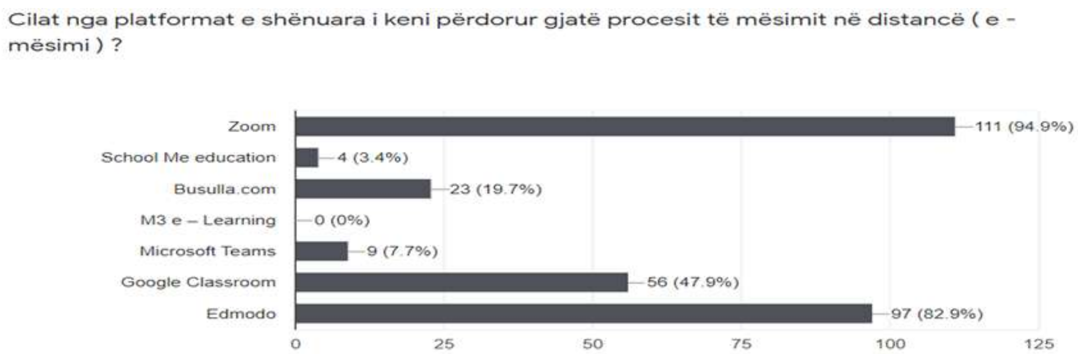
Figure 10. Students' opinion regarding the use of applications during the e-learning process.



Regarding the question of which of the applications were used during the learning process (e-learning), the students answered with: 6% - Microwords, 23.9% Facebook, 96.6% Viber, 39.3% What's app, 0.6% Blog, while Wiki and Twitter with 0%.

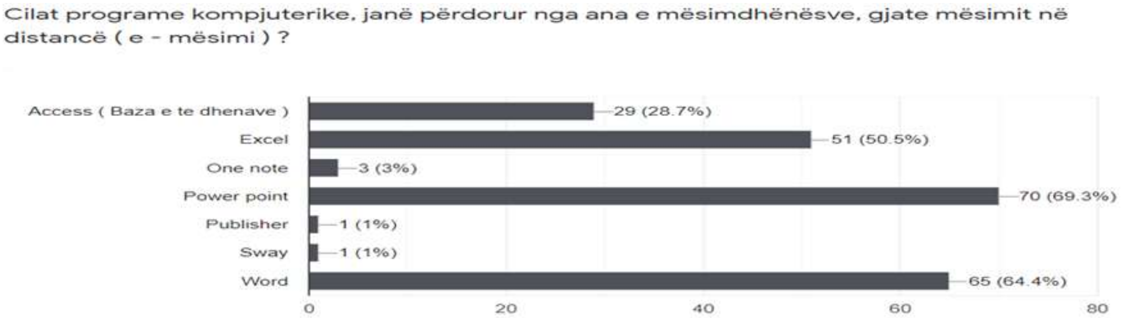
Here it can be seen that the Viber application has a wider use compared to other applications.

Figure 11. Students' opinion regarding the use of platforms during the e-learning process.



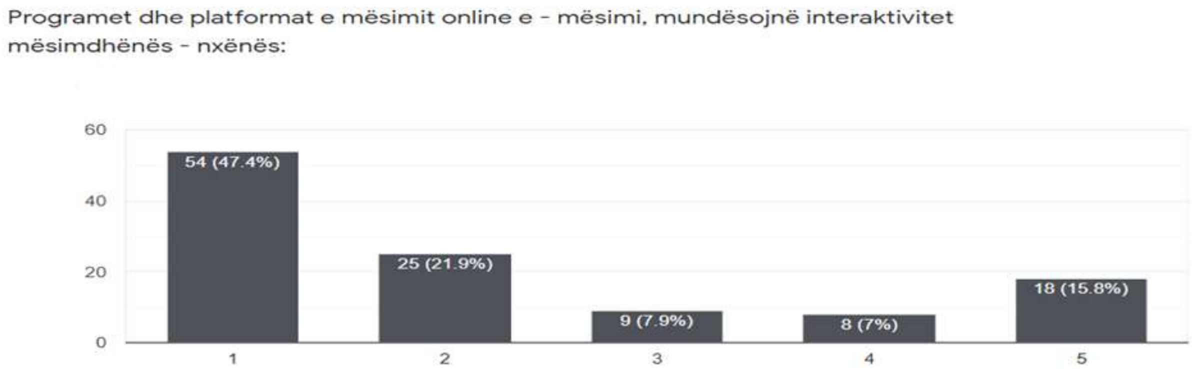
Regarding which platforms were used during the distance learning process, students responded with: 94.9% Zoom, 3.4% School Me education, 19.7% Busulla.com, M3 e-learning with 0%, 7.7% Microsoft Teams, 47.9 % Google Classroom and 82.9% Edmodo. From this we see that in terms of platforms, Zoom has a greater use, then the Edmodo platform follows, then the Google Classroom platform, then the Compass, Microsoft Team, School Me and M3 e-learning platforms, which as such have not been used at all.

Figure 12. Students' opinion regarding the use of computer programs used by teachers during the e-learning process.



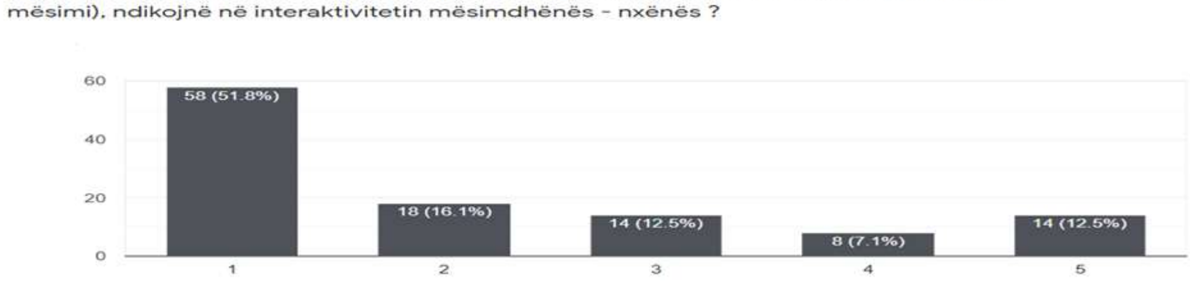
Regarding the computer programs used by teachers during the e-learning process, the opinion of the students is: 28.7% Database, 50.5% Excel, 3% One note, 69.3% Power Point, 1% Publisher, 1% Say , and 64.4% Word. From this it can be seen that the most used computer programs are Power Point, Word and Excel with 69.3%, 64.4%, and 50.5% respectively. Whereas in a smaller percentage we have the Database program with 28.7%, One note with 3%, and the Publisher and Sway programs with 1% each.

Figure 13. Students' opinion regarding the programs and applications related to the process of interactivity during the e-learning process.



In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the students' answers were such that 47.4% completely agree, while 15.8% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that online learning programs and platforms enable teacher-student interactivity.

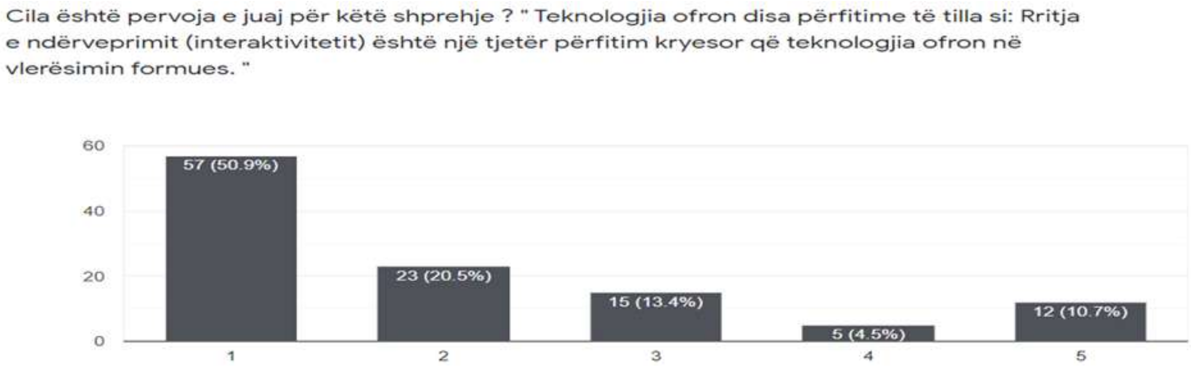
Figure 14. Students' opinion regarding the use of applications during e-learning.



In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 51.8% completely agree, while 12.5%

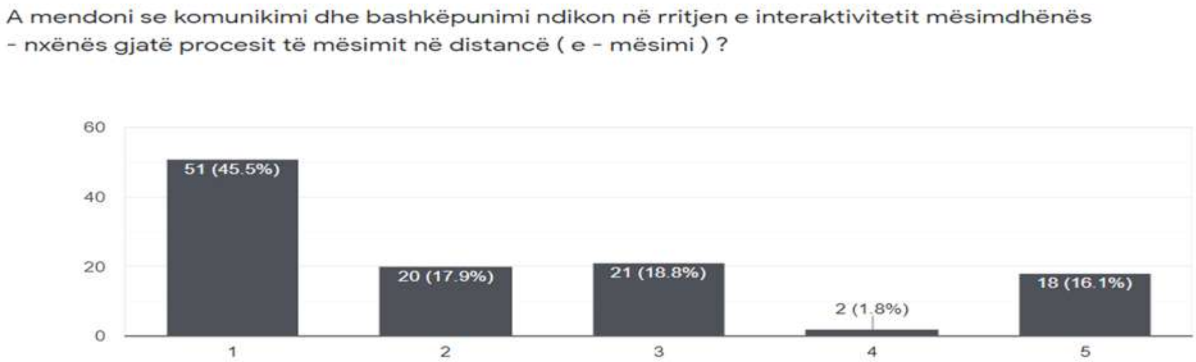
of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that the applications used in e-learning affect teacher-student interactivity.

Figure 14. Students' opinion on increasing interactivity when using technology.



In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 50.9% completely agree, while 10.7% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that technology affects the increase of interactivity during formative assessment.

Figure 15. Students' opinion on communication and cooperation during the e-learning process.



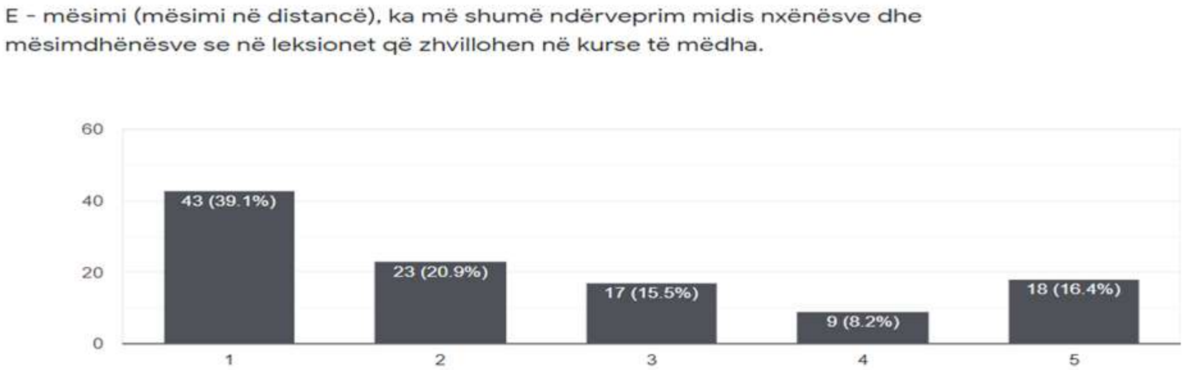
In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 45.5% completely agree, while 16.1% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that communication and cooperation influence the increase of teacher-student interactivity during the e-learning process.

Figure 16. Students' opinion about E-mail, forums and social networks during the teaching-learning process.

In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 50.5% completely agree, while 9% of the students answered that they do not agree at all.

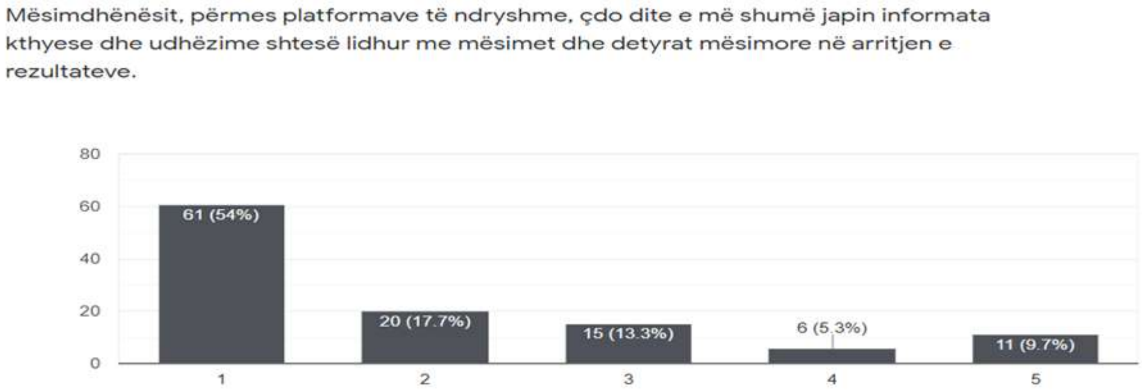
From this we see that E-mail, forums and social networks enable teacher-student communication and interactivity.

Figure 17. Students' opinion regarding the comparison between distance learning and lectures in large courses.



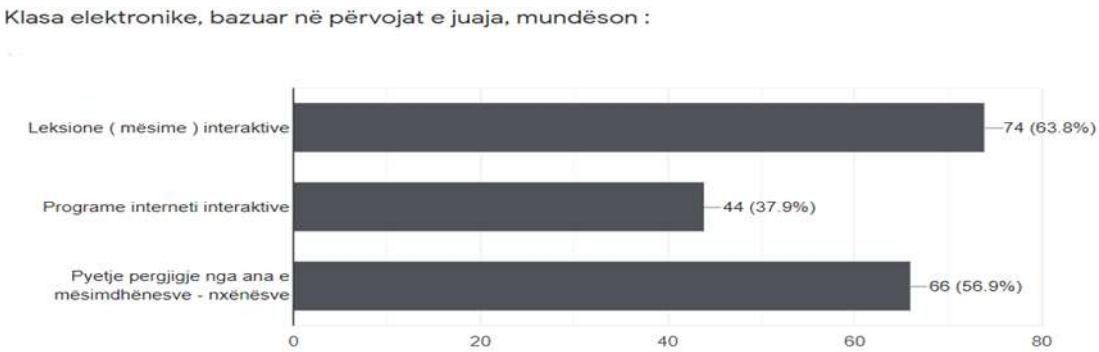
In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 39.15% completely agree, while 16.4% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that during the e-learning process there is more interaction between students and teachers besides lectures in large courses.

Figure 18. The opinion of the students regarding the work of the teachers while using the applications.



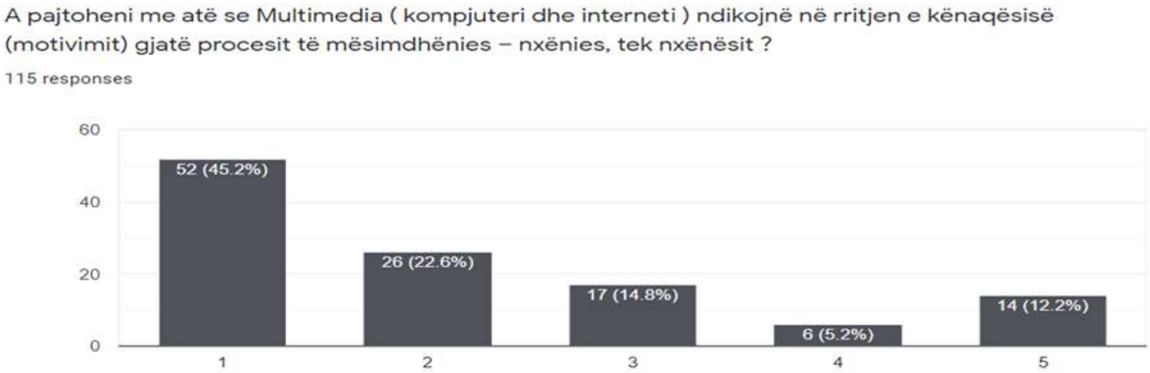
In the aforementioned question, using the Likert scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the students' answers were such that 54% completely agree, while 9.7% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that teachers, through different platforms, give feedback information, related to lessons and tasks in achieving results.

Figure 19. Students' opinion on the electronic classroom.



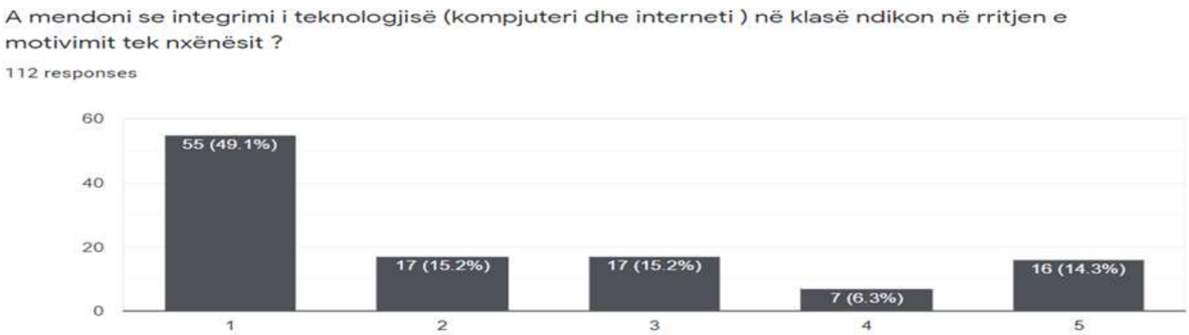
In the aforementioned question regarding the electronic class, within the three ready answers, we see that the students in the largest percentage have chosen the option Interactive lectures with 63.8%, and the option Questions - answers by teachers - students with 56.9 %, while the Interactive Internet Programs option received a smaller percentage, i.e. 37.9%. From this we see that the electronic class enables interactivity either through interactive lessons, or even between the teacher and the student.

Figure 20. Students' opinion regarding Multimedia in increasing student motivation.



In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 45.2% completely agree, while 12.2% of the students responded that they do not agree at all. From this we see that Multimedia (computer and Internet) affects the increase of satisfaction among students during the teaching-learning process.

Figure 21. Students' opinion about the integration of technology in the classroom.



In the aforementioned question, using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the students' answers were such that 49.1% completely agree, while 14.3% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that the integration of technology in the classroom affects the motivation of students during the teaching-learning process.

4.2. Hypothesis testing

We have presented the results of the main hypothesis through the T test as follows:

H1: The use of computers and the Internet increases students' motivation during the teaching-learning process.

Ho: Computer and Internet use does not increase or affect at all student motivation during the teaching-learning process.

Table 3. Analysis of data from the test of two independent samples T-Test

Test of independent samples	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		T-test for Equal Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Average difference	Standard error difference	The lowest	Higher
Assumed unequal variances	33.765	.000	-2.608	118	.010	-93.670	35.913	-164.786	-22.553
Unequal unposed variances			-2.317	52.002	.024	-93.670	40.423	-174.785	-12.555
Assumed unequal variances	33.765	.000	-2.608	118	.010	-93.670	35.913	-164.786	-22.553
Unequal unposed variances			-2.317	52.002	.024	-93.670	40.423	-174.785	-12.555

In table 3, it can be seen that the table contains two groups of analyses, where the first assumes the matching of variances, while the second assumes the discrepancy or inequality of variances. Two-tailed p-value is 0.024, which is less than 0.05, but higher than 0.01. Therefore we can reject the null hypothesis of 0.05 level of significance, which means that the mean of significance in both schools is significantly different from each other. Even in the case of the second independent variable, we have a p-value of 0.024, which is less than 0.05, but higher than 0.010.

So, according to the results of the T-test, the null hypothesis is rejected and the first hypothesis is confirmed, that "The use of the computer and the Internet increases the motivation of students during the teaching-learning process".

4.3. Testing the second hypothesis

H2: E-learning, based on computer and Internet, enables teacher-student interactivity.

Ho: E-learning, based on computers and the Internet, does not enable teacher-student interactivity.

Table 4. Testing of the T-test in the second Hypothesis

Test of independent samples									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		T-test for Equal Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Average difference	Standard error difference	The lowest	Higher
Assumed unequal variances	43.740	.000	-2.926	118	.004	-113.769	38.884	-190.769	-36.769
Unequal unposed variances			-2.599	52.001	.012	-113.769	43.767	-201.595	-25.943
Assumed unequal variances	42.443	.000	-2.871	118	.005	-135.137	47.065	-228.339	-41.935
Unequal unposed variances			-2.614	61.421	.011	-135.137	51.699	-238.500	-31.773

In table 4, it can be seen that the table contains two groups of analyses, where the first assumes the matching of variances, while the second assumes the discrepancy or inequality of variances.

Two-tailed p-value is 0.012, which is less than 0.05, but higher than 0.004.

Therefore we can reject the null hypothesis of 0.05 level of significance, which means that the mean of significance in both schools is significantly different from each other.

Even in the case of the second independent variable, we have a p-value of 0.011, which is less than 0.05, but higher than 0.005.

Therefore we can reject the null hypothesis of 0.05 level of significance, which means that the mean of significance in both schools is significantly different from each other.

So, according to the results of the T-test, the null hypothesis is rejected and the first hypothesis is confirmed, that "E-learning, based on computers and the Internet, enables teacher-student interactivity".

5. Discussion and Conclusions

According to this research and according to studies done by different authors, the use of computers and the Internet has a positive effect on teachers and students during the teaching-learning process. The technologies in question help teachers to facilitate the performance of educational work, while students, in addition to helping them complete their tasks, give them work satisfaction, motivating them, then simulating them, and even influencing their creativity. during educational work.

The research questions we have answered are:

1. *Does the use of computers and the Internet influence the motivation of students during the teaching-learning process?*

The answers to the first question can be found in the interview with the teacher (in question no. 1 and 4) and in the questionnaire with students (in question no. 15 and 16), which we have presented as follows:

Teachers: In the first question, we have: The teachers in both schools participating in the research agree with the fact that the computer and the Internet influence the increase of motivation in students, while we have different and interesting answers, where the reasoning of the answers is related to several processes such as .sh, interest, impacts on learning outcomes, online research, student attitudes including motivation, success and confidence, online research, tangible teaching by alluding to pictures, events and activities, interaction and effective teaching – all these being based on the use of the Internet and the computer in the teaching-learning process**.** And, in the second question, we have: The teachers in their answers agree with that of Multimedia in this case - the computer and the Internet, have an impact on entertaining and facilitating the learning process for students, where as an example they mention the case of photos, videos different, better retention and much easier understanding of the lesson.

Students: Using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 45.2% completely agree, while 12.2% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that Multimedia (computer and Internet) affects the increase of satisfaction among students during the teaching-learning process, while using the Likert Scale 1 - 5 (Completely agree - I do not agree at all), the students' answers were such that 49.1% completely agree, while 14.3% of the students answered that they do not agree at all. From this we see that the integration of technology in the classroom affects the motivation of students during the teaching-learning process

2. *What is the role of the computer and the Internet in the new forms of teaching-learning (e-education, media education)?*

The answers to this question can be found in the interview with the teacher (in question 6) and in the questionnaire with students (in questions 7 and 8), which we have presented as follows:

Teachers: Regarding this question, one teacher is skeptical based on his experience, while others affirm the fact that E-mail, forums and social networks influence the teacher-student interactivity, where as such they relate it to information about lesson and learning activities, tasks, ideas and up to teacher-student discussion**.**

Students: In the answer related to the first question, we have: Using the Likert scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the answers of the students were such that 47.4% completely agree, while 15.8% were answered by the students regarding with the fact that they do not agree at all. From this we see that online learning programs and platforms enable teacher-student interactivity. And in the answer received from the next question, we have: using the Likert scale 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), the students' answers were such that 51.8% completely agree, while 12.5% of the students answered about that they do not agree at all. From this we see that the applications used in e-learning affect teacher-student interactivity**.**

From these surveys, it can be seen that in both school institutions, the use of computers and the Internet during the e-learning process is such that it affects the increase of teacher-student interactivity.

The research hypotheses for which we received answers are:

H1: The use of computers and the Internet increases students' motivation during the teaching-learning process.

The verification of hypothesis H1 can be found in the questionnaire with students (in question no. 15 and in question no. 16), verified in the SPSS program with the T-test analysis, which we have presented as follows: "The result of the significant S2B (p = 0.010) indicates that the main hypothesis H1 is confirmed because its value is less than 0.05 and is within the 95% confidence interval. So, in both educational institutions, using the Likert scale from 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), 52 or 45.2% respectively 55 or 49.1% of the students completely agree that the computer and the Internet increase the motivation of students during the process of teaching - learning, while 14 or 12.2% respectively 16 or 14.3% do not agree at all regarding the raised hypothesis."

The second hypothesis:

H2: E-learning, based on computer and Internet, enables teacher-student interactivity

The verification of the second hypothesis H2 is found in the questionnaire with students (in question no. 8 and in question no. 12), verified in the SPSS program with the T-test analysis, which we have presented as follows: "The result of the significant S2B (p = 0.010) indicates that the main hypothesis H2 is confirmed because its value is less than 0.05 and is within the 95% confidence interval. So, in both educational institutions, using the Likert scale from 1 - 5 (I completely agree - I do not agree at all), 54 or 47.4% respectively 56 or 50.5% of the students completely agree that the computer and the Internet increase the motivation of students during the process of teaching - learning, while 18 or 15.8% respectively 10 or 9% do not agree at all with the raised hypothesis."

We conclude that the use of the computer and the Internet influence the increase in motivation among students during the teaching-learning process, and these technologies have also influenced the increase in cooperation and conversation-interactivity during the e-learning process (Covid-19) during the 2019 school year - 2020.

6. Recommendation

6.1 Recommendations for teachers

We recommend teachers to use the computer and the Internet during different stages of the teaching process. The reason for the use of these technologies in the teaching process in general is because their work is facilitated on the one hand, including the creation of lists for students, the creation of different presentations, the formation of different electronic classes, etc. On the other hand, it is possible to apply teaching methods from those centered on the teacher to those centered on the student, creating an environment as suitable as possible and not making the learning process boring. During the use of these technologies, synchronous and asynchronous communication is enabled, where in fact communication represents the main link in the learning process and education in general.

7.2.Recommendations for students

The recommendations for students at this stage are to be aware of the use of these technologies, especially in the phase of the learning process. The use of these technologies during the learning process or even during various tasks, enables a pleasure for the students, making the lesson not boring, then help and fun in completing the various tasks and exercises recommended by the teachers.

7.3.Recommendations for parents

We recommend that parents be careful when using the computer and the Internet by their children, and in particular for various educational issues. In most cases, students can misuse the technologies in question, and the consequences can be of different natures, so parents can play a key role at this point. We recommend that the child's work history be forwarded, in this case the students, on these devices, to have a communication with the teachers either about the work at school or even at home about the child's work with these devices. He asks for help from teachers or other interest groups, if he does not have knowledge about the use of these technologies as well as about the consequences for the child - the student. To be informed about the terms and the consequences that exist in the framework of the negative use of these devices. To have a continuous communication between parents - teachers, parents - school and parents - law enforcement agencies, for all possible doubts raised by the child - student during the introduction of these technologies in general.

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CRIMINAL OFFENSES AGAINST THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER IN DEVELOPED DEMOCRACY WITH A FOCUS ON THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO

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Abstract.

Democratic states in contemporary times are not infrequently faced with threats of crimes against the constitutional order, and in essence, not all states, in addition to the protection of human rights and freedoms, have advanced with the democratization of the constitutional order. Most of the countries with avant-garde democracies in their criminal codes have a special chapter with a tax enumeration of criminal offenses against the constitutional order. Such criminal acts are those acts, or illegal actions, aimed at subverting the constitutional order and the establishment of order against democratic rules, by means of murders, kidnappings, torture or other violent acts. The perpetrators of such offenses are sentenced to various punishments, including capital punishment, depending on the criminal codes of the country where such attempts are made. Democratic states have placed these acts within the framework of positive legislation. In this regard, the Republic of Kosovo has also decided to make these criminal offenses part of the legal system in the Criminal Code, dedicating a special chapter in order to ensure a good legal infrastructure using the affirmative provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo to create a legal security for the authorities and of course to implement the international conventions which are part of the constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, paying attention to 57 articles in the criminal code. The object of committing these criminal offenses are the legal relations established by the Constitution and by law to ensure the constitutional order in Kosovo and protected by criminal legislation. From the objective side, crimes are committed with active and illegal actions that are expressed in assassinations, conspiracies, uprisings, unlawful taking of command, public calls for violent actions, etc. From the subjective side, they are carried out intentionally and with the aim of subverting the constitutional order established in a state with a developing democracy. The perpetrator of these crimes is undoubtedly every person who has reached the age of criminal responsibility and is responsible.

Keywords: Democracy, Constitution, Criminal Code, Criminal Offense, Constitutional Order.

1. Introduction

The change of systems in countries emerging from armed conflicts, as was the case of Kosovo, is also challenged by the problem of the development of democracy in front of freedom. The creation of a legal infrastructure with international standards and the construction of state institutions and practices until the construction of a modern state remain a difficult situation because it takes time to create a political culture in the country. Regardless of all situations or even criticisms from the international factor, democracy is the most successful process towards the cultivation and preservation of human rights on the democratic spirit. All over the world, people rely on it, in different regions and systems. On the other hand, each model of democracy can have its own shortcomings and it is difficult to find an ideal model of democracy. Well, according to most theorists, the model closest to the ideal democracy is the English model, since Great Britain has a long tradition in creating and implementing the essential conditions for the manifestation of democracy and contemporary democratic values (Hasani & Čukalović, 2013).

State values or interests that are related to the functioning and full extension of state power within territorial borders are guaranteed by legal and international instruments, the violation of which creates favorable legal conditions for dealing with justice. History over the years has proven the subordinate position of the Albanian society towards the occupying systems, for the change of which many efforts and sacrifices have been made until the formation of an independent state. State legal goods are closely related to some elements that prove the character of a society's independence, the full autonomy of state institutions to exercise the functions entrusted by law, state security and territorial unity. Independence, territorial integrity, security, exercise of constitutional and legal order and democratic character as a form of contemporary government are national values without which it would be difficult to represent public interests. Every effort that meets the criteria of an action under the awareness and physical readiness of a person or an organized group that is oriented against these values, creates the legal space for criminal responsibility and meritorious punishment in accordance with legal-criminal norms.

Making efforts to treat these issues with care and seriousness, the purpose of this paper is to present the legal regulation, specifically the treatment in the criminal aspect of all those actions which are undertaken with the aim of violating independence, security and territorial integrity as a matter of sensitive that are directly related to state existence. The purpose of this paper is to deal with all the constituent elements of the acts that are foreseen as criminal offenses, the consequence of which is precisely the jeopardy and violation of independence, security and territorial integrity. These elements in the first place have to do with the systematization of criminal offenses separately, the determination of the protective object, the determination of the elements of an objective nature that in the specific case of this research mainly has to do with the actions of committing these offenses, the determination of the elements of a subjective nature in relation to guilt and criminal liability.

In order to collect the necessary data in the first instance, a theoretical method was used, through which early research and studies were consulted regarding democracy as a form of political regime, its role, importance and the benefits that society can have as a result of such a government. In the framework of this method, theoretical analysis has been used to clarify different terms from the field of justice in general and the legal-criminal field in particular, starting from the concept of democracy, then continuing with the theoretical elaboration of some designations, the combination of which forms the legal definitions of criminal offenses, such as: constitutional order, territorial integrity, the difference between capitulation and occupation, classified information, etc. On the other hand, through this method, all the features or elements of some of the criminal offenses that are closely related to the protective object of the first chapter of the special part of the criminal code are divided into component parts. These elements are the characteristics of all criminal offenses, particularly the criminal offenses discussed in this research, such as the act of committing, the determination of the state legal goods protected through incriminations, the determination of criminal responsibility as well as the criteria for determining the level of punishment.

The Republic of Kosovo is a new state with a democracy in development, so for our society, researches that presents examples of consolidated democracies, as is the case with American democracy, are very important. Therefore, this paper attempts to serve as a contribution to the enrichment of the literature with the necessary data regarding the importance of democracy, the promotion of national values, the preservation of independence and territorial integrity, as well as all those criminal offenses that are committed against these values. Also, this paper attempts to facilitate the research work of other researchers for the future research that aims to present the European example of the legal system of Kosovo.

2. The concept of developed democracy

Historically, since the creation of the first states, governance and the form of exercising state power has been different. Since the features of the social order of these first states were similar to those of primitive tribal organizations, the functions in the state sense were directed by an individual. However, the rule of the elite class, characterized by social inequality and the absolute concentration of state functions in only one individual, created discontent among the lower sphere of the population.

As opposed to this, in the 5th century BC, the first beginnings of the Greek model of democracy were presented, of course with fundamental changes compared to the modern form of democracy (McCannon, 2012). In Ancient Greece, the direct form of democracy dominated, which is practically impossible in contemporary states. Well, since slaves and women were prohibited from participating in political and decision-making life, the number of the population with such rights was reduced to the extent that democracy could be exercised directly.

Given that the origin of this form of government or political regime derives from the ancient Greek period, the etymology of the word democracy is of Greek origin, as it is combined from the two words "*demos*" - people and "*kratos*" - rule. Based on this, the basic concept of democracy represents the rule of the majority where the bearer of sovereignty is the people themselves, so it is a form of exercise of state power by the majority against the minority.

Different researchers from the field of justice have made a valuable contribution regarding the definition and promotion of values that justify the practical implementation of democratic governance. According to a definition given by Dahl (2022), democracy represents the leadership or governance system where issues attributed to the state, starting from laws to state policies, are decided directly or indirectly by the people. Practically, direct decision-making by all the people of a country or the majority of them is not possible, but today the indirect form of democracy dominates, where the people choose their representatives. The representatives act on behalf of the citizens and reveal their problems. Regarding the development of representative democracy, Berisha (2010) emphasizes that: "the representative democracy of the people should be professionalized and specialized, which would help the representative body of the people in the process of issuing democratic acts and achieved in the professional aspect" (p. 120). Each of us may have heard of the most common definition of democracy given by Abraham Lincoln: *government of the people, by the people, for the people* (Becker & Raveloson, 2008).

Democracy represents the system that offers opportunities for the participation of the largest number of people in the exercise of public works aimed at raising the general well-being. Democracy is closely related to human rights and freedoms as a constitutional category, as well as to the way power functions in society. In different dictionaries of justice, democracy is defined in that way that the supreme power belongs to the people, who can exercise it directly or through representatives elected in a democratic procedure, that of voting (Bajrami, 2010). So, the role or key point of democracy is for the people to play an active role in the governance and management of the country (National Geographic Society, 2022).
Combining the features of this form of government as well as analyzing the benefits that society and the state can have, the concept of developmental democracy can be defined as a democratic system of government to prevent rule by autocrats and to guarantee freedoms and human rights. As such, developmental democracy proclaims and promotes the raising of consciousness and a high level of political equality, therefore developing countries must always expand the practical application of the substantive elements of democratic governance.

3. Developed Democracy and Criminal Offenses Against the Constitutional Order and Security of the Republic of Kosovo

Democracy lives from the cooperation of citizens. Democracy lives from the cooperation of citizens, the condition of which for engagement is knowledge. Only those who have basic knowledge of the mechanisms and institutions of the democratic state have the possibility of involvement. In order to reach such a democracy, legislators go through the test of democracy through the issuance of legal acts, these acts in the spirit of cooperation with the international factor. The constitutional order of a country represents the group of principles, rules and institutions through which the basic decisions of a nation are made. The constitutional order represents the totality of legal-constitutional norms which first of all determine the constituent elements of a state, to continue with basic rights and freedoms, bodies or institutions as constitutional categories as well as the functioning of justice and economic relations. So, the unity of legal-constitutional norms and the behavior of legal bodies and subjects according to these norms forms the constitutional order.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (2008) defines that: "the constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo is based on the principles of freedom, peace, democracy, equality, respect for human rights and freedoms and the rule of law, non-discrimination, property rights, environmental protection, social justice, pluralism, separation of state power and market economy" (p. 2). The constitutional norm that preserves democracy as a value coexists with other constitutional values such as the separation of powers, non-discrimination, environmental protection and respect for social justice (Gërxaliu, 2019).

3.1. Criminal Offenses Against the Constitutional Order and Security of the Republic of Kosovo

The Republic of Kosovo, in order to increase security for citizens but also to prove its pro-European will, has used affirmative provisions to create an institutional stability towards the preservation of law and the implementation of justice. It achieves this function by incriminating criminal offenses that are aimed against the constitutional order, security, independence and territorial integrity.

The compilation of legal-criminal norms through which the above-mentioned criminal offenses are foreseen has been accompanied by various controversies, being subjected to internal filters until their approval in the European spirit. As a result of this, the Republic of Kosovo continues to remain a model for the countries of South-Eastern Europe, being an example of issuing norms in the spirit of international cooperation.

This way, criminal offenses, with the aim of preserving the constitutional order and security of the Republic of Kosovo, are incorporated into the legal system, such as:

- Assault on constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Armed rebellion;
- Acceptance of capitulation and occupation;
- Treason against State;
- Endangering the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Murder of high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Abduction of the high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Violence against high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Endangering the constitutional order by destroying or damaging public installations and facilities;
- Sabotage;
- Espionage;
- Disclosure of classified information and failure to protect classified information.

3.1.1. Assault on constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo

The first criminal offense systematized in the chapter of Criminal Offenses against the Constitutional Order of the Republic of Kosovo, is the Assault on constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo. The functioning and democratic organization of power and the institutions that are the bearers of this power are guaranteed and protected through state or institutional mechanisms. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the special part of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo begins with this chapter of criminal offenses, specifically with the criminal offense expressed in the form of an assault against the constitutional order.

According to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019), this criminal offense will be committed in those cases when someone, by the use of violence or threat of violence, attempts to change the constitutional order or overthrow the highest institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. For this criminal offense, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five (5) years.

Based on this provision, we can understand that this offense can be carried out in two basic forms and that the first form will be carried out if someone attempts to change the constitutional order by the use of violence or threat of violence. Meanwhile, the second form is carried out in cases where someone attempts to overthrow any of the high state institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. According to the Constitution, the highest bodies of the Republic of Kosovo are considered: The Assembly, the President of Kosovo, he Government, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and the State Prosecutor (Salihu et.al., 2014).

The overthrow of state institutions includes the impossibility or difficulty of exercising the functions entrusted by law. This impossibility must be permanent, which can usually end with the replacement of that institution with another illegal institution. From the definition of the legal provision itself, the consequence of this criminal offense is clearly understood, which consists in violating and disrupting the correct functioning of public bodies. In terms of determining the perpetrator of this criminal offense, the perpetrator can be any person with criminal responsibility. In the framework of subjective elements, such a criminal offense is committed intentionally, including the perpetrator's awareness that he is committing a criminal offense that includes the attempt to change the constitutional order or the overthrow of public institutions (Salihu, 2014).

In contrast to the first paragraph of the Criminal Code, in which the basic form is provided, in the second paragraph the special form of this criminal offense is provided, which is considered to be committed if someone, by the use of violence or threat of violence, attempts to obstruct the establishment of the constitutional order or implements a foreign legal order in any part of the territory of the Republic of Kosovo. In contrast to the first paragraph of the Criminal Code, in which the basic form is provided, in the second paragraph the special form of this criminal offense is provided, which is considered to be committed if someone, through violence or the threat of violence, tries to prevent the establishment of order constitutional or implements a foreign legal order in any part of the territory of the Republic of Kosovo. For this form of criminal offense, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five (5) years. A concrete case of the commission of this form of criminal offense is the situation in the northern part of Kosovo, where groups of Serbian nationality, since the liberation of Kosovo in June 1999, by violence, attempt to implement the legal order of Serbia (Salihu, 2014).

Whereas, in the third paragraph of this provision, it is determined that if someone by use of violence or threat of violence, attempts to endanger the independence of Kosovo, its sovereignty and territorial integrity, its territorial entirety or its democracy, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than ten (10) years (Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo, 2019).

Independence and sovereignty are one of the basic conditions for the state to function respecting the autonomous will of the population without being dependent on another state and to establish the constitutional order it wants. According to a definition given by Turnbull et. al. (2019) independence is synonymous with the freedom to choose how citizens live their lives within their professional capacities, as well as synonymous with self-determination from external interventions.

3.1.2. Armed rebellion

The second offense in a row aimed against the political and security order of the Republic of Kosovo is the armed rebellion. According to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019), this criminal offense will be considered committed if someone takes part in an armed rebellion that is aimed against the constitutional order, security and territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo. For such an offense, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five (5) years. Meanwhile, the organizer of an armed rebellion shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than ten (10) years.

Participation in numbers in rebellion is indefinite, in which case the participants orient their offensive actions in the direction of changes of the constitutional order or endangerment the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo. In a constitutional democracy, a rebellion refers to inciting or participating in rebellion against the processes or institutions of the state of law (Spaulding & Nair, 2021).

The actions with which this criminal offense can be committed can be different, starting from armed actions, acts of violence, physically or psychologically helping the participants of these violent actions, etc. (Salihu, 2014). From the aforementioned legal provision, we can observe that in the objective meaning this criminal offense consists of: the indefinite number of participants, their connection with the same purpose or motive, which in this case is the attack against the constitutional order and territorial integrity, as well as the readiness of the participants for the use of violence. The perpetrator of this criminal offense can be any person with criminal responsibility and that in terms of guilt, such an offense is committed intentionally.

3.1.3. Acceptance of capitulation and occupation

Another criminal offense systematized in the chapter of criminal offenses against the constitutional order and security of the Republic of Kosovo is the acceptance of capitulation and occupation. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019) has determined that if the citizen of the Republic of Kosovo signs or accepts the capitulation or approves the occupation of the Republic of Kosovo or any part of it, shall be punished by imprisonment of at least ten (10) years or lifelong imprisonment.

In this direction, in terms of determining the objective elements, the act of committing is defined in three ways: *signing* the capitulation, *accepting* the capitulation and *approving* the occupation. In principle, with the legal-criminal provision, it is determined that this criminal offense could be committed by a citizen of the Republic of Kosovo, but in practice this offense could only be committed by a person who is in charge of state functions. This criminal offense is committed only intentionally. The protected object of this criminal offense is the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo. Regarding what capitulation represents, Salihu (2014) defines that: "capitulation means the agreement between warring parties to stop the war or the armed conflict. In these cases, the party that has lost the war agrees to surrender its weapons and, in most cases, also accepts other conditions, in which case the party that has lost the war completely or partially loses its sovereignty" (p. 40).

Meanwhile, occupation represents that situation when during an armed conflict a territory or a part of it falls under the control of a foreign power, regardless of whether it faces armed resistance or not (Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre, 2022). The occupier, of course, can decide the establishment of his power and the obligation of the occupied to implement the decisions of the first.

3.1.4. Treason against State

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019) has determined that this criminal offense will be considered committed if the citizen of the Republic of Kosovo in the capacity of the President of the Republic of Kosovo, the Prime Minister or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, signs the acceptance of the occupation or the act of the capitulation of the state. For this criminal offense the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of at least fifteen (15) years or lifelong imprisonment.

In the second paragraph, the qualified form of this criminal offense is foreseen, which will be considered committed if the above-mentioned state officials sign international agreements through which a certain part of the territory of the Republic of Kosovo is given or left under the sovereignty of another state. The special form of this criminal offense is foreseen in the third paragraph, which is closely related to the time when such a form is committed. If the citizen of the Republic of Kosovo in the capacity of the President, Prime Minister or Minister of Foreign Affairs abandons the state during the time of war or emergency situation, thereby leaving the armed forces without a chain of command, shall be punished by imprisonment of at least fifteen (15) years or lifelong imprisonment (Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo, 2019).

The protected object of this criminal offense is the territorial integrity or territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo. The act of committing this criminal offense, including the basic form and the qualified forms, consists in*: signing the acceptance of occupation or the act of capitulation, signing the international agreement for violation of territorial integrity and abandoning the country during the time of war or emergency situation*. The perpetrator of this criminal offense is only the citizen in the capacity of the President, the Prime Minister or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and not any person, as is usually the case with most criminal offenses. In terms of determining subjective elements or guilt, the perpetrator acts with direct intent.

3.1.5. Endangering the territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo

The concept of territorial integrity is related to the concept of a sovereign and independent state. Territorial integrity is important for the evolution of principles related to international peace and security. At the same time, territorial integrity reflects the sovereign equality of states as one of the legal principles (Shaw, 1986). The protection and guarantee of the territorial integrity are one of the most sublime values or elements for the existence, stability and functioning of the state alongside the development processes of different natures, especially the political ones, a value that proves state independence. The state or institutional instruments, above all, have foreseen a special criminal offense for all those who aim to violate the territorial integrity. The territorial integrity of the Republic of Kosovo is inviolable and is protected through the means provided by law.

This criminal offense is considered to be committed if someone by the use of violence or threat of violence attempts to detach a part of the territory of the Republic of Kosovo or to join any part of the territory to another state. For this criminal offense, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than five (5) years (Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo, 2019). According to Salihu (2014), the use of violence means the use of weapons.

The protection object of this criminal offense is the inviolability of territorial integrity. Regarding the determination of the objective elements, the act of execution is foreseen in two forms: the detachment of a part of the territory and the annexation of a part of the territory to another state. Both alternative forms of this criminal offense result in the fragmentation of territorial integrity. The perpetrator of this criminal offense can be any person with criminal responsibility. In terms of guilt, this criminal offense is committed intentionally.

3.1.6. Murder of high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo

The constitutional order and security of the Republic of Kosovo can be endangered through another criminal offense, the consequence of which is the deprivation of life of the high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo. Passive subjects of this criminal offense can be the high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo, who according to the Criminal Code (2019) are:

- The President of the Republic of Kosovo;
- The President of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo;
- The Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo;
- The President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Kosovo;
- The President of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kosovo;
- The Chief State Prosecutor of the Republic of Kosovo.

The murder of the high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo is murder with political motives. While, during the development of international law and international criminal law, a legal norm and concept was built that in international conventions related to extradition, this act should not be considered a political criminal offense (Salihu, 2014).

The protective object of this criminal offense in the first place is the life of the high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo and through this also the constitutional order and the security of the country. Any person can be the perpetrator of this criminal offense. When determining the subjective elements, the intent as a type of guilt and the aim of the perpetrator to endanger the constitutional order and security of the Republic of Kosovo through this criminal offense must be proven. For this criminal act, according to the law, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment at least ten (10) years of lifelong imprisonment.

3.1.7. Espionage

Each legal system of the countries around the world determines which information or data is considered classified or state secret, the publication of which would seriously violate security interests. In principle, state secrets can be data or information from the economic, security or military fields, access to which is allowed only for authorized persons.

The Law on Information Classification and Security Verification (2010) has defined the criteria according to which data can be considered classified information. If the information is part of one of the following categories, it will be considered classified, categories such as:

- Public safety;
- Defense, military plans, weapons systems or operations;
- Information about foreign relations and foreign governments, including confidential sources;
- Discovery and law enforcement activities, including discovery methods and sources;
- Defense systems, installations, infrastructure, plans or protection services related to the security interests of the Republic of Kosovo;
- Scientific, technological, economic and financial activities related to the essential security interests of the Republic of Kosovo.

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019) in this regard, with the aim of preserving and protecting state security and secret information, has provided for the criminal offense of espionage. In the first paragraph, the basic form of this criminal offense is presented, the act of committing which is defined in three ways: *communicating the state secret, handing over the state secret or making the state secret accessible* to the state or foreign organization or the person serving them. For this form of this criminal offense, the perpetrator shall be punished from imprisonment of five (5) to twelve (12) years. As a result of the nature of this criminal offense, the perpetrator can only be the official person entrusted with the data or documents of a secret nature. Such a criminal offense is committed only intentionally, including the perpetrator's awareness that he is communicating classified data to the state or a foreign organization. If the perpetrator acts negligently, then he will be responsible for the criminal offense of disclosure of official secrecy (Salihu, 2014).

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019) has further sanctioned several other actions that are part of the framework of endangerment the security of the Republic of Kosovo. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo (2019) has further sanctioned several other actions that are part of the framework of jeopardizing the security of the Republic of Kosovo. Anyone who creates an information service for the state or foreign organization in the Republic of Kosovo, enters the foreign information service or collects data for it, collects classified data or documents with the intention of communicating it to the state or organization will be penalized. If these actions are carried out during the time of war or armed conflict or if the disclosure of the secret has to do with the security of the Republic of Kosovo, the perpetrator shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than ten (10) years or lifelong imprisonment.

4. Common features

Each of the criminal offenses mentioned above are distinguished in principle by the action or way of committing as well as the consequences caused by the act of committing. Well, in addition to this, the criminal offenses from this chapter have some features or characteristics in common.

I. All the criminal offenses dealt with above are part of the same chapter as: Criminal offenses against the constitutional order and security of the Republic of Kosovo. From the act of committing committed and the consequences resulting from these actions, we can see the common protection object of the criminal offenses from this chapter, starting from the constitutional order, security, territorial integrity, the highest bodies and representatives of the state, classified information, etc.

II. The field of incrimination of the criminal offenses of this chapter is usually wider compared to other criminal offences. In this direction, with the aim of protecting very important values, a wide range of actions has been incriminated, including preparatory actions (Salihu et. al., 2014).

III. Regarding the determination of guilt, the criminal offenses from this chapter are committed intentionally, while the action in the territorial area of the criminal legislation of Kosovo is determined according to the territorial principle, according to which the criminal legislation of Kosovo is applied to everyone who commits criminal offenses in the territory of Kosovo.

IV. Due to the nature of these criminal acts, most often these offenses are committed in an organized manner. The Criminal Code also punishes post delictum cooperation, which aims to provide assistance to the perpetrator after the commission of criminal offenses (Salihu et. al., 2014).

V. Due to the importance of the public goods that are protected through these criminal offenses and the serious consequences that can be caused by them, heavy penalties of up to a maximum of 25 years of imprisonment are foreseen, while for some serious forms life long imprisonment is also foreseen.

5. Conclusions

Democracy includes within itself the organization of the government system, which represents the public interests of society. The first signs of the appearance of this form of political regime differ from the modern form of democracy, since in the past the direct form of democracy dominated. With the change of political systems accompanied by the suppression of the monarchy and the duplication of the republic after the French bourgeois revolution, many states began to adopt representative democracy, in which case citizens decide on state affairs and general interests by electing their representatives with the will of free. This form of government is also practiced in the Republic of Kosovo, where representatives are elected through the democratic procedure of voting.

State legal goods such as independence, security and territorial integrity are guaranteed, the violation of which activates the competent law enforcement institutions for criminal prosecution against all those who direct their actions against these goods. In this regard, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo, with the aim of protecting the constitutional order and security, has foreseen a series of criminal offenses discussed in this paper, such as: attack against the constitutional order, armed rebellion, acceptance of capitulation and occupation, endangering the integrity territorial, murder of high representatives as well as espionage.

The paper shows that for each of these criminal offenses, the actions of the commission have been determined, including alternative actions depending on the social danger brought by the criminal act. The attack against the constitutional order is, in principle, carried out if by violence or threats there is an attempt to change the constitutional order or to overthrow the high state institutions. This offense is considered committed even if someone attempts to implement the foreign constitutional order or violate the democratic character of the Republic of Kosovo by making efforts to turn democracy into autocracy. Constitutional order, security and territorial integrity can also be violated through another criminal offense, the consequences of which can be quite severe, especially for the population, such as armed rebellion. The feature of this criminal offense is the connection of an indefinite number of participants with the same motive as the violation of the constitutional order and territorial integrity. The acceptance of capitulation and occupation as well as treason against the state are related to the perpetrators, since according to the law these offenses can only be committed by persons who are the bearers of state functions. The act of committing is oriented towards signing the capitulation or approving the occupation or abandoning the state during the war, leaving the armed forces without a command system. Constitutional order and security can also be violated through the murder of high representatives of the Republic of Kosovo, for which the perpetrator can be punished by lifelong imprisonment or even through the disclosure of state secrets.

From the data collected through this paper, it can be concluded that the field of incrimination of these criminal offenses is wider compared to other criminal offenses because the preparatory actions are also punished here. All these criminal offenses have the same protective object, starting from the constitutional order, security, independence, inviolability of the territory as well as classified data. The research shows that in terms of guilt, all these criminal acts are committed intentionally. Unlike other crimes, the punishments for these crimes are quite light due to the high state danger, even including the lifelong imprisonment.

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THE CHALLENGES OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN ALBANIA AFTER THE 90S. CASE STUDY KRUJA

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Abstract.

This study is dedicated to Albanian girls and women who face daily challenges and obstacles to move forward. Education equips Albanian girls and women with a peaceful weapon to fight gender inequalities. With education, they have a more significant opportunity to climb the ladder of their professional or social career. Albanian girls and women encounter obstacles that make it difficult for them to pursue high levels of education. Contemptuous mentality, fanaticism, negative opinion and economic impossibility are seen as the main obstacles. Albanian girls and women face these obstacles and despite them, many of them are educated and continue to be educated at the highest levels of education. As it is rightly claimed, education for girls and women is a unique opportunity to escape from the clutches of life's problems, a life jacket that they can hold on to when the waves hit. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it is the only one of its kind that has been dedicated so far to girls and women from krutan. The importance of the studied problem lies in presenting the situation of girls and women as fragile beings, with the prejudices and mentalities that surround them in their lives, as well as in their constant efforts to educate themselves and move forward.

Keywords: Challenges, Women's, Education, Kruja, Albania.

1. Introduction

The chaotic situation in which Albania found itself after the 90s greatly affected the positions of women in education. The Albanian woman went from a somewhat privileged education system during the period of communism 1945-1990 to an almost impossible and selective education system after the 1990s. Focusing on the education of Albanian women in general and krutan women in particular after the years '90, we see that education became more difficult, especially for small towns like Kruja, or many others like it. Focusing on the women in the city of Kruja and the opportunities to get an education became more and more difficult. Being a woman or a girl and living in the city of Kruja is more difficult for many think who have not tried it. I often hear people say that in Kruja, at least you don't have the stress that the hectic life of the capital gives you and are mentally and spiritually calmer. Maybe, you see it from the outside, without going deep, you can have this impression. But if you try to live there, you understand how complicated it becomes for girls and women. The real problem falls on the shoulders of Cretan girls and women, who, in addition to economic problems, are under the constant pressure of prejudices, contemptuous mentalities, obstacles and challenges in their efforts to leave the domestic sphere. Education is seen as a way of salvation, not only in the personal formation of every woman but also a way to create a personality and economic independence, which makes her safer in family decision-making and also in society.

This study is based on the thesis that the status and role of girls and women in the city of Kruja continue to be limited within the walls of the house as a result of the influence of the patriarchal society, contemptuous mentalities, fanaticism and the marked division of gender roles, which have been strengthened in the vortex of the development of the democratic society.

The purpose of this study is to present the current situation of the status and role of krutan girls and women in the social life of the city of Kruja, through the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The main objective is the research of disparaging mentalities and prejudicial opinions about educated girls and women or those who are unable to be educated in the city of Kruja, regarding their status and role in social life.

2. Methodology

For the realization of this study, several concrete methods of research have been used.

First, I have examined the literature on the issue of education of women and girls to present different authors' views on this issue as well as gain a deeper understanding of this issue and other issues related to it. The literature examined has included both English and Albanian.

Second, concrete data on the education of women and girls and their activity in the city of Kruja has been collected. This has been done to study concrete facts, which serve to clarify ideas and raise issues studied.

Third, 26 live and detailed, semi-structured interviews were conducted, 23 of which were conducted with women and men over the age of 18, residents of the city of Kruja.

Fourth, a survey was conducted that aimed to identify the causes, reasons, mentalities and opinions of women and men in Kruja on issues of women's status and role in the city of Kruja. The survey included 400 individuals aged 18 and over. The sample was selected based on an equal gender distribution, with 200 female respondents and 200 males.

Fifth, since I was born and raised in the city of Kruja, also the 5 years of experience in this city have helped me to use the method of direct observation of the phenomenon in this study.

To select the sample included in the study, the main criteria used were that respondents should be over 18 years of age and that the distribution of both sexes is equally (200 females and 200 males). As the study includes the town of Kruja, the casual choice of respondents was accomplished in every neighbourhood of Kruja, leaving none of them without being represented in this study. Thus, from the examination of the collected data, the sample composition results as follows: (Table 1).

Table 1: Respondents divided by gender, employment, education and age groups.

	Female	Male	Total
Total	200	200	400
Employed	98	140	238
Unemployed	102	60	162
Higher education	66	98	164
Secondary education	104	88	192
Eighth Education	30	6	36

Primary education	0	8	8
18 - 25 years old	52	50	102
26 - 35 years old	56	42	98
36 - 45 years old	40	64	104
46 - 60 years old	50	40	90
61 years and older	2	4	6

Hypothesis of the study

The main hypotheses of the paper are: Is education important for krutan girls and women? There can be no other answer to this question than YES. The interviewees also stated that education is very important for girls and women for several reasons:

- ✓ affects the culture of the individual, family and society
- ✓ affects the improvement of life and social conditions
- ✓ girls and women become capable of facing life's difficulties
- ✓ gain economic independence
- ✓ come out of the darkness of ignorance
- ✓ provides a preliminary and professional preparation
- ✓ for a better life in the future
- ✓ integration into society

3. Krutan girls and women in the waves of social change

With the fall of the communist regime, state-owned enterprises were destroyed agricultural cooperatives as well, causing hundreds of workers to lose their jobs, hundreds of thousands of men, especially young men, to take the paths of emigration, most of the girls and women to be closed within the walls of the house.

In the Development Strategy of the City of Kruja on this issue it is stated: "With the closure of industries and cooperatives, employment opportunities have suffered a significant decline to a greater extent for women than for men.

Girls and women had more equal opportunities for education and employment, but today they find themselves more economically dependent on men. The increase in gender discrimination within the labour market and the prevalence of conservative roles for women means that women only work in particular fields such as public administration, shops and the market. Women are completely excluded from serving in bars and restaurants and are not offered high positions in the private or government sectors. Also, the lack of childcare makes women stay at home and take care of the children, preventing them from competing in the labour market" (Kruja District Council, 2022: 25). After 1990, a large movement of the population inside and outside the borders of Albania was observed. Many krutan families moved to other cities in Albania, mainly Tirana, hoping to find more opportunities to improve their livelihood, more opportunities to ensure a better future for their children.

Between 1998 and 2020, approximately 38% of the population left Kruja City (Kruja District Council, 2022: 36). But, in addition to the movements to other cities or from the village to the city, a significant number of krutan youth, mostly men, left outside the territories of Albania in the direction of other countries, with the aim of providing a better life for them and their families.

About the effects of emigration on women, the Development Strategy of the City of Kruja states: "Although in most cases the money from emigration provides security and survival, emigration exerts a negative effect on workload women. During the absence of the husband or the son who is in emigration, the woman has to take on additional work (in addition to her work). In this way, immigration increases the responsibilities and workload for women, but it does not increase to the same degree her decision-making status in the family, since these always pass to a male member of the family or a relative" (Kruja District Council, 2022: 37).

As if the consequences of the overthrow of the communist government were not enough, the events of 1996-1997 aggravated the still unhealed wound, turning it into gangrene. These events closed the girl and the woman even more within the walls of the house. There was already an even stronger reason, the world outside the walls of the house was unsafe, and stories of robbed, raped, and trafficked girls were repeated in neighbourhoods and homes. These stories helped stuff girls and women further into the fragile shell of their homes. They should avoid as much as possible leaving the house alone, moving through the streets of the city, and with the fall of dusk, they should be at home because danger could be there ready to attack them.

I remember hearing it talk about how if something happened to a girl or woman after dusk then it was her fault because she shouldn't have been out at that hour. Going out alone or after dark was like asking for trouble, and for that, the victim blamed not the perpetrator. Guns in the hands of the population made this danger even more real and gave society one more reason to uphold even more of the traditional division of gender roles. Through the centuries, domestic duties, and care of children have been entrusted to women, now they were also justified by external circumstances (UNDP study, 2005). These suffocating mentalities led to "attacking" all those girls and women who tried to get out of the modern prison, and their homes. It seemed as if the most natural thing in the world was for girls to marry at a young age, to create their own families, even the main interest for them should be the family and the obligations that come from it. There was an influx of girls marrying at a young age which implies that these girls had made their choice between education and family formation, the latter had triumphed. Krutan girls and women were subjected to the contemptuous and prejudiced mentality of society, allowing it to become so strong that they would no longer have the strength to oppose it.

Until recently, the number of girls and women who frequented the bars was very few. Nowadays, more significant freedom is observed because every day the number of girls and women who go out with their company or family to spend their time free of charge increases in the premises of various bars in the city, which are still limited today. There are still bars and clubs that are labelled as masculine. In the turbulent years of transition, girls and women were not supposed to set foot in pubs and bars, at least those who considered themselves honest.

4. The attitude of the krutan youth on the importance of their Education

"...education is vital for a person's entry into the labour market and serves to legitimize financial gains; it is also important for other strategies to improve human living conditions, including the protection of personal rights and the possibility of participation in community institutions" (INSTAT, 2020: 14).

Thus, education is essential for individuals in particular and society in general. In a community like the krutan one, where girls and women are under the constant supervision and dependence of their fathers, husband and family in general, the role of education is existential.

During the communist regime, education had particular importance in the attention of the state (Albania NGO Shadow Report, 2002). The policies of the communist state placed considerable importance on the education of the individuals, both male and female. There were educational institutions even in the most remote villages of Kruja. Although most individuals could not choose the branch in which they would be educated, because it was the state that decided this both women and men have graduated in different branches of higher education. With the fall of the commune regime, many educational institutions were destroyed and went out of operation, causing a large number of children and young people to have no facilities to follow the learning process. In addition, the training of pedagogical staff in schools also declined, as many teachers abandoned teaching to engage in other more profitable activities, such as trade, or were involved in the wave of internal and external migration of the population of Kruja (Dervishi, Zyhdi, 2001).

With the fall of the commune regime, in the first years of democracy, the role of the state was greatly weakened which was accompanied by the birth of a series of negative phenomena which affected the position of krutan girls and women in particular. The krutan society, with patriarchal elements, used these negative phenomena to deny girls the right to education. The danger that could threaten the girls such as; violence, fraud, trafficking, robbery, etc., were used as reasons to fill the minds of the girls that for their good they should stay at home.

The events of 1997 further worsened this situation. The fate of these changes made girls and women fear for their futures. I remember that during this period there was such a great fear for girls that my parents began to have serious doubts as to whether it would be safe to continue nurturing in me the desire for further education.

In the circumstances of the chaos that was created after the fall of the communist regime and especially after the events of 1997, many stories took hold which a way served the fanatical and patriarchal mentality of krutan to strengthen their convictions that the country of girls and women it is the home, this is not because men love this thing, not because the norms of the canon say so, but, for their good girls and women should stay at home.

During these years, education seems to have lost its importance, men emigrated, and girls were confined within the walls of the house. Many girls stopped their education at the eight-year or secondary level, not continuing further, which would further deepen the unemployment crisis among girls and women.

In addition to the above drives and circumstances, the attitude of young people and even other age groups towards education was affected as a result of several factors such as:

- ✓ Significant lack of jobs as a result of the destruction of the state sector after the fall of the communist regime.
- ✓ Possession of a university degree no longer meant that you could secure a job.
- ✓ The income you can get from working in the state sector is insufficient to meet the needs of daily living.
- ✓ Engagement in the private sector did not necessarily require a university degree, especially since the private sector continues to maintain low development rates.

- ✓ Immediate economic needs are laid out to meet daily living needs.

All these dimmed to some extent the importance and role that education had. Young people and even other age groups of society focused on solving the most immediate needs that were laid before them, not thinking about, the benefits that education would bring in the future. They suffered high levels of unemployment and a marked lack of economic income, so they had to focus on the path they could solve as soon as possible education is not a fast path.

Emigration was seen as an opportunity for men to provide economic income for themselves and their families. Given that these incomes were much higher than those that could be obtained in the labour market in Kruja, this served as one more reason to exclude boys of particular from attending various education cycles.

Men's attitude towards education was particularly, influenced by the need to secure economic income, unlike that of girls, who were somehow forced to drop out of school by others. I think that these attitudes, both of girls and boys, were influenced by the patriarchal mentality of the division of gender roles circumstance, and phenomena of the 90s and beyond simply served as an incentive to once again place women and men in the position that dictated gender roles.

Men had to provide the income for the maintenance of the family, as required by their gender role, and girls and women had to engage with their domestic obligations, as required by their gender role. I think that the situation and circumstances created after the fall of the regime and after the events of 1997 served as tools that the patriarchal society used to strengthen its power.

On the one hand, the education of girls and women is one of the main enemies of patriarchy because it makes girls and women more independent from men, the other hand, the patriarchal mentality sees the education of girls and women as useless since "girls are of the foreign door", as the residents say in Kruja.

The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the new millennium brought a new attitude towards education many young krutan men and women competed to pursue higher education. During these years, a contemporary phenomenon appeared on the scene young people no longer wanted to return to their hometown after completing higher studies. The young men and women justify their actions by using as reasons the few opportunities that Kruja offers to move forward or even the few opportunities to find a job for which they were educated.

"Why should I stay? There is nothing here for me. I don't have a job to be, I don't even have running water! We only have each other, and for now, this is not enough" - Student from Kruja District.

The number of girls who choose not to return to Kruja after graduation is smaller than that of men, but their number is constantly increasing. Girls are controlled more by their families than boys they cannot stay away from their parents after finishing their studies because they would cover their family with shame.

The opinion does not pay attention to the efforts of male students not to return, it is normal for boys to show more independence, and this attempt is consistent with their gender role. As for girls, the gender role assigned to them did not include initiative and independence anywhere. As long as they were unmarried, girls had to be under the care of their parents, who would hand them over to their husbands after marriage. For those girls who dared and dare to follow their desire, the mentality is very heavy. They are talked about a lot and are seen as "not good" girls in the eyes of fanatics. But the number of girls who are breaking this mentality is increasing, which in a way shows either that the mentality is softening, or that the new generation is challenging it.

5. Education, opportunity and salvation for girls and women

Kruja as a city is characterized by the slow pace of development, both in the social and economic and political fields. During the communist regime and after its collapse, Kruja did not have the same attention as other parts of Albania by the ruling rulers, regardless of their political orientation. Being a country with a mountainous relief, where links to other cities of Albania were somewhat difficult, but through a low-tech infrastructure and low economic investment, the changes have come late. This slender and uneven development of Kruja with other parts of Albanian cities, the society with patriarchal elements, the weak and negative mentality on girls and women, the large number of girls and women who look no more than the walls of the house, the possibilities Slim to go ahead and to be professionally fulfilled to provide it, make education for very important girls and women.

As a single opportunity to escape from the clutches of problems, as a life jacket that can hold it on the water when the waves hit it. "Generally, girls consider education the main way to affirm their personality, especially in the whirlwind of these turbulent years of transition, fraught with all kinds of difficulties and challenges". (Dervishi, 2004: 15).

As the interviewees say, education is the only opportunity, especially for girls and women, to make a difference in life.

The job market in the city of Kruja is very limited, generally the jobs offered in the state sector necessarily require a university degree, while the jobs in the private sector are few and, as we will see below, girls and women are not preferred. On the one hand, since the state sector continues to have the greatest weight in the employment of residents in Kruja, it is understandable why the education of girls and women is seen as very important.

On the other hand, education seems to make girls and women stronger to cope with all the stresses they face. Education seems to make girls and women more indifferent to the public mentality it seems as if it provides them with a protective layer against it.

A 25-year-old student attending high school studies in Medicine said: "The future of society depends on the education and development of women, as it is the head of society.

"But other opinions do not agree that education is important for girls and women. Thus, an interviewee, a housewife with secondary education, says: "In my opinion, women should not be educated too much. Many are smart by nature, but the school spoils the girls and turns them into hooligans. Nine school classes are enough". Here we can see the influence of contemptuous mentalities that have infected the thoughts of girls and women themselves.

On the other hand, even the male interviewees spoke very positively about the education of girls and women. Thus, an interviewee, 52 years old, with higher education, says: "the education of girls and women is very important because it develops society and pushes life forward. An educated woman educates her children better." There is a tendency to associate educated women with their gender roles such as child care and education.

About the obstacles that are thought to hinder the education of girls and women in Kruja, mainly in the deep mountain villages, the interviewees mention:

- ✓ fanaticism of society, family and men

- ✓ the distance between the schools and the place where they live
- ✓ negative opinion and canon suppression
- ✓ backwards mentalities
- ✓ economic difficulties
- ✓ marriage at a young age

A 30-year-old interviewee says: "The girl is prevented from getting an education by an ignorant husband and a fanatical father."

Fanaticism has been described as one of the obstacles to the education of girls and women. It is related to outdated thoughts of society, family and men about girls and women. They must be obedient, perform all household duties, marry at a young age, take care of children, and respect and serve family members. None of these tasks includes the education of girls and women, attitudes towards girls and women are generally negative, which gives wings to bigots.

The distance to schools, especially universities, has served as an obstacle to the education of girls and women. Distance serves as a reason for bigots and bigots to use it to prevent girls and women from getting an education. Especially during the first years of democracy, where several dangers threatened girls and women, the long road that led to the Universities of Albania could be a source of various dangers that could happen to girls. Living alone, away from family, was also seen as a source of temptations to go astray, of wicked people roaming around to prey on them.

Economic difficulties have also been considered an obstacle to the education of girls and women. The possibilities of krutan families to cover the expenses of their children while they attend studies in Tirana, Shkodër, Durrës, and Vlora are generally quite limited. Many parents sacrifice a lot to be able to support their children, while others have not found opportunities to meet the economic expenses as a 50-year-old interviewee says: "My husband and I have sacrificed a lot for our children's education, with work unemployed, we have tried to pay him for expenses at the beginning of each month. I know many cases where parents have not even taken the trouble to enrol their children in a high school".

Even marriage at a young age is considered an obstacle to girls' education. Especially after 1990, the tendency to tie the crown at a young age was noticed, especially for girls. Even today, this trend continues many marriages are made between men, who are much older than girls. This trend has caused many girls to devote themselves to their new families, giving up on further education. A 23-year-old interviewee said: "I finished high school, and my parents neither pushed me, nor prevented me from getting an education. After finishing high school, I got engaged and married now, I have children schools just seem distant to me".

The separation of girls and women into different jobs from men begins with their education in such branches that later position them in traditionally female jobs. It is precisely education that determines what kind of work girls and women will do in the future. Initially, education with gender roles affects the preferences of girls and boys for different professions, which leads to their enrollment in different educational branches. Even for educational branches, there are divisions according to gender there are branches which are seen as suitable only for girls and others only for boys. Some branches can suit both girls and boys. Respondents were asked, on a list of 20 educational fields, to express their opinion as to whether they thought of them as suitable fields for girls, boys, or both. The results of the survey on this issue are as follows (Table 2).

Table 2: Women's and Male's preferences on educational branches

No.	Branches	Female (in %)	Male (in %)	Both (in %)
1	Teacher	77.5	1.0	22.0
2	Low Cycle / Educator	85.5	5.5	9.0
4	Engineering	0.5	81.5	18.0
6	General medicine	5.0	17.5	77.5
8	Infirmary	80.0	9.0	11.0
9	Dentistry	6.5	29.0	64.5
10	Foreign languages	35.5	5.0	59.5
11	Economic	13.0	14.0	73.0
12	Justice	3.5	17.0	79.5
13	Military Academy	3.5	85.0	11.5
14	Social Science	53.5	9.5	37.0
15	Literature	69.0	5.0	26.0
16	Informatics	18.5	33.5	48.0
17	History	41.5	18.0	40.5
18	Physics	16.0	40.5	43.5
19	Mathematics	20.0	30.0	50.0
20	Sports Academies	3.5	78.5	18.0

Thus, as it can be seen from the data obtained, it is clear that there are branches that are more rated females, such as teaching (77.5%), low cycle (85.5%), nursing (80%), literature %), etc. On the other hand, the branches of the Sports Academy (78.5%), the Military Academy (85%), Engineering (81.5%) etc., are seen as a suitable branches for boys, medicine, dentistry, economics or foreign languages are seen as appropriate branches for both genders.

Not only from the survey but also the interviews, the same result came out that there are branches suitable for girls and branches not suitable. A 49-year-old interviewee says: "Teaching, nursing, and economics are the branches that a woman should aim for because they are branches that suit the gender and nature of women more" Even the professions that the respondents and interviewees had shown that these branches are not they are only preferences, but they are their respective professions.

By being educated in such branches, girls and women are positioned in workplaces whose pay is very low compared to other jobs. And who does not know that the salary of a teacher is much lower than that of an engineer?!

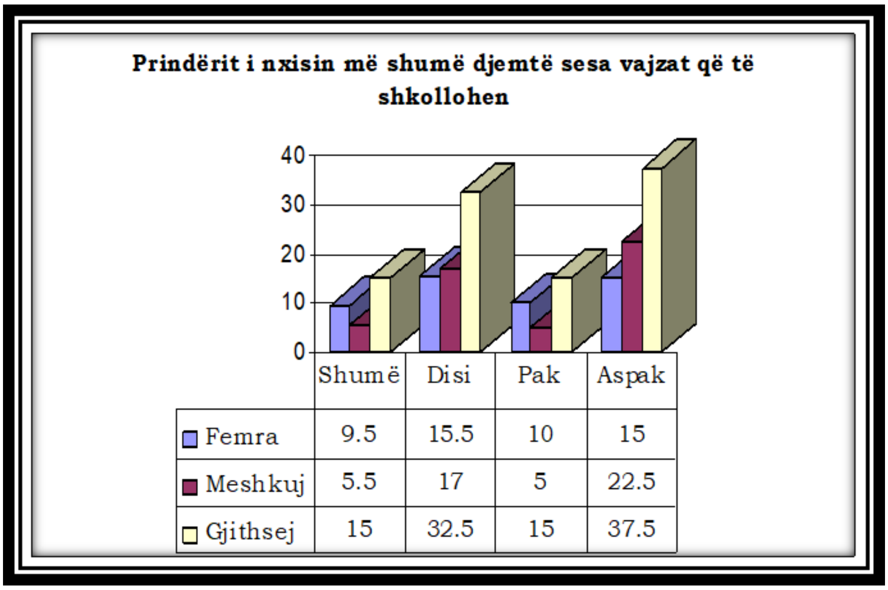
An important factor that influences and shapes the preferences of young men and women for different educational branches is socialization.

A 35-year-old interviewee says: "I have a son and a daughter. They are in elementary school. The girl will become a teacher and the boy a doctor, every time I pet him, I say to the boy, mommy's doctor, while to the girl, mommy's beautiful teacher. They seem to like you, that when my sister comes home they say to her with all joy: aunt I will become a doctor when I grow up, aunt I will become a teacher when I grow up".

And so, under the caresses and education of parents, children's likes and preferences for different professions come to life. Young children imagine themselves as a teacher or a doctor.

These preferences are further reinforced by the influence of society until young people, find themselves one day working as a teacher or a doctor.

Figure 1:.



The question arises: what attitudes do parents have towards their children's education? Respondents were asked how their opinion agrees with the statement: Do parents encourage boys more than girls to get an education?

According to the data obtained from the survey, about 15% of respondents say that they completely agree with this statement, 32.5% say that they somewhat agree 15% slightly agree, and 37.5% say that they do not agree at all with the above statement (Graph1). There is a balance between responses for and against this statement. I think this attitude depends a lot on the educational level of the parents and how much they are influenced by the mindsets of the krutan society (or how much importance they attach to these mindsets).

A 50-year-old interviewee says: "Parents encourage boys a lot because they are a bit lazy and don't pay attention to books", while a 60-year-old interviewee says: "Here in Kruja, the opinion is that the girl is headed for a foreign door, the boy stays at home, and the more the parents encourage the boys, the more girls are educated.

The attitude of krutan parents towards their children's education is relative. For some parents, it is more important that girls are motivated and encouraged to study. They consider education as insurance for the future. By educating the girl, they will be more relaxed when she goes to her husband's house because she will have more opportunities to be employed. Others have outdated mindsets that "higher education is not for girls" and that "girls belong outside the door". Others seem to encourage boys more because girls don't need much encouragement they are generally more organized than boys. Boys are more difficult, they are more into games than their parents force them to learn in most cases. But the attitude of men towards education is also different from that of women. Especially after the overthrow of the communist regime and the opening of the gates to the West, many boys took the path of emigration. Even nowadays, you hear from the mouths of boys the plans to emigrate a foreign country, to work for a few years until they earn some income to lead a peaceful life.

According to them, one of the reasons boys do not prefer schooling is that the job market is plunging and the salary is low.

A 35-year-old interviewee says: "I've been back for three years, I've worked for thirteen years abroad, I don't care about high school because it's not worth all that fatigue for a ridiculous salary".

While girls see education as a window to freedom, a 25-year-old interviewee with higher education says: "I don't see any other way for krutan girls to survive and be somebody in life. It is the only possibility to leave the walls of the house offered in Kruja".

6. Occupations, girls and women between two fires

As seen above, even when girls and women specialize in work outside the home, they are educated for occupations similar to domestic work. It seems as if stereotypes have been created for professions as well not only housework, which has been defined as feminine, but also professions have been divided into feminine and masculine (England, Paula and George Farkas.1986). Some fields are cultivated only by women, and others are cultivated, only by men. As expected, girls and women graduate in fields that position them for work as teachers, educators, nurses, doctors, etc. As for the branches of education and professions, the interviewees say that the most suitable for girls and women would be "to work as a teacher, nurse, economist, seller, or cook because, in these jobs, girls and women work with girls and other women and they are not prejudiced that they are working with men".

The professions of the respondents also match the results obtained from the interview. Just as the interviewees considered the: professions of the teacher, educator or doctor to be more suitable for girls and women; for men, the profession of lawyer, policeman or soldier, their professions were also the same. As the table below shows: (Table 3).

Table 3: Respondents divided by occupations

Profession	Fermale	Male	Total
Nurses, Chemists, Laboratory	26	0	26
Physician, dentist, lawyer	16	0	16
Teacher	32	8	40
Engineer, agronomist, electrician, technician	2	62	64
Economist, salesman	30	18	48
Military, crusher	0	14	14
Trader, driver, journalist	0	34	34
Domestic	28	0	28
Without a profession	20	30	50
Others	46	34	80
Total	200	200	400

As can be seen from the table above, the girls and women survey, mostly have professions such as nurses, teachers, and economists. While the surveyed men are mostly professionals as traders, engineers, agronomists, and electricians. When asked if there are professions that girls and women cannot practice, the interviewees generally state that they are capable, of doing any kind of profession and are even more correct and dedicated than men. An interviews: "Nowadays, any kind of profession can be done by women because the development of science and technology means that girls and women can do anything, they do not lack skills, and men no longer have to say that women cannot do this or that because it is hard work". Girls and women can do all professions, but they should not do some of them, and as a reason to justify these opinions statements such as they are jobs for men or they are jobs that contradict the nature of women. Thus, the interviewees say: "girls and women should not do those professions that contradict the feminine nature such as soldiers, engineers, surgeons, drivers, they make it look like a man, and the world should also have women, right?! "professions suitable for girls and women are teachers and seamstresses because they are less tiring and suitable for the krutan woman"; "Men's work should not be done by women, mayor or municipality and other leadership positions are for men"; "guards, customs officers, police officers, drivers, I can only say in one word the reason why not - because we live in Kruja".

Krutan girls and women are between two fires: on the one hand, they are seen as capable, ladies, correct, honest, and hardworking and on the other hand, they see them as immoral or as unsuitable for krutan professions.

The opinion and mentality are suffocating for girls and women in Kruja, especially in different villages. In addition to other problems that bother them, the low mentality and opinions of people follow them to inhale the air around them. They are followed step by step, everything they do is viewed with suspicion, and everything must have an unscrupulous reason behind their actions. Even when there is nothing "wrong" in the actions of a girl or woman, or at least the "private detectives" who feed negative mindsets and opinions have not found anything, there must be something behind it, it just takes more time to find it, but something is too good to be true.

7. Results

The result of this study concludes that the krutan society is a society with pronounced patriarchal elements. The force of patriarchy weighs heavily on the fragile shoulders of krutan girls and women.

In general, the residents do not accept that patriarchy is still very strong, but I have to remind them that the canonical mindset very much conditions their way of thinking often what changes are that almost the same attitudes are said and used as in canon but with different terminology.

I also think that in the primarily mountainous villages of Kruja, the influence of the canon is stronger than in the city. The purpose of this finding is not to prejudge canon, but what interests me is to show that canon has an impact, on the unequal and dependent position of krutan girls and women in all social spheres, especially in the educational spheres. In personal judgment, education is one of the strongest weapons to fight patriarchy in Albanian society...

8. Conclusion

Girls and women educated in a profession are severely attacked by social opinion. Even successful girls and women seem to be prey to the gossip agency. The more important the girls and women are the more attacked, the more they are defamed, and the more prejudiced they are. Mentality and opinion do not tend to attribute success to their abilities, but always seek to find what, according to them, is hidden behind this success. It seems that girls and women who are capable of surviving the social tsunami are always seen with a kind of sceptical eyes., that can't accept that women are as capable as men. When girls and women emerge from their traditional position, they are at the centre of attention to be attacked by others. As girls and women all over Albania, krutan girls and women face everyday opportunities and opportunities, with the harsh reality of women with the struggle to fulfil as human beings, the struggle to achieve what is right for gender equality, mainly in the educational field. Given the heavy weight of life on the back of the women, discrimination and the waves and the wind that constantly strikes, I wonder - how is it that a fragile being is not broken by the many challenges?

How could such fragile beings carry on their shoulder the heavy burden of inequality, discrimination, prejudice, oppression and addiction? How could their fragile shoulders endure the contemptible mentalities that keep them from moving forward?

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THE IMPACT OF THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT ON THE PROFITABILITY OF AGRICULTURAL FARMS

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Abstract.

The world today is facing a rapid increase in the prices of grain and agricultural inputs, also caused by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine - as global players in the grain market - have reduced supply, which has been accompanied by high grain prices. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has also affected the supply of inputs, especially chemical fertilizers, through the reduction of the supply from Russia and the supply from other producing countries due to restrictions on the supply of natural gas. The increase in the prices of products such as wheat, barley, soy, corn and fertilizers directly affects the profitability of the farm. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of the increase in the prices of agricultural inputs on the profitability of livestock farms and vegetable cultivation greenhouses in Albania. The activity budget was used to calculate the profitability of the farm, using 2 case studies, namely a dairy cattle farmer and a vegetable greenhouse farmer in Berat Municipality. Basic data on input and product prices were triangulated with area farmers and agricultural pharmacies. The results show that the profitability of the livestock farm has been reduced by about 10%, while the profitability of a greenhouse farm has been reduced by about 5%, compared to the previous year. Based on global price trends, we will analyze the effect on farm profitability under different scenarios.

Keywords: Russia-Ukraine Conflict, Input Prices, Farm Profitability, Albania.

1. Introduction

Agriculture is one of the most essential sectors in Albania, where it contributes about 18% to national production and employs about 40% of the workforce (INSTAT, 2022). It is dominated by small farms with an average size of 1.26 ha and fragmented, characterized by a low level of social capital Kolaj et al. (2014). As a result of structural problems, they are more exposed to market risk and competitiveness Osmani et al. (2022). This exposes it openly to external shocks that the market brings, such as the crisis caused by the conflict between the two states of Russia - Ukraine.

The resulting conflict between Ukraine and Russia has a high impact on the profitability of agricultural farms. The conflict has affected global trade, production and consumption patterns

Jagtap et al. (2022), causing a disruption in supply chains, which has been reflected in a rapid increase in the prices of food, energy and critical minerals (World Bank, 2022a). According to (UNDP, 2022) these induced effects are very worrying because they interact with each other creating vicious cycles. For example, high fuel and fertilizer prices increase farmers' production costs, which would drive higher food prices and lower farm profits.

Jagtap et al. (2022), in their study on the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on global food supply chains have extracted the six major impacts that the conflict has, using the qualitative Delphi evaluation method as an analysis methodology (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the food supply chain.

Source: Jagtap et al. (2022)

Significant impacts have been observed in food production, processing and storage. This has been affected by crop interruption, reduced new plantings, low availability of agricultural inputs and damage to agricultural infrastructure (FAO, 2022b). On the other hand, food logistics has been affected due to the reduction in movements from Ukraine and the sanctions imposed on Russia. This was followed by damage to the transport infrastructure and obstacles in the two most important ports of Ukraine, Odeska and Mykolaivska (FAO, 2022c). Impacts have also appeared in the retail food market due to low supply, high price increases for consumers and low quality for product categories. This is a consequence of the change in production models due to the rise in the prices of agricultural inputs, thus switching to cheaper alternative production methods.

But how has it affected the productivity of the farm? As we mentioned above, the effects caused by war are creating vicious cycles. Russia and Ukraine are net exporters of agricultural products and play leading roles in supplying global markets. Together they export about 28% of wheat, 16% of maize and 26% of barley worldwide (FAOSTAT, 2022). Also, in 2021, Russia was ranked as the leading exporter of nitrogen fertilizers (N), the second exporter of potassium fertilizers (K) and the third exporter of phosphorus fertilizers (P) in the world (FAO, 2022a).

Due to the reduction in planting new crops in these countries, the damage to logistics and infrastructure, the increase in transport prices, etc., prices have been affected at very high levels for food products. According to a forecast by (World Bank, 2022b), wheat prices have increased by 36.4%, corn by 24.6%, and soybeans by 16.6% compared to 2021.

On the other hand, higher energy costs, trade restrictions and reduced fertilizer supplies from Russia have caused fertilizer prices to rise even faster than food prices. The prices of chemical fertilizers increased by 66.1% compared to 2021, while plant protection products such as pesticides, herbicides and fungicides increased by about 90% (World Bank, 2022b). Many farmers, especially smallholders, are thus encouraged to reduce production as the fertilizers they need become more expensive than the products they sell (UNDP, 2022). They will be encouraged to reduce the amount used, resulting in lower yields. Increased fertilizer costs and reduced yields will result in lower profitability for farmers. On the cow farm, this is evident in the increase in the prices of fertilizers, wheat, corn and barley, increasing the cost of milk production. At the same time, the increase in the prices of fertilizers and plant protection products will increase the costs of vegetable production in greenhouses.

Recent analysis has found that the war crisis in Ukraine has had a significant effect on the agricultural sector in Albania. The results of an assessment with a qualitative approach by Skreli (2022) inform that the crisis in Ukraine has affected the agricultural sector mainly through the impact on the prices of inputs, both chemical fertilizers and livestock feed. The prices of nitrogen fertilizers have increased by 2 to 3 times. However, there is a lack of quantitative research to measure the effect of rising prices of agricultural inputs on yield, costs, profitability and another environmental impact. In this context, the main objective of this research is to evaluate the effect of input prices on farm profitability.

The remainder of this article follows: The introduction is followed by research methods and procedures. The results are presented in the following, conclusions are made, and recommendations are given at the end.

2. Materials and Methods

For the development of this paper, the most critical current literature was consulted, which shows the consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the impact on farm profitability and global price trends.

Data

Quantitative data from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) were used. Quantitative data on global price trends have been provided by the World Bank, which will be used to build different scenarios of how to farm profitability will react to price changes.

The primary data were obtained from two farms in the district of Berat, where the Farm Budget was used as a data analysis tool. One of the analyzed farms is a livestock farm that breeds 60 cows for milk. Farmland and leased land provide part of the cow's feed, while the rest is provided by the market, various villagers and agricultural companies. The other analyzed farm is a vegetable greenhouse with an area of 0.2 ha, which grows tomatoes two seasons a year. Our analysis considers only the first season, from planting in January to ending production in June.

The data regarding the current prices during the analysis of the inputs were obtained from the interviews with the local traders of these inputs located in the agricultural areas where the analysis was done and from the conversations with the farmers taken into consideration.

Model

For calculating the profitability of the analyzed activities, the standard model of the profitability of the activity was used, according to a standard model in excel. The profitability calculation model can be given in this simple form:

- Profit = Gross revenue - total costs
  - Gross revenue = production quantity * selling price
  - Total costs = variable costs + fixed costs
- Profitability (measured by gross margin) = Profit / gross revenue
- Income:
  - In the case of livestock farming, income is generated from the sale of milk, calves and manure.
  - The vegetable greenhouse generates income by selling tomatoes according to quality.
- Costs:
  - Production costs include mechanical work, labour, inputs, transportation, taxes, depreciation, and other costs.
  - The opportunity cost of the farmer's capital (estimated at the market price) was considered in the calculation.

The standard profitability calculation model was used to calculate the sensitivity analysis, changing the price of the primary input and the product price. In the case of the livestock farm, we have taken corn and wheat as the primary input, while in the case of the vegetable greenhouse, we have NPK fertilizers. These choices were based on the weight of inputs derived from farm budget analysis and consultation with the production technology map (AASF, 2019). For the change in input prices, we have based a forecast made by (World Bank, 2022b).

3. Results and Discussion

We have obtained the following results from the analysis of the budget data of 2 farms, a livestock farm and a vegetable greenhouse.

Profitability

Table 1. Calculation of profit margin. Case: livestock farm with 60 cows

Year	**2021**	**2022**
Net profit in value (Lek)	3,794,025	2,654,825
Yield at the critical point (litres/year)	222,146	253,933
Labour productivity from milk (litres/working day)	162.5	162.5
Production cost (Lek/litre)	54.30	69.69
Average selling price (Lek/litre)	58	67.5
Profit Margin (%)	22.7	13.8

Source: Prepared by the authors

The livestock farm consisting of 60 head of milk cows has a profit margin of 8.9% reduction compared to the previous year. In 2021, the farm resulted in a net profit of 3,794,025 Lek generated from the sale of milk at the price of 58 Lek/litre, the sale of calves and the sale of organic manure. In 2022, net profits reached the value of 2,654,825 Lek. The cost of production has increased by 28.3%, while the average selling price has risen by 16.43%. Because the increase in costs is higher than the increase in the price level, we have a reduction in the profit margin. We must emphasize that there are no changes in production technology. The farmer used the same feeding regimen for the cows. So the reduction in the profit margin is addressed only by the increase in the prices of production inputs.

Table 2. Calculation of profit margin. Case: Tomato greenhouse 0.2 Ha

Year	**2021**	**2022**
Net profit (Lek)	172,160	141,940
Yield at the critical point (kg/0.2ha)	13,729	14,562
Labour productivity (kg/working day)	81.8	81.8
Production cost (Lek/kg)	41.0	47.6
Average selling price (Lek/kg)	51.1	56
Profit Margin (%)	19.7	14.8

Source: Prepared by the authors

The vegetable greenhouse with an area of 0.2 ha has a decrease in the profit margin by 4.9% compared to the previous year. In 2021, the greenhouse generated an income of 873,200 Lek, and a net profit is 172,160 Lek. In 2022, the gross income of the greenhouse has reached the value of 956,200 Lek, and the net profit has reached the value of 141,940 Lek. In 2022, we had an average price increase of 9.3%, but the profit margin reduction came from the rise in production costs by 16.1%. The analysis, in this case, is different from the case of the livestock farm since here, only the first production season is taken into analysis, which starts around January and lasts until June. Even in this case, the tomato production technology has not changed compared to 2021.

Sensitivity analysis

Sensitivity analysis has been performed under different scenarios by offering options for product pricing. According to (World Bank, 2022b), in 2023, it is predicted that the price of corn will decrease by 7.9%, wheat by 4.7% and NPK fertilizers by 12.4% compared to the previous year. In 2024, it is predicted that the price of corn will decrease by 1%, wheat by 1.2% and NPK fertilizers by 9.4%.

In the livestock farm, we analyzed the sensitivity of profitability when the price of an input and the product change (keeping price and other inputs unchanged). Profitability, measured by gross percentage margin as a result of combinations of input and output prices, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Profit margin, sensitivity analysis. Case: Livestock farm with 60 heads

Price of inputs (Lek/kg)		The average price of milk (Lek/litre)					
Maize	**Wheat**	**60**	**65**	**68**	**70**	**75**	**80**
45.0	48.0	*5.5*	*11.2*	*13.8*	*16.2*	*20.7*	*24.7*
41.4	48.0	*6.1*	*11.8*	*14.3*	*16.8*	*21.2*	*25.1*
41.0	48.0	*6.2*	*11.8*	*14.4*	*16.8*	*21.2*	*25.2*
45.0	45.8	*5.9*	*11.6*	*14.1*	*16.6*	*21*	*25*
41.4	45.8	*6.5*	*12.1*	*14.7*	*17.1*	*21.5*	*25.4*
41.0	45.8	*6.5*	*12.2*	*14.7*	*17.2*	*21.6*	*25.5*
45.0	45.2	*6*	*11.6*	*14.2*	*16.6*	*21.1*	*25*
41.4	45.2	*6.6*	*12.2*	*14.8*	*17.2*	*21.6*	*25.5*

41.0	45.2	*6.6*	*12.3*	*14.9*	*17.2*	*21.6*	*25.6*

Source: Prepared by the authors

Scenario: Profit margin as a function of input price and output price.

	Maize	Wheat	Milk	Description of scenarios
Pessimist	45	48	60	Maximum input price, minimum output price
Neutral	41.4	45.8	68	The average price of inputs and output
Optimistic	41	45.2	80	Minimum input price and maximum output price

Pessimistic Scenario: In this scenario, our assumption for the average input prices is 45 Lek/kg for corn and 48 Lek/kg for wheat (the maximum of the estimated input prices). The sale price of milk is supposed to decrease to 60 Lek/litre (minimum of the expected price for milk). In this case, the farm's profitability decreases to 5.5%, with a decrease of 8.3 percentage points.

Neutral Scenario: Our assumption for average input prices is 41.4 Lek/kg for corn and 45.8 Lek/kg for wheat. The selling price of milk will remain unchanged at 68 Lek/litre. In this case, the farm's profitability increases to 14.7%, with an increase of 0.9 percentage points.

Optimistic Scenario: In this scenario, our assumption for the average input prices is 41 Lek/kg for corn and 25.2 Lek/kg for wheat (minimum of estimated input prices). The milk price will increase to 80 Lek/litre (the maximum price for milk). In this case, the farm's profitability rises to 25.6%, increasing 11.8 percentage points.

In the vegetable greenhouse, we have analyzed the sensitivity of profitability when the prices of NPK fertilizers and the price of the product change. Profitability, measured by gross percentage margin as a result of input and output price combinations, is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Profit margin, sensitivity analysis. Case: Tomato greenhouse 0.2 ha

Fertilizer price NPK* (Lek/kg)	Average price of tomato (Lek/kg)						
	48	**53**	**56**	**60**	**62**	**65**	**70**
380	*-0.009*	*8.5*	*14.8*	*19 .1*	*21.6*	*25.2*	*30.5*

332.7	*1.1*	*10.3*	*16.6*	*20.7*	*23.2*	*26.7*	*31.9*
301.4	*2.5*	*11.6*	*17.7*	*21.8*	*24.3*	*27.8*	*32.9*

**NPK- Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Potassium*

Source: Prepared by the authors

Scenario: Profit margin as a function of input price and output price.

	NPK	Tomatoes	Description of scenarios
Pessimist	380	48	Maximum input price, minimum output price
Neutral	332.7	56	The average price of input and output
Optimistic	301.4	70	Minimum input price and maximum output price

Pessimistic Scenario: In this scenario, our assumption for the average input price is 380 Lek/kg for NPK fertilizers (the maximum of the predicted price). The selling price of tomatoes is supposed to decrease to 48 Lek/kg (minimum of the estimated price for tomatoes). In this case, the farm's profitability is negative (-0.009%).

Neutral Scenario: Our assumption for the average input price is 332.7 Lek/kg for NPK fertilizers. The selling price of tomatoes will remain unchanged at 56 Lek/kg. In this case, the farm's profitability increases to 16.6%, with an increase of 1.8 percentage points.

Optimistic Scenario: In this scenario, our assumption for the average input price is 301.4 Lek/kg for NPK fertilizers (minimum of the predicted price). The selling price of tomatoes will increase to 70 Lek/kg (the maximum price for tomatoes). In this case, the farm's profitability rises to 32.9%, increasing by 18.1 percentage points.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The main objective of this paper is to evaluate the increase in input prices in the profitability of a cattle farm with a direction for milk and a vegetable greenhouse. Meanwhile, the sensitivity analysis of the gross margin has been evaluated based on the forecast of price changes due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has significantly affected the dairy cattle sector. The profitability of the dairy sector has been reduced by 8.9% compared to the year before the start of the conflict. This has come as a result of the increase in production costs by 28.3% and not the proportional increase in the milk price (16.43%).

The conflict has also affected the greenhouse vegetable sector. Profitability is reduced by 4.9% compared to the year before the conflict in a tomato greenhouse. Even in this case, the decrease in profitability is attributed to the higher increase in production costs (16.1%) compared to the rise in the selling price of tomatoes (9.3%).

Noting the increase in prices brought about by the conflict, it is considered important to predict how the profitability of the farm will continue in the following years. To perform the sensitivity analysis, price forecasts made by (World Bank, 2022b) were used. In 2023, prices are expected to decrease by 7.9% for corn, 4.7% for wheat and 12.4% for NPK fertilizers. While in 2024, prices are expected to decrease by 1% for corn, 1.2% for wheat and 9.4% for NPK fertilizers.

The sensitivity analysis for the dairy sector and the tomato greenhouse shows three scenarios, pessimistic, neutral and optimistic.

In the cattle farm, according to the pessimistic scenario, the profit margin will decrease by 8.3 percentage points. According to the neutral scenario, it will increase by 0.9 percentage points, while according to the optimistic scenario, it will increase by 11.8 percentage points.

In the vegetable greenhouse with tomatoes, according to the pessimistic scenario, it results that the profit margin will be negative (-0.009%). According to the neutral scenario, we will have an increase in the profit margin by 1.8 percentage points, while according to the optimistic scenario, we will have an increase of 18.1 percentage points.

Recommendation

The livestock farm needs financial support as there is a reduction in the profit margin of 8.9% compared to the year before the start of the conflict. According to the pessimistic scenario, the profitability of the livestock farm will drop to 5.5%. If livestock farms are not supported, they will significantly reduce income.

The vegetable greenhouse that grows tomatoes also needs financial support because there is a reduction in the profit margin of 4.9% compared to the year before the start of the conflict. According to the pessimistic scenario, the profitability of the tomato farm is negative (-0.009%). If these farms are not supported, they will result in losses under this scenario.

Matters for further research

This paper has as its primary objective the evaluation of the impact of the price increase caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the profitability of the farm, taking as an analysis a cattle farm and a vegetable greenhouse. Meanwhile, it is of interest to quantitatively evaluate the effects of the crisis through a structured survey. It is of interest to study the increase in the prices of inputs at the farm level, the impact of the rise in prices on the use of inputs and the yield of plants and animals, the increase in cost and profitability in the use of assets, as well as the effects on migration.

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