



INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

International Virtual Academic Conference

**Education and Social Sciences
Business and Economics**

10 June 2020

IAI Book of Abstracts

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Briselska 1/16

Skopje, Republic of N. Macedonia

ISBN 978-608-4881-11-7

ADAPTING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS. OVERVIEW ON THE ROMANIAN CASE¹

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Abstract

The pandemic crisis generated by the corona virus affected all the world and its social systems. They had to rapidly adapt and take drastic measures, in order to answer in an effective and efficient way to the virus dispersal. The most common answer was the lockdown of many of the economic and social activities. One of the most affected social systems by the Covid-19 crisis was the educational system, which had to eliminate all the face to face interaction teaching and learning methods and move all in online, transforming them in e-learning activities. As the system theory states, many systems have the property of adapting itself to changes in the environment. The aim of this work is to make an analysis on how the Romanian educational system was able to adapt in a short period of time, by reviewing the administrative and legal measures taken. Also, we will try to see if this crisis is a real treat or an opportunity to rethink how we educate future generations and which should be the new skills needed for the future, for both students and teachers.

Keywords: reforms, education, learning, system.

¹ Acknowledgement - paper elaborated within the project: "Service Based Learning - innovative tool for strengthening the skills of employing students in the public administration of the 21st century", won the competition for grants - *Researchers in Training* – National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA) / Faculty of Public Administration 2019, implementation period 2019-2021.

WEEKEND OFFENDERS. CLUBS, DRUGS AND DEVIANT LEISURE IN POST-SOCIALIST ROMANIA**Dinu Guțu**, postdoc fellowNational University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest

Abstract

During recent years, leisure can no longer be strictly associated with the concepts of ‘good’ and ‘pleasure’: a critical perspective offered by the recent theory of ‘deviant leisure’ shows how the relation between leisure, freedom and pleasure is no longer clear, and how, in the context of late capitalism, a part of leisure activities imply harm, exploitation and vulnerability. In summary, Smith and Raymen (2016) claim that in the current context, norms and values are manipulated by consumerist capitalism’s ideological domination which opens a space for harm resulting from the individualistic pursuit of leisure as a moral right, in what Žižek (2002) calls ‘cultural injunction to enjoy’. The article aims to analyse recreational drug consumption in the context of Bucharest music clubs from the perspective of deviant leisure theory. The paper explain the club space through the concept of deviant heterotopia (Foucault, 1986) and finally discuss the harm types involved by this type of leisure. The method for data collection was based on participative observation in clubs and raves for one and a half years (September 2018 – March 2019), on semi-structured individual interviews, but also on two focus groups applying critical discourse analysis to the collected data. As several deviant leisure studies show, substance abuse in the Night time economy is not deviant in a traditional sense, but rather conformist (Ayres, 2019) and an integral part of the systemic harm and inherent violence of contemporary consumerist capitalism (idem, 151). The neoliberal playspace of the club, defined by infantilization, liminality and transgression is part of the larger microcosm of society (idem, 136).

Key words: devian leisure, recreational drugs, night time economy, club culture, post-socialism

ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF EXITING FROM FOSTER CARE IN ROMANIA IN THE LAST 10 YEARS

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Abstract:

Throughout this paper I analysed the social impact of exiting from foster care of young people for whom the measure of special protection has ceased after reaching the age of 18, respectively of young people preparing to leave foster care in the next two years.

The article also presents the perspective of the qualified personnel within the child protection directorates at national level. In respect of this, I presented the manner in which the authorities have administered and are due to administer the future generations of young people who are preparing to leave the special protection system. At the same time, the article analyses the perception of young people regarding the experience lived after leaving the care system.

In order to substantiate the article, I utilised as research methods the interview, the observation and the qualitative case study. The qualitative research method approached is centered on understanding the situation of young people after the revocation of the special protection measure.

The actions of the actors involved are insufficient to treat/solve the problems that young people have after the termination of the special protection measure. The General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (G.D.S.A.C.P.), the main responsible, has proved a defective involvement in the implementation of sustainable social policies for the protection of young people for whom the special protection measure has ceased.

Keywords: revocation, special protection measure, social impact, foster care exit

**DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF CURATORSHIP AS PHENOMENON OF MODERN
ART CULTURE IN GEORGIA**

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Abstract

Art Curatorship is the topic which is widely discussed around the world. The institute of art curator is being established in Georgia. Though, no specific research has been conducted to measure the development aspects and challenges of establishment of the institution.

The objective of the research was to study the historical development and creative value of the institute based on curatorship at the museum, gallery and art fairs. Qualitative research methodology was applied, which enabled in-depth analysis of the information collected. Three specific Georgian cases and number of interviews with Georgian curators were appropriate for this work.

The research findings indicate that academia, public, private sector support art curatorship development in Georgia, however, the actions are inconsistent, there is not academic degree on curatorial studies, only some courses on museum studies without fundamental academic approach. It is concluded, therefore, that the institute of art curatorship in Georgia is developing gradually echoing world art processes for further enhancement.

Key words: Art, Curator, culture, development, Georgia

"OPERATION DYNAMO": INTEGRATING SPECIAL EDUCATION SUCCESSFULLY INTO REGULAR SCHOOLS**Gilad Cohen-Ynon¹ & Moshe Sharabi¹**¹Yezreel Valley Academic College, D.N. Emek Yezreel, 19300, Israel

Abstract

Recently, in Israel the "reform of the inclusion" (integrating the special education into the regular education) transferred budgets from special education to regular education by increasing the trend of the integration of special education children in regular schools. From now on, most of these children will be placed in regular classrooms. This situation is likely to flood the regular education stream with challenges that these schools have not yet dealt with. The knowledge of the teachers, mental perceptions, and the school mechanisms are not compatible to cope with special education children. No means have been assigned to prepare the teachers for the new challenge or to change the schools' organizational structures to support the reform.

The process described here was developed to build "Operation Dynamo" to support for regular schools and the purpose of this process was to use the power of teachers, educational consultants, and principals from special schools to help regular schools prepare for the upcoming change. The process included two groups of 20 participants, each group included teachers, consultants, and managers of special educational institutions. These groups were the first core of a specialist education center which will support regular schools during the reform. The participants took part in 8 workshops during which they mapped the "DNA" of their practice - the knowledge, values, and mechanisms that are the basis of the treatment of the special education child. Based on this knowledge, instruction manuals and protocols were built to convey this knowledge to regular schools through personal and group training processes. Today, this is an ongoing process. Independent initiatives are being held to convey this knowledge and collectively help the success of the reform and to transfer vital knowledge between the educational systems.

Key words: special education, regular education, reform of the inclusion, integration, training processes

USING A CLINICAL SIMULATOR SYSTEM TO IMPROVE TEACHERS' LEARNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

Clinical learning is an approach used by medical schools and recently, it has also been used for training new teachers. This is a type of learning that exposes new teachers to the professional knowledge and experience of expert teachers (teaching methods, class management, decision-making). The learning process usually takes place within a learning community of teachers. These teachers learn through experience and study their own professional practice - effective ways of transferring knowledge, personal biases that limit them and professional beliefs and identity.

Clinical learning uses simulation (clinical simulator) or real-life processes as its learning materials. In this case, the simulator usually takes place at the field – the school, in close proximity to practice. Unlike other simulators, the processes of analysis or observation in this context does not deal with relationships and behaviors between persons (a conversation with a parent, confrontation with student, feedback giving, discipline at the classroom, etc.), but deals with professional aspects of the work – the way teachers teach. The simulator comes to assist teachers, administrators, and school to maintain the best pedagogical processes.

12 elementary school teachers participated in using the clinical simulator. First, a learning community was built that was characterized by mutual trust, a willingness to expose their practice, and a solid ethical code. The community then set its teaching goals. The practices they needed to improve – differential teaching processes - were selected. The teachers also defined personal goals for improving their teaching styles. Later on, lessons administered by the group members were videoed. The group analyzed the lessons, gave feedback to the teachers, and formulated new ways of teaching to repair problems discovered. It was found that all the teachers felt an improvement in their styles of teaching far beyond any other professional development processes they had previously participated in.

Key words: simulation, learning effectiveness, teaching methods, pedagogical processes, real-life processes

ILLEGAL BUT ACCEPTED: A STUDY OF THE RISING POPULARITY OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES IN THAI TEENAGERS**Pavaris Pongchaikaikiti^b, Pralin Chongrungsakulroj^a, Sarin Sirimongkolsakul^a**^aMahidol University International Demonstration School, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand^bAssumption College Thonburi, Bangkok, Thailand

Abstract

In Thailand, due to the legal prohibition of e-cigarettes enforced by the government since 2014, little attention is made to advance research on issues related to e-cigarettes, compared to other countries. Thus, the awareness of e-cigarettes utilization among Thai teenagers, a group potentially tempted to try smoking, become subtle. This research therefore aims to conduct a survey to investigate causes, attitudes and behaviours of Thai high schoolers on e-cigarettes. Based on the survey with 132 high school students, both men and women, the result reveals that 61% of them tried smoking e-cigarettes, while 38.6 % did not. In addition, it also shows that 91.7% of those who tried smoking were introduced to e-cigarettes by their close peers. Moreover, the top three reasons that make them smoke were taste and smell (42.9%), stress relief (38.3%), and invitations from friends (30.1%). These therefore are considered as prominent causes leading to smoking habits among the respondents. Concerning the attitudes toward smoking e-cigarettes, it is commonly perceived that purchase of e-cigarettes is easily accessible and is usual for modern day teenagers to smoke them. Despite the majority of the respondents having known about the illegality and risks associated with smoking e-cigarettes, such illegal availability potentially keeps the habit unaltered. This study therefore suggests that there exist illegal acts upon smoking e-cigarettes among this vulnerable age group. A more rigour control to forbid the purchase of e-cigarettes and more serious attention to raise awareness of harmful effects should be performed by those taking part including the government, schools, teachers, and parents.

Keywords; Attitudes; Friends' influence; E-cigarettes; High school students

HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND ENVIRONMENT DUE TO PANDEMIC OF COVID-19**Kanapot Numdee**

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Abstract

Covid-19 is an event which has transformed the lives of all humans throughout the world. Currently, people cannot do things that they normally would have done such as interacting with their friends, acquaintances and colleagues face-to-face as they would place themselves and those close to them at risks. I believe the key to solving this problem would be to use what is called “social distancing” and adapt accordingly. One widely-used solution is social distancing. By distancing yourself from others, the increasing number of infections can be stopped to a certain degree. Surprisingly, in addition to the medical aspect, social distancing is also beneficial for the environment. As is already known, social distancing requires that all businesses and industries be closed. As a result, the carbon emission are set to fall by almost 8 percent from over the past ten-years . Positive changes are also happening to the wildlife. Normally, humans tend to dump plastic and other hazardous waste into water bodies, crippling and killing marine creatures in the process. At present, with social distancing a part of our behaviours, the destruction has been temporarily halted, nature is restoring itself and some endangered animals are reappearing. As these changes only happened recently, it is safe to conclude that these are direct consequences of social distancing.

Regrettably, this improvement in the environment may only be short-lived as from the moment when this global pandemic disappears from the Earth, people’s detrimental behaviours towards the nature will return and revert the nature towards its former course. As such, I suggest that the best way to solve the problem is by taking heed of our former mistakes and never let them repeat. If we continue to destroy the nature as we would normally have done, there would certainly be no saving it.

Keywords: The pandemic situation; Human behaviors; social distancing; Environment

THE CORE COMPETENCIES FOR THAI HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS TO ENTER MEDICAL SCHOOL

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Abstract

A large number of Thai high school students desire to continue their higher education in medicine. As a potential medical student, there is a set of competencies required by the Association of American Medical College (AAMC), which can be divided into three main cores: pre-professional, thinking and reasoning, and science. All of which constitute 15 separate competencies. This study aims to assess the competencies of Thai high school students who choose to enter medical schools based on a 5-Likert scale survey containing 15 items with 100 respondents. The results reveal that the majority of the respondents perceive that they have a relatively higher level of confidence in pre-professional competencies ($\bar{x} = 4.25$), especially in respect of social orientation, teamwork, ethical responsibility to self and others, and reliability and dependability. In contrast, the respondents perceive a relatively lower level of confidence when considering science competencies ($\bar{x} = 4.07$), and thinking and reasoning competencies ($\bar{x} = 3.98$), especially in quantitative reasoning and written communication. In addition, the analysis shows that there is no disparity between male ($N = 29$) and female ($N = 71$) students from an overall perspective. However, when considering the individual competencies, male students appear to have a greater level of confidence in capacity for improvement and quantitative reasoning than that of girls. On the other hand, girls express a higher level of confidence than males in social skills and cultural dependence. The findings suggest that while the prospective students are well-equipped in pre-professional competencies, there remain areas of improvement that high school students aiming to pursue a degree in medicine have to take into consideration in particular those related to thinking and reasoning which is the ability to use logical explanations and apply quantitative reasoning to solve problems. Such competencies are considered crucial in handling medical tasks which often are associated with medical dilemmas.

Keywords: Medical Core competencies; Pre-professional competencies; Thinking and Reasoning competencies; Science competencies; Service Orientation; Ethical Responsibility; Quantitative Reasoning

**EXCEPTIONS TO THE EXCLUSIONARY RULE REGARDING THE FRUITS OF
ILLEGALLY OBTAINED EVIDENCE IN THE NEW ROMANIAN CRIMINAL
PROCEDURE CODE**

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Abstract:

The present article aims to analyze exceptions put in place by the new Romanian Criminal Procedure Code to the Exclusionary Rule Regarding the Fruits of Illegally Obtained Evidence. It analyzes the general exceptions recognized by the Romanian legislator in relation to the exceptions generally accepted in the criminal procedure systems where such exceptions exist, but also the specific view that the Romanian legislator and the Constitutional Court have taken in interpreting the nature and the significance of the exclusionary rule and its exceptions.

Key words: fruits of illegally obtained evidence; exclusionary rule.

THE CONCEPT OF GRAND STRATEGY: THE RUSSIAN CASE

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Abstract

In the last decades the concept of grand strategy has increased in popularity in the domain of International Relations. This led to the present situation in which we have a disputed term with multiple distinct definitions. In this context the central objective of this paper was to select and evaluate the contributions that analysed the grand strategy of the Kremlin between 2000 to 2019. A second goal was to clarify the main elements of this concept. The present analysis shows that one central category of authors argue that the grand strategy of the Russian Federation has become more assertive. According to their opinion the Moscow administration is willing to use all the means available, in order to achieve the main objectives: the status of great power; the return to the spheres of influence; and to have a multipolar international system. However, this paper shows that many elements remain to be explored in relation to a topic of such complexity as the grand strategy of the Russian Federation.

Key words: grand strategy; the Russian Federation; literature review.

¹ Beneficiary of the project “*Researcher-Entrepreneur on Labour Market in the Fields of Intelligent Specialization (CERT-ANTREP)*”, project co-financed by the European Union through the European Social Fund, Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020, the project code: code SMIS 124708, Financing contract: POCU/380/6/13/124708 (nr.3741/23.05.2019)

**THE IMAGERY IN STORY READING AS AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY TOWARD
ACHIEVING PROFICIENCY IN EFL AND ACQUIRING HUMAN VALUES IN VERY
YOUNG LEARNERS**

**Edita Hornáčková Klápicová
Megan A. Reister**

Abstract

This article examines how the imagery in stories reproduced through music, tangible objects, hands-on activities, drama activities, and the Readers Theater strategy can help very young learners to not only become proficient in English as a foreign language but also acquire basic human values. The present study is based on an English lesson taking place in a kindergarten in Lower Austria. There were two target groups of three to six year old children, one consisting of 25 learners and one consisting of 24 learners. English as a second language was taught to them in a natural way for the period of three years. The learners' language skills and communicative competence in English were assessed through three different oral tests during the lesson. The results of the tests proved that the learners had already acquired a high level of proficiency in EFL as a result of the effective teaching strategies used in their English program and were capable of acquiring new vocabulary and meanings during the current English lesson.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, very young learners, hands-on activities, story reading, Readers Theater, human values

USING SPSS FOR DATA ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REVERSE LOGISTICS AND CIRKULAR ECONOMY

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Abstract:

The number and types of statistical software packages that are available continue to grow each year. In this paper we have chosen to work with SPSS, or the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. SPSS was chosen because of its popularity within both academic and business circles, making it the most widely used package of its type. SPSS is also a versatile package that allows many different types of analyses, transformations, and forms of output - in short, it will more than adequately serve our purposes.

The capability of SPSS is truly astounding. The package enables you to obtain statistics ranging from simple descriptive numbers to complex analyses of multivariate matrices. You can plot the data in histograms, scatterplots, and other ways. You can combine files, split files, and sort files. You can modify existing variables and create new ones. In short, you can do just about anything you'd ever want with a set of data using this software package. A number of specific SPSS procedures are relevant to the kinds of statistical analyses covered in an introductory level statistics or research methods course typically found in the social and health sciences, natural sciences, or business. Yet, we will touch on just a fraction of the many things that SPSS can do. Our aim is to help to become familiar with SPSS, and we hope that this introduction will both reinforce our understanding of statistics and lead us to see what a powerful tool SPSS is, how it can actually help you better understand your data, how it can enable you to test hypotheses that were once too difficult to consider, and how it can save our incredible amounts of time as well as reduce the likelihood of making errors in data analyses. We show how to create a data file and generate an output file. We also discuss how to name and save the different types of files created in the three main SPSS windows. This paper will present a software presentation from a survey on socio-economic and environmental research, especially for reverse logistic and circular economy.

Keywords: SPSS, statistics, social sciences, natural sciences, business

AN INVESTIGATION ON MOTIVATIONAL REGULATIONS DRIVING THAI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PURSUE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF SELF-DETERMINATION

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Abstract

Self-determination is a psychological framework in which various types of motivational regulations are classified. While internalised regulations include drives that arise from personal interest (intrinsic motivation), personal values and personality (integrated regulation), as well as perceived importance of executing of a certain task (identified regulation), non-internalised regulations are associated with drives that come from external regulations such as social expectations (introjected regulation) and incentives (external regulation). Research suggests that internalised regulations tend to give rise to enjoyment in doing tasks. However, stress and anxiety may be caused by non-internalised factors. This study aims to explore different types of motivational regulations driving Thai high school students to enter university education in medicine, engineering, business, and social sciences. Results taken from 314 respondents based on a 5-likert scale survey reveal that among those interested in social sciences are predominantly driven by internalised regulations, with the ratio of internalised and non-internalised regulations at 32:1. In contrast, those interested in medicine, engineering, and business exhibit a lower level of internalisation as the ratios are 4:1, 4:1 and 3:1, respectively. It is hypothesised that although students may find intrinsic drives to carry on their study in these fields in some way, they may find it difficult to avoid social expectations and incentives that may attach to these mainstream degrees. In contrast, those interested in other courses particularly in social sciences concern more on their personal interest that is well aligned with the subject area. This study therefore points out some educational concerns that potentially exist among students preparing for medicine, engineering, and business who may require proper emotional and educational support from their teachers and parents.

Keywords: Self-determination, Internalised regulations, Non-internalised regulations, Motivation

**THE EUROPEANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY –
“GERMANIZATION” OF THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY**

Gyula Speck

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Abstract

Our paper aims to examine the relationship between Germany’s foreign policy and the European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy. Since Germany is the European Union’s leading political and economic power today, it could be assumed that the Common Foreign and Security Policy has also been “Germanized”. However, we should not forget, that the German foreign policy has a strong European identity as well. To examine this issue, we exert the Europeanization theory in cases like Germany’s role in the institutionalization of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, negotiations of Iran’s nuclear deal, and the Ukraine crisis. We conclude that the German foreign policy is still today highly Europeanized, on the other hand, the Common Foreign and Security Policy is not “Germanized”. In other words, a more assertive German foreign policy does not mean that Germany has left her strong Europeanized identity.

Keywords: Europeanization, European Union, European Identity, German foreign policy, Common Foreign and Security Policy.

YOUTH POLICIES AND THE SOCIAL SITUATION OF NEETS IN ROMANIA**Sebastian Țoc**National University of Political Science and Public Administration
Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy

Abstract

In this paper, I analyze the situation of vulnerable young people in Romania, with a focus on NEETs, one of the categories at risk of social exclusion in the European countries. The main objective is to understand the vulnerabilities of young people in relation with the specific issues of the education system, the labor market, and the efficiency of the social protection system.

The first part of the paper aims to describe the social inequalities to which young people in Romania are exposed. The second part proposes the descriptive analysis of the NEETs profile in Romania and the European Union. I use Eurostat quantitative data to outline the diversity of NEETs in Romania, complemented with secondary qualitative data collected from NEETs and social workers from a research report published by the Institute of Educational Science in Romania (ISE 2015). The third part focuses on the problems that young people face when leaving the education system, as well as on labor market inequalities and issues related to the efficiency of social transfers in Romania. The last part aims at analyzing youth policies in the context of austerity after the global economic crisis of 2008.

Keywords: social inequalities, NEETs, youth policies, labor market segmentation, Romania

**KEY NON-STANDARDIZED FINANCIAL METRICS BASED ON THE INCOME
STATEMENT FOR MEASURING HOTEL PERFORMANCE AND THE POSSIBILITY
OF FRAUD**

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Abstract

Non-standardized metrics are one of the key metrics that can have a big impact on the operations of hotel companies. In today's environment, it is necessary to identify the parameters to properly determine the direction of movement of hotel companies, given that the performance of these depends on the success of their business. The information contained in the financial statements is of great importance to decision makers, and enables them to create directions for the company's future operation. Standardized metrics do not have the flexibility option required by today's environment, and cannot be properly subject to business policy changes, so non-standardized metrics are created that serve managers as a tool when measuring a company's financial performance. In order for a company to survive in today's market, it must adapt to changes, and manage costs in an adequate way. The aim of this paper is to identify key non-standardized financial metrics that can serve hotel companies in measuring their business performances. The subject of the paper are the financial reports of hotel companies that operate on the Serbian market, and are listed on the Belgrade Stock Exchange. The research is based on the application of the case study method and the content analysis method.

Key words: Non-standardized financial measures, Hotel companies, Financial reports, Fraud

**THE BETTER VERSION OF OURSELVES: A SOCIO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL
REVIEW OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN ROMANIA**

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The paper investigates what are the social and personal consequences of practicing personal development in Bucharest, Romania. Personal development has been conceptualized as an instrument by which citizens are governed in advanced capitalism (Rimke 2000, Rose 1996, etc.). The mantra „You are the most important person in your life!” opens a challenge in understanding how bears the responsibility on how we lead our lives. According to personal development discourses, the individual is the only one who can interfere with his/her own existence. It opposes blaming other entities (e.g., system, friends) for success or failure or building expectations that other entities will provide solution for one’s problems. Furthermore, personal development purports to provide tools through which individuals can overcome their problems and achieve their goals. These tools are built mainly on the concept of personal transformation, which covers a comprehensive range of potential practices, from changing social or professional relationships to changing language, emotions, and thoughts.

A SOCIAL SURVEY-- SHOULD DIGITAL PILLS BE IMPLEMENTED INTO SOCIETY?

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Abstract

Digital pills are currently being used to track the time and date that a pill was consumed and are utilized in medication known to aid patients with mental illnesses. However, should the use of digital pills be implemented into society among medication that does not essentially treat mental illnesses? The main objective of this study is to evaluate people's opinion on whether the use of digital pills should be implemented into society. To achieve our goal, we conducted a survey over a period of 10 days and collected data from a sample of 108 Thai citizens. With this method, we were able to explore the following matters: the types of pills that participants have consumed and the duration of consumption, if they have accidentally consumed said medication repeatedly after taking it, and whether it would help them if they could use pills with a function that could record the time and date that the pill was taken. From the survey, it was revealed that among those who accidentally consumed medicine repeatedly after taking it 80.6% of participants did not, while 19.4% did. Interestingly, 72.9% agreed that the use of digital pills would definitely help them in their daily lives with only a minority (27.1%) who disagreed. This indicates that although the majority of participants did not necessarily encounter the problem that the digital pill was created to solve, they agreed that the use of digital pills should be applied into one's daily life for greater convenience.

Key Words Digital pills; Implemented; Society; Medication; Record time and date

THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19

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Abstract

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) outlines a new conceptual framework that would allow China to play a bigger role in the world economy and international relations. However, the conceptual foundation of the BRI establishes essential components of the Chinese foreign (economic) policy in the long run. Understanding China's BRI development strategies may help the neighbouring states to learn Beijing's intentions at the regional level. Is the BRI China's vehicle for the road to a peaceful development or is it a covering strategy for acquiring, at least, regional hegemony? Moreover, how the BRI is going to develop considering the COVID-19 outbreak?

The goals of the essay are to examine the core features of China's most audacious project: the Belt and Road Initiative. However, the scope of the paper goes further explaining BRI's geopolitical aims, how the COVID-19 may transform the project and its relevance to China's financial reformation process.

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China, Eurasia, USA, Russia, geopolitics, objectives, peaceful development, economic integration.

**A SUBJECTIVE RESEARCH PAPER ON
MULTICULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF ABORTION LEGALISATION IN THAILAND**

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Abstract

We are living in a world where modernization and economic stability prevail; never before have we witnessed the rapid development of science and technology that unites human beings and strengthens the unquestionable knowledge. Abortion, an endless debate which is and etc.; a debate where either ethical issue of the child or pregnant women rights will conquer. As stated by the World Health Organisation (WHO), up to 25 millions cases have taken place illegally, sadly, among 25 million cases, up to 8 million cases malfunctioned; jeopardizing the lives of both maternity and fetal. Our ambition is to investigate the different perceptions on the legalisation of abortion in Thailand. Therefore, we conducted a survey of a total of 202 responses of 16 open and close ended questions, where this research paper will discuss the qualitative findings gathered as follows. According to the findings, 74% believe abortion should be legal in Thailand. On the other hand, 26% believe abortion shouldn't be legal in Thailand. In which, the research paper will then examine and justify their beliefs. In addition, the paper will discuss what should be prioritized, child's or mother's rights, including real life scenarios and father's rights. As a conclusion, this subjective research paper will analyze the qualitative perspectives, on the topic 'Should abortion be legal in Thailand?'

Key words: Illegal abortion, Legal abortion, unplanned pregnancy, Mother's right, Father's right, Fetal's right

STUDENT SURVEY GATHERS OPINIONS ABOUT ONLINE LEARNING DURING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC OF COVID-19

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Abstract

The spread of Corona virus affects the whole world. A great loss whether in lives or economy but another problem that affected not less than other side is the school. In this period of time child safety is the most important factor that everyone must consider. In many countries, there is a solution so that young people have equal access to education and learning during the outbreak of COVID-19. The methods of solving problems in each country are different. And the method that is popular in many countries is online learning which is considered a big adjustment for teachers and students. But even though it is the best method, there are still disadvantages and many problems such as inequality in education Inequality in access to technology - online equipment lack of student interaction or including the parents have to allocate and take care of the education plan for the children, not every parent will have enough time because may have to work too .In this study with the purpose of exploring opinions or recommendations in the corner of youth who have to study online mainly during the outbreak of COVID-19 in order to be useful in improving the online teaching system to reach students and allowing the student to get good mental health while studying during this time period. By conducting this survey, divided into a total of 10 questions related to online teaching. And is the answer selection only Yes or No for clarity and easy to understand information. The survey will be conducted by all students from the sample of 300 people which will be divided into 100 students from each elementary school secondary school and university students. After that, the survey results were summarized and analyzed. All data is therefore displayed in a chart for easy distribution.

Keywords: Corona virus, Online learning, Survey, Economy, Mental health

GREEK CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

The rise of soft power on foreign policy agenda has included culture as one of the basic mechanisms of the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than other means. Eventually, cultural diplomacy has been connected to the concept of soft power and has turned into an essential part of any soft power exercise and strategy, in contemporary world. Cultural diplomacy plays an important role in supporting state's response to global challenges, promoting national image and building alliances. Additionally, it enhances mutual understanding and frames a context of peace and tolerance. Greece has an advantage over exercising cultural diplomacy, since its name is internationally known due to its ancient history, its classical cultural heritage and its accomplishments in the cultural field through out time. How Greece has employed culture in its international relations and how has mobilized culture in its external relations? Which are the main goals of Greek cultural diplomacy and the axes upon which has developed? And, which are the challenges and obstacles in exercising successfully cultural diplomacy? Is there room for improvement, and if so which policy recommendations should be made? The paper tackles the above issues.

Keywords: Greek cultural diplomacy, national and international scene, challenges and opportunities, policy recommendations.

COACHING – A USEFUL METHOD OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Florina Pașcu**

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Abstract

“In the actual social context when our capacity to develop, learn and adapt at a professional level is extremely challenged is absolutely important to find those methods and instruments which can help us to reach the necessary changes in our professional life. As we know, professional development is a real concern for every organization and also an area/a domain which explore many kinds of methods, such as training, mentoring, e-learning, professional specialization etc. This paper has the purpose to bring in your attention a development method which is not fully explored – COACHING method. The present paper is a conceptual review of definitions, advantages and opportunities of coaching for professional development. Here are some possible questions to the fundamental dilemma of professional development: How is possible as a coach with no background in the field of coacher’s profession to bring a relevant and important contribution to his professional development? Which are the situation and context when coaching is a helpful developing method? How can it help to develop as a specialist in one ‘s professional field? What kind of positive impact we can have if we chose to use this method?”

**MONEY TREES, JEWISH NOSES AND SOME GOOD OLD FASHIONED RED
BAITING: BERNIE SANDERS AND THE CURIOUS CASE OF ANTI-SEMITIC DOG
WHISTLES IN THE 2020 DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY**

Luiza-Maria FILIMON

Abstract

The Republican Party has operated with racial coded messages or “dog-whistles” over the last fifty decades and for a good reason: they are very effective. They are convenient rhetorical devices that provide plausible deniability, they are persuasive from an electoral point of view, and, more importantly, they shape public policy. So successful have the dog-whistles proven to be that the Democratic Party would also adopt this strategy as was seen during President Clinton’s 1992 presidential campaign as well as afterwards during his mandates (from immigration to the welfare reform to the crime bill – all of these issues were sprinkled with some dog-whistle dust).

Dog-whistles target minorities – primarily African-Americans, but also Latinos as well as other non-ethnic minorities. Dog-whistles work by framing the person or group as somehow taking advantage of the system on account of the color of their skin and profiting on the backs of hard-working American taxpayers (the taxpayers are coded as “white”). African-Americans have bore the brunt of this coded form of discrimination and the community witnessed many setbacks due to the way the official rhetoric has framed them (“thugs”, “welfare queens”). President Obama was also targeted by dog whistles, for example, his full name – Barack Hussein Obama – was used frequently by right-wing commentators in an attempt to emphasize some alleged Muslim / Islamic origins.

This article examines how dog whistles were used to target Bernie Sanders, the Democratic-Socialist who ran for president in the Democratic primaries from 2016 and 2020. Bernie Sanders is Jewish and though people are cognizant of anti-Semitism stereotypes, they are not immune to the anti-Semitic dog-whistles as proven by their mostly uncontroversial use where Sanders was concerned. From erasing his Jewish identity and framing his as just another white candidate to the insistence that he should publish his tax releases even though he had already disclosed some – the subtext being that he was potentially hiding some money cache while going around criticizing billionaires – to multiple red-baiting instances – the case of Bernie Sanders showcases how mainstream can prejudices become especially if the person positions themselves to be anti-mainstream, to go against the grain.

Keywords: anti-Semitism, Bernie Sanders, dog-whistles, Democratic Party, Democratic primary

CHANGES IN CONSUMER INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOUR IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITALISATION

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Abstract

The way how consumers search for information within their purchasing decision making has changed dramatically. Thanks to the widespread use of mobile devices and the continuing availability of online information, consumers have almost endless pool of information resources they can refer to. This article deals with the topic of online information search in relation to future purchases of goods and services. Specifically, its aim is to provide a comprehensive overview of processes related to cross-device and cross-session search and their impacts on marketing. Systematic review of trusted peer-reviewed academic literature resources is conducted to identify and analyse relevant published research results in the area. Theoretical implications relate to the theory of consumer behaviour and the concept of integrated marketing communication. Impacts on businesses striving to capture and sustain the attention of consumers throughout their information search process are outlined.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, cross-device search, cross-session search, digitalisation, information search, literature review

Funding

This paper/publication originated as the result of working on the grant scheme KEGA 016EU-4/2019 The innovative learning texts from marketing for secondary schools

COMPARISON OF FINE ARTS EDUCATION OF TURKEY AND ROMANIA**Laura Sînziana CUCIUC ROMANESCU**

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Abstract:

Art is the most powerful field which expresses human being's values, culture, identity, life styles, emotions and society's experiences. In the historical process, the art was buttressed by human beings and accordingly by civilizations and was transferred from one human being to another. In the history of humankind, art and human being got integrated to each other and moved forward together across life and in this travel, the human being got acquainted with art and made artistic progress through education.

In the globalizing world, there is a growing need for imagination, creativity, innovative labor and cooperation in the transition process from industrial society to information society. Art education is extremely important to the satisfaction of such needs as it enables the development of flexible and different thinking styles, supports emotional development and via the cooperation to be established, promotes learning and skills acquisition.

As of the early 20th century, the concept of art education is defined in its general sense as the creative artistic education which is offered both in and out of schools and covers all fields and forms of fine arts.

Fine arts education occupies a significant position in education. It adopts an approach which addresses human being through all his/her aspects, enables him/her to perceive the life as beautiful and raises his/her aesthetical sensitivity and equips him/her intellectually. In this conjunction, this study is aimed at the comparison of Turkish and Romanian education programs on fine arts in terms of their contents. It is a study on comparative education and in the study, a qualitative research method, the document analysis, was employed. As the primary source, the most up-to-date data which were available on websites of universities of both countries analyzed under the study and fine arts education programs which could be accessed through program coordinators at universities were utilized. Departing from study findings, certain recommendations were developed for fine arts education programs of Turkey and Romania.

Key-words: *comparative education; fine arts; education programs; fine arts education.*

THE PROBLEM OF PRECISION IN RESEARCH EVALUATION: IMPACT FACTOR QUANTILES AND THEIR USE IN HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY DECISIONS ¹**Gabriel-Alexandru Viiu**National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (Romania)

Abstract

The impact factor of a journal (JIF) is used in many extensive policy decisions concerned with the evaluation of research in higher education. One type of usage of JIFs in academic evaluation entails broad impact factor classes which pool together individual JIF values according to some predefined method. In the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science and within the annual Journal Citation Reports (JCR) in which JIFs are presented a distinctive classification is offered in which journals are assigned to specific JIF quartiles. This quartile classification is sometimes leveraged in policy practice as a definitive proxy for research quality. The aim of this paper is to investigate the differences between the quartile classes and to discuss the implications these differences may bring about when only this high-level classification is employed. A small sample of social science fields from the 2018 JCR edition is explored. The results of the paper highlight a problematic phenomenon of artificial aggrandizing through aggregation in which very small and insignificant JIF differences can be made to appear larger and more meaningful than they really are. This phenomenon presents a serious caveat for the use of JIF quartiles as an independent and singular proxy for the quality of research papers and indicates that such a use should be abandoned in policy practice.

Key words: research evaluation, journal impact factor (JIF), JIF quartiles

¹ This paper was financially supported by the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project POCU/380/6/13/124708 no. 37141/23.05.2019 with the title “Researcher-Entrepreneur on Labour Market in the Fields of Intelligent Specialization (CERT-ANTREP)”, coordinated by the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION DURING A PANDEMIC AND ITS POSITIVE IMPACT TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Recently, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the educational transformation has been made towards online learning where students use their phone, computer, tablet, or TV for communication and learning. Research has shown that this does not only help students stay safe at home from the viral pandemic, but it also helps ease students' learning in various aspects ranging from their educational experience to psychological enhancement such as reduced stress and anxiety when interacting with teachers. To make students certain about their well-being, educational institutions including schools, universities, and tutoring schools establish a new curriculum namely online-education by using innovations in education to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the classroom. However, little is known about how students generally feel about this mode of learning, especially from a psychological point of view. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of this new educational form among school students in Thailand (N = 313) who have been exposed to online learning during the pandemic. The result shows that 68.9% felt safer with online education than study at school. In addition, 85.9% express that they prefer online learning to the face-to-face classroom. Furthermore, it shows that 55.9% prefer online discussion to face-to-face discussion. In sum, this study reveals that students in this present generation are prone to well adapt to the use of educational technology to advance their learning. Students feel more secure when their presence is made online. Therefore, perhaps it is a positive side of the pandemic that digital transformation has been more seriously put in place, and digitalized learning is a preferable mode of the students.

Key words: technology, education, psychology, curriculum, communication, education.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IN ACADEMIC PROBLEMS: AN APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF THAI STUDENTS

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Sirawit Amornchairojkul

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Abstract

Many face a variety of issues and impediments of different topics, although the major problem in today's society is academic problems. Nowadays, students have trouble learning in schools and universities, affecting mental health issues consequently. Education has a crucial impact on individuals which influences psychological stress, especially in students. Apart from intrinsic factors like self-reliance, extrinsic approaches such as emotional support from others also play an essential role in people's mental health and wellness. Emotional support is defined as the ability to show sympathy, tenderness and concern for another person. The main purpose of emotional support is to make a healthy relationship which leads to emotional well-being and even longer life expectancies. This study investigated Thai students' point of view towards four main sources of emotional support including families, friends, school personnel and social support groups (for example, foundations and professional care providers). The lack of emotional support from school personnel like teachers and social support groups is clearly shown at only 2.4% and 2%, respectively. In contrast, the vast majority of the students surveyed received emotional support the most from their families and friends with a total of 56.8% and 38.8%, respectively. Despite the fact that emotional support from their families is the highest in its importance, efficiency and reliability, results revealed that the most accessible and preferred source of emotional support is from friends. Surprisingly, approximately two thirds of emotional support from social support groups and school personnel altogether is perceived to be inadequate, followed by family and friends, respectively.

Keywords: Academic problems, mental health issues, education, psychological stress, extrinsic approaches, emotional support, emotional well-being

ADAPTABILITY OF BANGKOK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMICS

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Abstract

People all around the world are currently facing a problem as a whole. COVID-19, an infectious disease that is currently widespread and is almost impossible to control. With the spreading of this deadly disease in Thailand, many Bangkok high school students are presently facing huge problems with trying to get into universities. Thai students are required to make portfolios and study hard for college admissions which, right now, are being obstructed by the spread of COVID-19 quarantine. This study, therefore, adopts the framework of adaptability to convey how well Thai high school students have been preparing for university requirements during the COVID-19 quarantine as each student has different motivations. Adaptability theory presents how well ones adjust readily to different conditions (in this case is COVID-19 pandemics). Based on a survey with 100 high school students, the result shows at first that 41% of the students spend time relaxing, another 41% spend most of the time relaxing but sometimes learning, and only 18% spend their time wisely learning and preparing for university. But, 51% took a short time to adapt and go back to studying while the other took a little bit longer to adapt and motivate themselves to study. The result shown above shows the correlation between high school student's actions and the time they spend to get back to the right track by showing how at first the majority of them take part in pleasure activities that is non-university related and let time pass but then the majority of the students adapt to the distraction of different lifestyle and get back to the right track. This can be assumed that the majority of Bangkok high school students were not traumatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and they are highly adaptable turning quarantine into a golden period to study.

Keyword: Adaptability, Motivation, COVID-19, University, Bangkok high school students.

DIGITAL DIVIDE AND THE GAMIFICATION OF TRANSPORT SERVICES**Mihail Caradaică**

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Abstract:

Technology was never ideologically biased, but more of an instrument in the hands of people who follow an ideology. Thus, in the capitalist redistributive system, technology implementation is very likely to create social and economic inequality. The concept that describes this situation is the digital divide, which was first introduced to analyse the gaps created by the spread of internet. In this paper, I will mainly focus on the potential digital divide created by the gamification of transport services. Gamification entails the use of gaming elements in non-gaming related contexts, and it started to be implemented for applications or devices used in the transport sector, as well. Thus, the research question will be: “Could the process of gamification create more digital divide?”. I will try to answer this question by describing the features of gamification in any mobility-related contexts and by identifying what groups of people are motivated to use gamified apps or devices and which ones are at the risk of being marginalised.

Key words: Gamification, transport, digital divide, inequality, technology.

**RIGHT TO A SALARY ACCORDING TO THE MACEDONIAN LEGISLATION AND
DISTRIBUTION OF SALARIES IN THE MACEDONIAN SOCIETY**

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Abstract

Today, more than 7.6 billion people are living in the world, out of which according to the International Labor Organization 5.7 billion are work – age population, and about 3.3 billion are employed. The most common reason why an employee engages in an organized work process with an employer is the salary and other incomes he receives for exchanging his labor.

Given the importance of the wage in the employment relation, this paper analyzes the normative framework that regulates this issue in Macedonian labor law. Thereby, in this paper are analyzed the payment systems of the workers, including the minimally guaranteed wage and through a comparative analysis of the salary determination rules in the public and private sector, the paper shows the non-existence of a uniformed salary determination system in the Macedonian society. By the help of the quantitative method and data analysis on the percentage of workers belonging to different income categories, this paper shows the lack of balance between wage distribution and the required income imposed by the living standard as well as the need for establishing better criteria for its determination.

Keywords: right to a salary, Macedonian salary system, wage distribution, minimum wage

LEARNING THROUGH DISCOVERY IS LIKE A WAY TO DEVELOP THINKING AND IMAGINATION

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Alizada Sabina

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Abstract

From the 1960s onwards, educational concepts were aimed at developing students' thinking. At the turn of the 21st century, creativity emerged as an important creative problem. In the concept of education in this context. A new stage - the stage of imagination - has emerged. As a result, in the content of modern lessons, along with cognitive processes and creative processes have emerged, the problem of talented children also has become urgent.

Thinking, which is characterized as a cognitive process in classical psychology, is also valued as a creative process in modern psychology. The creative possibilities of thinking are realized in connection with the imagination. In this context, in order to develop students' creative qualities in modern times, the school must develop their thinking and imagination in interaction. The methodology of learning through discovery has ample opportunities in this direction.

The theory of learning through discovery is studied against the background of the psychodidactic possibilities of thinking. However, the imagination itself has profound psychopedagogical effects. In order to develop creative qualities in students, a modern school must discover and take advantage of these effects.

Keywords: thinking, imagination, creative process, cognitive process, learning through discovery.

NEGATIVE TENDENCIES IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF ADOLESCENTS AS A RESULT OF DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES

Bagirova Arzu

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Abstract

Recently, the term "antisocial people" are used frequently. The psychological nature of this concept is explained as example of people who have been exposed behavioral disorders. It is considered that, antisocial behaved people are children, adolescents, youngers who are called "difficult children", "street children", "lawbreakers", "hooligans", "criminals".

People are not born with a mentally disabilities, they socialize in the environment in which they live. Depending on the features of this environment, negative tendencies may arise in their socialization. Adolescence is considered to be the most critical period in socialization.

In society, human relationships are based on social norms. People learn these norms and expect them in the process of socialization. When the conditions of human social development are normal, the process of socialization takes place dynamically.

The family plays an important role in the socialization of adolescents. However, in the family, demographic processes (divorce, death, remarriage, migration, unemployment) can often be a factor in changing the social development of the family. As a result of these processes, adolescents emotional tension and stress increase. It leads to family tragedies: family relationships become tense, family conflicts increase, physical and emotional violence increases and etc. Adolescents are more prone to antisocial behavior when this process continues for a long time. They first fall behind in training, then drop out of school, spend most of the day with friends, engage in antisocial behavior, and gradually antisocial behavior becomes characteristic of their activities.

Keywords: socialization, antisocial behavior, demographic factors, negative tendencies in socialization.

EDUCATION AND POLITICS: SOME FEATURES OF EDUCATION THAT MAKE IT POLITICAL

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Abstract

Education and politics are connected in many forms. Relations of power and authority characterize both education and politics. The way education is organized is an element that makes it political. Education is also among the main factors that influences politics. Components of education like the education policy, curricula and aims have political implications. Policy makers have direct influence on the educational aims. They establish values to be achieved and norms to be followed, leaving no space for teachers or parents to question them. The content of the curricula reflects this influence. On the other hand, different political theories point to the reality that education is used for political gains. This relation resembles a perfect symbiosis with mutual gains but where politics dominates education and extracts the best parts from it. Politics uses education to sustain the respective political system. This paper intends to trace possible elements in education which are political and not neutral. For this reason, some components of education will be assessed together with their relation to politics.

Key Words: Education, Politics, Policy, Curricula

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY:
ASSUMPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**

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Doc. Ing. Andrej Miklosik, PhD.

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Abstract

Companies that are looking to grow and increase their market share rely on the loyalty of their customers and expansion of the customer base. In both cases, customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in sustaining and improving their market position. In the telecommunications industry, mobile operators compete on the B2C and B2B markets, operating a variety of customer touch points. The objective of this paper is to provide insights into the specifics and situation on the Slovak telecommunications market and its development. On top of describing the current situation, it focuses at determining the trends affecting customer experience. Its results will assist in further research aiming at identifying strengths and weaknesses in the management of customer experience in selected telecommunications operators and designing a methodological handbook that will enable mobile operators to systematically enhance their customer experience.

Keywords: Customer experience, telecommunications industry, mobile network operator (MNO), mobile virtual network operator (MVNO), Slovakia

Funding

This paper/publication originated as the result of working on the grant scheme KEGA 016EU-4/2019 The innovative learning texts from marketing for secondary schools

US-GREEK RELATIONS DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF GERALD FORD

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Abstract

US-Greek relations in the wake of the Cyprus crisis have faced major challenges directly affected by the Cold War. This period is especially significant in Greek history, as major changes have taken place in Greek society. The coup in Cyprus, the fall of the military junta in Greece, the Cyprus dispute and the Aegean issue were just some of the new challenges for the United States. Greece was economically classified in the category of poor agrarian countries, which produced raw materials for production, ie. it was an underdeveloped country. Politically, it has often been influenced by clientelist parties. In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of events took place in Greece, both internally and externally, that marked her changing political mood. The fall of the military junta's dictatorship in the summer of 1974 sparked a series of turbulences in Cyprus that opened the door to a new era. US-Greek relations have been intertwined with a series of disagreements and collaborations. The tradition of their relations was the most intense, unlike other Balkan countries. Greece and the United States have maintained their diplomatic relations and have been on the same side during the conflicts of the 20th century.

The subject of the labor analysis is the US-Greek relations during the administration of Gerald Ford, which is an extremely important period for defining the relations between these two countries in the seventies of the twentieth century. This new constellation of relations, created in the 1970s, was crucial for Greece and the decisions it made, especially in its relations with the United States. In that regard, the decisions made during this period were crucial in tracing its development externally. Consequently, this paper will seek to identify the main features of US-Greek relations during this extremely important period during the Cold War.

Keywords: US-Greek relations, Greek-Turkish dispute, Cyprus dispute, democratization, Aegean issue

DIGITAL PROCESS MATURITY AND THE IMPACT ON EFFICIENCY IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT - A FINDING FROM SPECIALISTS.

Florian Schüssler, MSc

Abstract

Digitalization and efficiency in product development are more important today than ever. What factors are decisive for this, how they relate to each other and what can be derived from this is the content of this paper. Specialists from the development environment from the areas of mechanical engineering and aviation were interviewed. The result of this is that there is consistently an awareness of the importance of digital processes, but the level of process maturity is not measured. According to the specialist statements, a direct connection between the degree of digitization, efficiency and financial parameters in product development can be established. Basically, all companies face similar challenges.

Keywords: product development, digital process maturity, efficiency, development process, digitalization

HATE SPEECH IN SOCIAL MEDIA – EFFECTS ON ROMA MINORITY

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Abstract:

Digital communication platforms have made it easier for people to spread extremist ideas and adopt discriminatory attitudes against certain individuals or groups, often facilitating the proliferation of hate speech. This study investigates the effects of hate speech against Roma people, one of Romania's largest ethnic minorities – in Romanian online settings.

Based on an experimental research, this study sheds light on the effects of exposure to hate speech directed against the Roma ethnic minority in the digital age, with particular reference to engagement, stereotypes and persuasive effects. The research aims at investigating engagement with hate speech in social media and persuasion effects of positively and negatively valenced media messages in an online hate speech context. Participants were exposed to viral Facebook messages (i.e., Facebook posts which received high engagement and visibility from Facebook users) containing or not different degrees of hate speech references (i.e., neutral content, derogatory content, hate speech content, and extreme hate speech content) plus to one type of comments (either positive or negative) related to the initial post.

Main results show that exposure to hateful content (neither mild, nor extreme) directed against Roma people does not determine people to engage but diminishes negative stereotypes rather than enhancing them. The findings suggest significant persuasion effects in terms of the impact of negatively vs. positively valenced messages voiced in an online hateful speech context. Such findings could be useful in future studies investigating hate speech effects and in the development of strategies and policies addressing discrimination against Roma ethnic minority.

Keywords: hate speech, online communication, Roma minority, experimental design

DIGITAL PAYMENT TRENDS: NEW ERA WITH GENERATION Z?**Mgr. Lucia Kocisova****Prof. Mgr. Peter Starchon, PhD.**Faculty of Management, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

Abstract

Digitalization of payments represents a huge step towards achievement of an easy, convenient, fast, and secure ways to pay. The current payment methods powered by rapidly changing development of technology stimulate and force us towards more innovative solutions, which are in many ways the result of consumer pressure. The objective of this paper is to provide insights into the specifics and changes on the Slovak market concerning new creative ways of payments with special emphasis on certain generation of customers. On top of describing the current situation, it focuses at determining the trends affecting customer experience. Its results will assist in further research aiming at identifying strengths and weaknesses of digital payment solutions focused and adjusted on specific sets of customers along with suitable suggestions for future development.

Keywords: Digitalization, New Technologies, Digital Payments, Innovation of Payment Methods, Generation Z, Slovakia

Funding

This paper/publication originated as the result of working on the grant scheme KEGA 016EU-4/2019 The innovative learning texts from marketing for secondary schools

ANTECEDENTS OF STRATEGIC THINKING AND CONSEQUENCES ON THE COMPANY'S PERFORMANCE IN THE PROCESS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract:

The motivation for this work is based on the training and conventional practices that have too often led strategic researchers and executives to assume a stable competitiveness around existing companies, without recognizing the effects of radical and increasingly disruptive changes in markets and space. competitive. The new logic of strategic thinking and initiatives requires a conceptual framework for guiding information, perceptually interpreting issues, strategic trends and choosing the right strategic initiatives. The ability to think strategically is an increasingly important requirement for managers at different levels within organizations. Cultivating management practices and rigorous strategic thinking are the most important step a leader and company can take to avoid decline and sustain growth. It is very important to understand the proposed concept for understanding the relationship between the antecedents of strategic thinking and strategic thinking at the organizational level.

Keywords: antecedents of strategic thinking, strategic thinking, performance, marketing skills, technology, digital transformation.

JEL Classification: M10, M19.

**THE PRACTICES OF THE OPEN AND HIDDEN RELIGIOSITY UNDER THE
SOVIET REGIME: THE CASE OF THE OLD BELIEVERS IN LATVIA**

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Abstract:

After the Second World War the democratic system of the Republic of Latvia was changed into the soviet order. The communist regime was openly anti-religious and threatened believers with punishment and social isolation. In Latvia, the atheistic propaganda influenced representatives of all confessions, but not all of them suffered badly. By the time, the Old Believers were already experienced in surviving under adverse conditions, and the new political ideology became the challenge, but not the verdict. Old Believers' parishes continued their daily activities and sometimes even managed to get support from the local authorities. However, the community itself stratified into two major groups – practicing believers and non-believers. For their part, practicing believers divided in the open and hidden fellows. The main reason for abandoning religion was the public career and/or the necessity of caring the family. Nonetheless, there were also those, who stayed religious and gained social success and recognition. The believers became a minority, who had to keep religious traditions and to transfer the religious experience to secular brothers in faith in 1980s after religiosity was allowed. The presentation is based on life stories of the Old Believers, who narrated about their experience under the soviet power.

ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM AND ITS ROLE IN THE EDUCATION OF JOURNALISTS: SCIENTIFIC STUDIES AS A BASIS FOR ELABORATION OF ARTICLES DEALING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE

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Abstract

The media play an important role in informing about environmental issues, particularly about climate change, and thus fulfilling also their educational function. At the present time, environmental topics are often published in the online media, that require journalists to process them thoroughly, to have an adequate approach, and, above all, to understand the issue. The study summarizes the most important aspects of environmental journalist education. It is evident that journalists, who are adequately versed in the topics depicted, have the best knowledge about the serious issues of climate change. Scientific studies often serve as a basis for developing themes related to climate change. We consider this to be a form of education for journalists, as they work with scientifically based facts, texts. The paper deals with the analysis of whether and to what extent articles about climate change, published in Slovak online media, have a scientific basis.

Keywords: environmental journalism, climate change, online media, environmental issues, education

REGULATIONS REGARDING CORPOARTE SOCIAL RESPONSABILITY IN ROMANIAN COMPANIES

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Abstract

In Romania, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is in development, the number of companies investing in CSR is quite small, but growing, assuming as a long-term business strategy. The objective of the paper is to analyse the impact of the European Directive no. 2014/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council between the moment of regulating the obligation to report actions regarding CSR and its transposition into Romanian legislation, up to now. It was analyzed the evolution of the number of companies that were going mandatory to draw up the non-financial statement between 2015-2018, as well their structure according to different classification criteria and the practices used by companies. In 2015, in Romania, 701 companies fell under the scope of the Directive, and their number increased by 6% by 2018, the cause being mainly the increase of the number of employees, but also the establishment of new companies. In 2015, public interest entities represented 21% and multinationals 28% of the total number of analyzed companies. Very few companies publish their reports, because there not having the obligation to make publicly available the information on CSR actions.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Romanian regulation, non-financial reports, European Directive;

JEL classification: M14; M40; M49

THE UNITED NATIONS DELAY IN INSTITUTING PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA, 1991 AND 2018

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Abstract

Recently, the issue of insecurity has become increasingly prevalent in Africa, especially in the sub-Saharan region. Regardless of the exclusion of the use of force in pursuit of national interest in international relations by United Nations charter, violence and conflict have continued to appear in various guises on the global stage. Among others are ethnonational struggles for independence, environmental degradation, classical power struggles, regional conflicts, religious extremism. The peacekeeping operations in conflict situations present some critical political underlying structural biases in its pursuit. By so doing, exhibit a missing link in the quest of global peace and security. To address the thrust of Peacekeeping need effective management that facilitate political stability, security and development. On this pedestrian, the study is set to examine the impact of the United Nations delayed response and management of peacekeeping operations in Somalia. Specifically, to identify how the United Nations management of the peacekeeping played out in the restoration and stability of peace in the country. Moreover, the implications on attaining of the state hegemony, multiplication of warlords, economic development and peace/security of this state, between 1991 and 2018. The framework of analysis for this study is Critical theory, using the documentary method of data collection and qualitative descriptive analysis.

Keywords: United Nations, Peacekeeping Operations, Security Crises and Civil wars