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Section 1. Journalism

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THE FAKE NEWS PHENOMENON WITHIN BRITISH MEDIA

The phenomenon of fake news is a growing concern in the contemporary British press environment and needs urgent attention. The lack of strict fact-checking mechanisms, mass distribution, and widespread use of social media platforms are some of the contributing factors to the spread of fake news¹. The power of social media platforms coupled with the vast online outlets has led to an unprecedented level of fake news in the modern British press.

One of the most significant features of fake news in the British press today is the abundance of alternative media sources². The rapid emergence of new journalism platforms such as blogs, podcasts, and YouTube channels, coupled with widespread social media usage, has provided fertile ground for the spread of false or misleading information that masquerades as credible news. The rise of social media influencers, such as the author and influencer Katie Hopkins, who have become prominent figures in the British press by disseminating misleading information on social media platforms, adds to this growing concern³.

Another key feature of the fake news phenomenon in the British press is the lack of strict fact-checking protocols⁴. The quest for speed at the expense of accuracy, combined with the largely self-regulated nature of the British press, has created a conducive environment for the widespread dissemination of fake news. The sensationalist and

¹ Wardle C., & Derakhshan H. Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking. Council of Europe report, 2019.– P. 1–120.

² Matsa K. E., & Shearer E. What Americans know about fake news and media trust. Pew Research Center,– 6. 2018.– P. 101–114.

³ Thornhill J. The agonies of a Brexit relative: fake news, disinformation and misinformation. *Journal of International and Comparative Law*,– 7(1). 2020.– P. 115–132.

⁴ Wardle C., & Derakhshan H. The battle against ‘fake news’ and disinformation: An ongoing global conversation. Council of Europe report, 2017.– P. 1–78.

misleading coverage found in the tabloid press further perpetuate this issue. For example, in 2015, The Sun newspaper ran a headline stating that “1 in 5 Brit Muslims’ sympathy for jihadis”, which was based on a misinterpretation of survey data¹.

Additionally, fake news in the British press often enjoys significant social media distribution. Algorithms favoring clickbait content and sensationalist headlines tend to spread quickly, culminating in the proliferation of fake news and making it difficult to counteract. A prime example of the power of social media is highlighted in the recent case of the Conservative Party who re-branded one of their social media accounts as “factcheckUK” during a party leaders’ debate. This misleading branding was condemned by media regulators but not before it had gained significant exposure on social media².

Social media platforms tend to facilitate the spread of fake news even further. Not only do they provide a conducive environment for the proliferation of untrue information, but they also make it easier for malicious actors to spread fake news faster and more efficiently than traditional news media platforms. A case in point is the misleading headline from the Daily Express in 2016, claiming that the EU would ban British sausages, which was retweeted over 1.000 times³.

To combat the problem of fake news in the British press, news outlets need to prioritize accuracy over speed. This creation can be achieved by implementing better fact-checking mechanisms and protocols. Media regulators should hold news organizations accountable to ensure accurate reporting. Additionally, the wider public needs to develop the ability to scrutinize news sources critically. This calls for the development of media literacy skills that enable individuals to differentiate between credible and unreliable sources of information⁴.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of fake news poses a significant challenge to the credibility of the British press. The abundance of alternative media sources, lack of strict fact-checking protocols, and the reliance on social media platforms, among other factors, pose a significant risk to the quality and integrity of the news. News organizations, media regulators, and the public need to support initiatives such as the implementation of robust fact-checking protocols, strengthening media regulatory frameworks, and developing critical media literacy skills among the public. By doing so, the UK can help safeguard the credibility of the press, ensuring that individuals have access to accurate and trustworthy news sources⁵.

¹ Ofcom. (2016). News consumption in the UK: 2016 report.

² Ofcom. (2020). Report of the investigation into the rebranding of the Conservative Party’s Twitter account.

³ Fletcher R., & Park J. The impact of newsroom automation on fake news and fact-checking. *Digital Journalism*, – 5(4). 2017.– P. 443–468.

⁴ Katz R. Fake news and media literacy: 10 reasons to be optimistic. *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies*, – 8(1). 2019.– P. 61–77.

⁵ Friedland L.-A. Battling fake news: A summary of key recommendations towards building more trustworthy journalism. *Global Investigative Journalism Network*. 2018.

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POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ATHENIAN “PLAGUE” (430–426 BC)

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ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ АФИНСКОЙ «ЧУМЫ» (430–426 ГГ. ДО Н.Э.)

На сегодняшний день Афинская «чума» (430–426 гг. до н.э.) является одной из самых известных эпидемий в истории, несмотря на то, что о ней существует не так много источников. Эпидемия началась в Аттике на второй год Пелопоннесской войны (431–404 до н.э.) во время осады Афин, которые в то время были лидером Деллосской симмахии, которая в дальнейшем трансформировалась в Афинскую архэ. Когда «чума» только начала распространяться, Афины были переполнены иностранными беженцами и местными жителями из сельской местности. Данный рост населения перегрузил инфраструктуру и ресурсы города и создал условия для роста эпидемии, которая распространилась на другие части Греции. Канадский историк Херберт Невел Коуч полагает, что Афины не полностью оправились от «чумы» в течение целого поколения: скорее всего, последствия эпидемии помогли Афинам проиграть Пелопоннесскую войну, которая положила конец власти гегемонии города. Следовательно, от-

крытое и принимающее государство в Греции, где проживали иностранцы (так называемые «метэки»), испытало серьезные проблемы. Отношение афинян к метэкам в конечном итоге изменилось в V и IV веках, но не в лучшую сторону.

Согласно Фукидиду¹, афиняне считали, что «чума» возникла в Северной Африке (Эфиопии) и пришла из Персии во второй год войны (430 год до н.э.). «Чума» появилась летом во время осады Спарты, но в данный период Афины еще не были заражены. «Чума» впервые поразила афинский портовый город Пирей, предполагалось, что источники воды были отравлены армией противника. Затем болезнь вернулась в 429-м и в 427-м гг., она стала причиной гибели афинского полководца Перикла.

Сегодня неизвестно, каким было данное заболевание: существует почти тридцать различных теорий о патогене². Определенные историки предполагают, что описание «чумы», которое дал Фукидид, было составлено не сразу после войны, а через определенное время³, в отличие от работы Даниэля Дефо «Журнал года чумы» (*Journal of a Plague Year*). Также предполагалось, что это были тиф, корь или грипп, поскольку данные болезни быстро распространяются в непосредственной близости и их симптомы имеют некоторое сходство с тем, что описывал Фукидид. Другие районы Средиземноморья, включая Лемнос и Рим, были поражены болезнью примерно в то же время, вероятно, это был тот же патоген.

Анализ ДНК пульпы зуба из Афинского некрополя, датированной указанным периодом, указывал на брюшной тиф, патоген, переносимый водой⁴. Мы не ставим в задачу определения точного патогена, так как сегодня имеется достаточно информации о его общей природе и способа передачи. Эпидемия быстро распространялась воздушно-капельным путём и смерть от нее составляла примерно одну неделю. Выжившие были ослабленными, болезнь не носила сезонного характера, и источники свидетельствуют о том, что у тех, кто выжил, было в дальнейшем очень слабое здоровье. Эпидемия продолжалась более трех лет, в течение которых погибла треть населения города. Болезнь была новой для жителей, и инфекция, по-видимому, давала иммунитет выжившим, так как она не поражала одного и того же человека дважды. Сам Фукидид также был одним из тех, кто пережил инфекцию. Он полагал, что «чума» особенно сильно поразила беженцев из сельской местности, так как они проживали в антисанитарных условиях. Эпидемия

¹ Фукидид. История. – Л., Изд-во «Наука», 1981 г.

² Rubincam C. Thucydides and Defoe: Two Plague Narratives. *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, – 11(2). 2020. – 280 p.

³ Orwin C. Stasis and Plague: Thucydides on the Dissolution of Society. *The Journal of Politics*, – 50(4). 1988. – 900 p.

⁴ Stewart A. Imag(in)ing the Other: Amazons and Ethnicity in Fifth-Century Athens. *Poetics Today*, – 16(4). 1995. – 750 p.

ослабила военную силу Афин в то время, когда она была им необходима, данный факт стал своего рода «террором», который напугал, разрушил общество и вызвал социальные потрясения, в конечном итоге, они оказались катастрофическими для таких групп меньшинств, как сословие иммигрантов-метэков. Фукидид отметил ряд следующих социальных потрясений, которые вызвала эпидемия. Родственники и друзья не хоронили умерших, так как боялись заразиться. В нарушение строгих греческих погребальных обрядов тела мертвых не предавали погребению. Их не трогали птицы-падальщики и собаки, судя по всему, они также пострадали от падения популяции начала чумы. Люди не боялись законов, так как верили, что скоро умрут, и открыто занимались аморальными делами: «теперь каждый легче отваживался на такие дела, которые прежде скрывались во избежание нареканий и разнuzданности»¹.

«Чума» стала для города демографической катастрофой. Число погибших граждан среди трети всего потерянного населения (некоторые из этих метэков и рабов) неизвестно. Существуют источники о том, что данная эпидемия изменила демографический баланс между гражданами и метэками и привела к дальнейшему ужесточению ограничений в отношении метэков, которое началось в 450-х годах. Закон, принятый в 451 году, ограничивал афинское гражданство только теми, кто родился от афинских граждан, был восстановлен в 403-м году, через год после окончания войны². Враждебность по отношению к некоренным жителям усилилась после окончания войны. В долгосрочной перспективе реакция афинских граждан на потери от «чумы» и войны заключалась в ужесточении правил гражданства, а не в их открытии и увеличении числа граждан, позволяя более богатым и трудолюбивым метэкам войти в ряды афинян. Это можно объяснить оценкой Фукидида, согласно которой городу потребовалось пятнадцать лет с момента первоначальной вспышки «чумы», для восстановления численности населения³.

Афиняне были обеспокоены тем, что им нужно сохранить своих граждан, но не были убеждены, что им нужно снова открыть гражданство (как это было три четверти века назад) не афинянам. Кроме того, у них был пример спартанцев, которые отказались расширять свои ряды до точки, когда они вошли в постоянное сокращение численности населения в четвертом веке. Это произошло после того, как им удалось подчинить Афины во время войны и доказать, что они являются доминирующей силой в мире⁴.

¹ Фукидид. История. – Л., Изд-во «Наука», 1981 г.

² Stewart A. Imag(in)ing the Other: Amazons and Ethnicity in Fifth-Century Athens. *Poetics Today*, – 16(4). 1995. – 750 p.

³ Holladay A. J., & Poole J. C. F. Thucydides and the Plague of Athens. *The Classical Quarterly, New Series*, – 29(2). 1979. – P. 282–300.

⁴ Там же.

Будучи крупнейшим и наиболее космополитическим греческим городом-государством в пятом веке, Афины стали объектом иммиграции из других частей Греции¹. В то время как демократия была политической формой правления в некоторых греческих городах-государствах (но в Спарте существовала олигархическая форма правления) голосующие граждане были ограничены свободнорожденными мужчинами, родившимися в данном городе-государстве. Неполноправные переселенцы из других городов-государств были известны как «метэки». Данный термин впервые появляется в документах начала пятого века².

Метэки были чужеземцами из других городов-государств Греции, обычно торговцами или ремесленниками. Метэк-мужчина, например, бывший раб, мог купить себе место в гражданском обществе, а метэк-женщина могла выйти за него замуж. В противном случае они оставались гражданами города-государства, из которого они эмигрировали, и могли иметь права только в своем родном городе, а не в Афинах. Метэки жили в большинстве греческих городов, особенно в Афинах. Но афинские граждане в начале пятого века были обеспокоены огромным притоком иммигрантов из других областей Греции после персидских войн в 490-х и 480-х годах³.

Ситуация достигла критической точки в 451-м году, когда государственный деятель Перикл ввел закон о гражданстве, запрещавший всем, кроме афинян, рожденных от двух афинских граждан, становиться гражданами и, следовательно, пользоваться преимуществами афинской политики и имперской гегемонии. Это уменьшило власть и авторитет метэков в Афинах, а смешанные браки для метэков утратили способность получения афинского гражданства. Таким образом был создан эндогамный этнический высший класс.

В то время метэки составляли от одной пятой до половины свободных афинян, следовательно, закон был ответом на этнические опасения коренных афинян, что они будут вытеснены иноверцами, особенно в результате браков молодых метэков с афинскими мужчинами⁴. Метэку стало намного труднее стать гражданином. Он должен был сделать это, заплатив городу большие суммы денег и внося свой вклад в его развитие. Неизвестно, мог ли метэк, купивший свой статус таким образом, применить его к своей жене и детям, хотя этого нельзя исключить. В противном случае любой предыдущий брак мог стать недействительным после получения им гражданства, в результате чего его дети окажутся незаконнорожденными. Метэки

¹ Gomme A. W. *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B. C.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1933. – 225 p. – С. 392.

² Cawkwell G. L. *The Decline of Sparta.* *Classical Quarterly*, – 33. 1983. – 512 p.

³ Connor W. R. *Thucydides* (2. ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. – 315 p.

⁴ Vickers M. *Pericles on Stage: Political Comedy in Aristophanes' Early Plays.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997. – 185 p.

обычно могли стать гражданами только в конце жизни после многих лет работы на благо города¹. В то время как женщин из класса метэков называли «метэками», а из класса граждан – «гражданками», афинские женщины не обладали гражданскими правами. Несмотря на это, женщина метэк также теряла возможность выйти замуж за гражданина и наделять своих детей статусом отца в силу закона. Сам Перикл дождался до того, чтобы пожалеть о своем законодательстве, когда вступил в брак с женщиной-метэком и вынужден просить афинян признать его детей законными гражданами².

В данный период, возможно, произошло слияние мифических женщин-амазонок с персами, вторгшимися в Грецию в 480-х годах. Этническая напряженность также проявлялась в двух пьесах во время войны: Еврипида Медея (431) и Ипполит (428). В данных пьесах брак с иностранкой изображается как неразумная идея, ведущая к трагедии³. Здесь иностранцы классифицируются как женщины (слабые и непослушные) и варвары, приносящие несчастье Афинам⁴.

Хотя принятие метэка в афинское гражданство не было невозможным, оно было редким и крайне невероятным событием, особенно в пятом и четвертом веках. В исторических источниках есть много судебных запретов и судебных дел против метэков, выдающих себя за граждан. Они увеличились после принятия закона 451-го года и ограничения не ослабли ни после «чумы», ни после войны. Поскольку некоторые метэки стали довольно богатыми (из-за того, что основная причина иммиграции заключалась в стремлении участвовать в афинской свободной торговле), они нашли способы расплачиваться с чиновниками и скрывать свой первоначальный статус, становясь де-факто гражданами. Однако цена открытия была высока, обычно происходило понижение до статуса раба. Даже невиновного метэка могла постигнуть такая судьба в случае, если он не имел влиятельного покровителя среди афинских граждан. Метэки больше подлежали военному призыву и налогообложению. Хотя по закону метэки-мужчины не были исключены из дачи показаний в афинских судах (как женщины, дети и рабы), большинство свидетелей в судебных делах были гражданами. Метэки также не могли выступать в качестве присяжных на судебных процессах. Что наиболее важно, они не могли владеть землей, основным традиционным источником богатства афинских граждан. Это не остановило переселение в Афины, но привело к появлению

¹ Craik E. M. Thucydides on the Plague: Physiology of Flux and Fixation. *The Classical Quarterly, New Series*, – 51(1). 2001. – 170 p.

² Vickers M. *Pericles on Stage: Political Comedy in Aristophanes' Early Plays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997. – 185 p.

³ Perrin B. *Plutarch's Lives*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916. – 464 p.

⁴ Vickers M. *Pericles on Stage: Political Comedy in Aristophanes' Early Plays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997. – 185 p.

небогатого сословия между гражданами и рабами, что побудило некоторых метэков уехать. Например, во время войны произошел упадок производства керамики, чего не было в предыдущих войнах, вероятно, это происходило из-за появлений новых ограничений и возросшей ксенофобии среди коренных афинян¹. Гражданство в четвертом веке не обязательно обеспечивало безопасность бывшему метэку и его детям. Аполлодор, писатель четвертого века, часто вступал в тяжбы с другими людьми, включая своего отчима. Его отец был метэком².

Многие иски Аполлодора касались дел, которые посягали на его честь как гражданина и могли показать тревогу по поводу того, что он потомок метэка, неуверенность в своем гражданстве, право которого он должен был постоянно защищать от других, «настоящих» граждан. Положение метэков в четвертом веке (после «чумы») было более нестабильным, чем в пятом веке (до «чумы»), и, похоже, отразилось на тревогах метэков, бывших метэков и их потомков. Можно сделать вывод, что другие изменения в афинском обществе повлияли на статус метэков, включая саму Пелопоннесскую войну.

Фукидид не рассматривал изменение отношения к метэкам. Опираясь на его труды, можно исследовать отношение афинян к эпидемии, а также дальнейшее настроение по отношению к иностранцам. Положение метэков в Афинах вначале было положительным, но в отличие от других городов-государств Греции, оно было юридически и социально неопределенным. Это стало еще более очевидным после эпидемии «чумы» в IV веке, когда метэки окончательно потеряли право стать гражданами и, возможно, желание получить афинское гражданство, так как Афины также потеряли власть и престиж, а также необходимость расширяться. В связи с тем, что они не имели прямой политической власти, государство утратило право покупать наиболее надежную и важную форму богатства (землю), метэки, таким образом, также не имели средств для расширения своих юридических или политических прав в Афинском городе-государстве. События войны и «чумы» склоняли хрупкое равновесие против них. Хотя с данной точки зрения трудно сказать, насколько упадок мешал метэкам обосноваться в Афинах, вызванное этим снижение прав (и отсутствие интереса метэков к идентификации как метэков) в четвертом веке указывает на то, что метэческий класс никогда не был должным образом интегрирован в афинское общество. Причиной этого стала война между двумя могущественными городами-государствами Греции и последствия «чумы».

¹ MacDonald B. R. The Emigration of Potters from Athens in the Late Fifth Century B. C. and its Effect on the Attic Pottery Industry. *American Journal of Archaeology*, – 85(2). 1981. – 180 p.

² Longrigg J. The Great Plague of Athens. *History of Science*, – 18. 1980. – 270 p.

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Section 3. Pedagogy Sciences

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE AND ITS PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Abstract. The phenomenon of variation in language learning outcomes among seemingly similar learners is a prominent issue within foreign language classrooms.

Within this conference paper we propose a reevaluation of the traditional dichotomy of “strong vs weak” language learners by employing the concept of foreign language aptitude. This psychological construct encompasses the cognitive abilities that underlie the observed disparities in learners’ performance.

The Classical View of Foreign Language Aptitude, which consists of four fundamental abilities (phonetic coding, grammatical sensitivity, inductive language learning, and rote memory), provides a framework for both operationalizing and assessing various aptitude levels. The outcomes obtained from aptitude assessments offer instructors quantitative data that can be utilized to tailor instruction and adapt teaching methodologies according to the specific needs of individual learners.

Through the identification of deficiencies and the adjustment of instructional practices, instructors are able to optimize the learning experience and facilitate learners’ progress. The practical implications of foreign language aptitude assessment empower instructors to align learners’ abilities with appropriate instructional approaches, thereby enhancing language learning outcomes.

Keywords: progress pace variation, foreign language aptitude, instructional strategy adaptation, assessment results.

The variation in the pace of progress among language learners placed in similar educational settings represents a highly prominent (if not the most notable) phenomenon within the context of foreign language classrooms.

No complex instruments or intricate computations are necessary to perceive the aforementioned discrepancy. Merely immersing oneself in the environment of formal language education would reveal that certain individuals exhibit a superior aptitude for language learning compared to others.

Foreign language instructors commonly acknowledge the presence of “stronger” and “weaker” students in their classrooms, often without delving into a more intricate examination of the underlying reasons and contributing factors.

However, it can be contended that reevaluating the dichotomy of “strong” and “weak” language learners from the perspective of the psychological construct of foreign language aptitude could potentially facilitate the attainment of the desired outcomes for both language learners and instructors. Such a reconceptualization may prove beneficial in enhancing the learning experience and overall performance in foreign language studies.

A psychological construct is a “postulated attribute of people”¹ encompassing a number of cognitive abilities that cannot be observed or measured directly² yet underlie actually observed differences in the behavior of an individual expressed in response to external stimuli³.

Hence, the determination of which cognitive abilities should be considered as integral components of a psychological construct significantly influences both its conceptualization, involving its formal definition, and its operationalization, involving the conditions under which a behavioral response can be elicited to draw conclusions regarding the construct⁴.

Multiple approaches exist for the conceptualization and subsequent operationalization of the foreign language aptitude (FLA) construct. However, when considering the practical implementation of this construct within a standard foreign language classroom, particularly when instructors aim to align their instruction with the aptitude profiles of their language learners, the Classical view of FLA should be employed.

Espoused by the founding father of foreign language aptitude research, John Bissell Carroll, *the Classical View of FLA* suggests that foreign language aptitude comprises four basic abilities:

- ***the phonetic coding ability*** – the capacity to convert unfamiliar auditory stimuli, including individual sounds or sequences of sounds, into a form that allows

¹ Cronbach J. and Meehl P. E. “Construct Validity in Psychological Tests”. Psychol Bull.,– Vol. 52. 1955.– P. 178.

² Wen Z., Biedroń A. and Skehan P. “Foreign language aptitude theory: Yesterday, today and tomorrow”. Language Teaching,– Vol. 50.– No. 1. 2017.– P. 2. Doi: 10.1017/S0261444816000276

³ Wesche M., Edwards H. and Wells W. “Foreign language aptitude and intelligence”. Appl Psycholinguist,– Vol. 3.– No. 2. 1982.– P. 128. Doi: 10.1017/S0142716400006664

⁴ Zverev I. “Uzbekistan MoD Foreign Language Aptitude Test: A Critical Evaluation”. Filologiya Masalalari,– Vol. 29.– No. 2. 2019.– P. 138–151.

their retrieval at a later time interval, i.e. the materials must be “recognized, identified and remembered over time”¹;

- **the grammatical sensitivity ability** – the ability to perceive and comprehend the diverse functions that different lexical items serve within an expression, without the need for explicit guidance or instruction.;
- **the inductive language learning ability** – the ability to deduce grammatical rules, linguistic structures, and semantic interpretations of lexical items from unfamiliar language materials independently, without reliance on an instructor or external assistance.;
- **the rote memory for foreign language materials** – the ability to memorize and retain substantial amounts of new vocabulary or grammatical structures in a foreign language.

Foreign language instructors have the option to assess each of these abilities using the various FLA operationalization instruments available online, some of which are offered free of charge. However, it is important to consider the practical applications that can be derived from these assessment results.

Within any instructional setting, language learners are required to employ specific cognitive abilities, either individually or in combination. As a result, any alteration in the instructional context necessitates corresponding adjustments in the sets of abilities utilized by students. The outcomes obtained from FLA component assessment tests can provide instructors with quantitative data that substantiates the requirement for such modifications among particular students. These results can serve as valuable evidence supporting the need to adapt instructional strategies to address the specific cognitive abilities and aptitude profiles of individual learners.

Therefore, a language instructor may conscientiously devise and deliver an inductive grammar and vocabulary presentation, anticipating enhanced student performance. However, the instructor may encounter a situation where, despite their diligent efforts, the desired outcomes are not attained.

The observed disparity may lead the instructor to speculate that the inductive presentation approach may not be optimal for their students. In order to evaluate the validity of this hypothesis, the instructor can utilize an assessment instrument to measure their students’ inductive language learning ability. If a group of students, or even an individual student, obtains a low score on such a test, it would be prudent for the instructor to contemplate eliminating elements of inductive grammar and vocabulary presentation from the lessons. This adjustment has the potential to save significant time and effort for both the language learners and the instructor.

¹ Sparks R. L. and Ganschow L. “Foreign language learning difficulties: affective or native language aptitude differences?” *Modern Language Journal*, – Vol. 75.– No. 1. 1991.– P. 6.

Additionally, low scores on any of the other tests can provide valuable insights to the instructor regarding the remedial measures that may be necessary to support a language learner or a group of language learners in their endeavors.

These scores furnish the instructor with a comprehensive understanding of the particular language learning skills that their students may be deficient in, thereby offering a range of possibilities for enhancing or addressing those skills through customized instructional approaches. This tailored instruction has the potential to yield mutual benefits for both the language learners and the instructor.

The FLA component assessment serves a dual purpose as it enables the identification of potential deficiencies in students' foreign language learning while also facilitating modifications in the instructional process to address those deficiencies. The assessment results offer foreign language instructors the opportunity to align learners' abilities with appropriate instructional approaches.

Through the assessment, instructors can diagnose potential deficiencies in foreign language learning, allowing them to pinpoint specific areas where students may encounter difficulties or require additional support. This diagnostic aspect helps identify gaps in language aptitude, such as vocabulary retention, grammar comprehension, or oral fluency, among others.

Furthermore, the FLA assessment not only aids in diagnostics but also facilitates the modification of the instructional process to provide targeted remedies for the identified deficiencies. Drawing upon the assessment results, instructors can customize their teaching strategies, materials, and approaches to align with the individual needs of the learners. This personalized approach ensures that instruction is tailored to match the learners' abilities, thereby optimizing the learning experience and promoting greater progress.

Essentially, the FLA assessment empowers instructors to refine their teaching methods by utilizing the diagnostic information to identify areas for improvement. Subsequently, they can adapt their instructional practices to offer effective remedies for learners' deficiencies. This dynamic process allows for continuous refinement of the instructional approach, leading to enhanced learning outcomes.

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THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IN THE ORGANIZATION OF MENTORING OF TEACHING STAFF OF RURAL EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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РОЛЬ УНИВЕРСИТЕТА В ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ НАСТАВНИЧЕСТВА ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКИХ КАДРОВ СЕЛЬСКИХ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫХ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЙ

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются возможности университета в организации наставничества в системе «преподаватель университета – опытный педагог – молодые педагоги сельских школ. Анализируются ресурсы вуза как площадки для организации наставничества, учитывающие специфику деятельности молодых специалистов в сельских образовательных организациях.

Ключевые слова: наставничество, ресурсы университета в организации наставничества, молодой педагог сельской образовательной организации.

В современной педагогике особую актуальность приобретает институт наставничества молодых специалистов на рабочем месте. 2023 год объявлен Указом Президента РФ Годом педагога и наставника в России. Считается, что институт наставничества в воспитании имеет многовековую историю и упоминания о нем содержатся еще в античной философской литературе.

В Средние века в работах Э. Роттердамского, Ф. Аквинского, Н. Макиавелли прослеживаются идеи наставничества. Попытки создания и систематизации правил для воспитания и требования к самим воспитателям предпринимались в Древнерусских источниках и более поздних образцах русской педагогической литературы, в частности в «Поучении Владимира Мономаха» (12 в.), «Домострое». Максим Грек сказал о грамматике, что она «начало входа в Филосо-

фию – учиться долго, со многим трудом и биением». Педагогические наставления содержатся в «Книге притчей Соломоновых» и «Книге премудрости Иисуса сына Сирахова», более позднем «Юности честном зерцале или Показании к житейскому обхождению, собранное от разных авторов» Петра I. В зарубежной истории педагогической мысли наставничество рассматривали в разные периоды Ян Амос Коменский в «Великой дидактике» (16–17 в.), Жан-Жак Руссо в трактате «Эмиль, или О воспитании» (18 в.), Иоганн Генрих Песталоцци в своем труде «Как Гертруда учит своих детей» (19 в.). Позднее К. Д. Ушинский в книге «Человек как предмет воспитания. Опыт педагогической антропологии» (19 в.), А. А. Хованский как редактор первого русского научно-педагогического журнала «Филологические Записки» (19 в.), В. А. Сухомлинский в книге «Сердце отдаю детям» (20 в.) и многие другие. Каждый из них внес значительный вклад в развитие педагогической мысли, оставив неизгладимый след.

Считается, что понятие «наставничество» приобрело свое современное значение в середине 60-х годов XX века и рассматривалось как действенная форма воспитания и профессиональной подготовки молодежи.

Как отмечают Н. Ю. Синягина, Т. Ю. Райфшнайдер, «термин «наставничество» произошел от английского слова «mentor». Так звали героя древнегреческой мифологии – мудрого советчика, пользовавшегося всеобщим доверием. .. Наставничество в своем лучшем проявлении связано с компетентностью, опытом и четким определением ролей. Наставниками, как правило, становились люди авторитетные, с хорошей профессиональной подготовкой и богатым жизненным опытом»¹.

Грет Льюис предлагает рассматривать «наставничество» как «систему отношений и ряд процессов, когда один человек предлагает помощь, руководство, совет и поддержку другому»².

Понятие наставничества разрабатывалось в контексте сопровождения молодых специалистов при начале трудовой деятельности. В 80-е годы XX века возрастает интерес к этому процессу, что вызывает к жизни ряд исследований в психологии труда. Популярность в научной и практической педагогике приобрели концепции Д. Меггинсона (D. Megginson), Д. Клаттербака (D. Clutterbuck), Э. Парслоу (E. Parsloe) и других. С появлением множества исследований появилась путаница в употреблявшейся авторами разнообразной терминологии, а также в появившемся множестве моделей организации наставнической деятельности:

¹ Синягина Н. Ю., Райфшнайдер Т. Ю. Наставничество в системе образования России. – М.: Рыбаков Фонд, 2016. – 153 с.

² Настольная книга «Наставничество: эффективная форма обучения»: информационно-метод. материалы / авт.-сост. Нугуманова Л. Н., Яковенко Т. В. – 2-е издание, доп., перераб. – Казань: ИРО РТ, 2020. – 51 с.

«наставничество», «менторинг», «коучинг», «обучение на рабочем месте», «супервизия» и т.д. стали употребляться как синонимичные.

Единым остается до настоящего момента только представление об особой миссии и пользе наставничества. Несомненным признается тот факт, что «Наставничество является проверенной стратегией, доказавшей свою способность помочь молодым людям реализовать их потенциал при любых обстоятельствах. За счет опыта других людей оно способно наиболее полно решать задачи образования и воспитания»¹.

Специфическая роль университета в формировании ресурсов наставничества педагогических кадров сельских образовательных организаций состоит в определении и аккумуляции его возможностей содействия молодым учителям². В первую очередь, они представлены человеческим ресурсом – преподавателями, обладающими знаниями, опытом и педагогическим мастерством, связями с педагогическими работниками (позволяющими аккумулировать опыт школы и университета).

Нугуманова А. Н. и Яковенко Т. В. определяют наставничество как «универсальную технологию передачи опыта, знаний, формирования навыков, компетенций, метакомпетенций и ценностей через неформальное взаимообогащающее общение, основанное на доверии и партнерстве»³.

А. В. Томильцев пишет о том, что «неформализованные знания – продукт личного опыта человека, который отражает его убеждения, моральные ценности и взгляды. Эти знания нельзя увидеть или задокументировать, а передать их можно только посредством личного и непосредственного общения»⁴.

Для начинающего педагога это будут особенности поведения с коллегами, администрацией в данной конкретной образовательной организации, ориентация в разнообразных уникальных условиях трудового коллектива, что существенно сэкономит время на адаптацию молодого специалиста на рабочем месте. Также, например, могут быть переданы эффективные способы общения с агрессивно настроенными родителями, обучающимися с высокой степенью индивидуальности (одаренными, с ОВЗ, воспитывавшихся в особых условиях и т.д.).

¹ Сиягина Н. Ю., Райфшнайдер Т. Ю. Наставничество в системе образования России. – М.: Рыбаков Фонд, 2016. – 153 с.

² Невзорова М. С., Корепанова Е. В. Современные тенденции развития высшего педагогического образования в России // Наука и Образование. 2022. – Т. 5. – № 1.

³ Наставничество в системе образования России. Практическое пособие для кураторов в образовательных организациях / Под ред. Н. Ю. Сиягиной, Т. Ю. Райфшнайдер. – М.: Рыбаков Фонд, 2016. – 153 с.

⁴ Томильцев А. В. Возрождение наставничества как тренд профессионального образования // Стратегии развития социальных общностей, институтов и территорий: материалы VII Международной научно-практической конференции. Екатеринбург, 19–20 апреля 2021 г.: в 2-х т. – Екатеринбург: Изд-во Урал. ун-та, 2021. – Т. 1. – С. 366–379.

Эти знания можно передать «в системе «молодой педагог – наставник» путем «прямого контакта – «с глазу на глаз», в виде рекомендаций «делай как я» или при помощи специальных процедур извлечения знаний. Во многих случаях именно скрытое практическое знание является ключевым для принятия решений и управления. Скрытые знания включают в себя взаимоотношения между людьми, нормы поведения, общепринятые ценности и стандартные оперативные процедуры»¹.

Нужно определить и молодого педагога сельской школы как субъект, которому наставничество адресовано. Чаще всего нуждающийся в наставнике – это начинающий свою трудовую деятельность молодой специалист, который только прибыл на место работы, обладающий общим опытом профессиональной деятельности от 0 до 3 лет (Н. Ю. Синягина, В. А. Березина и др.). Причем такой молодой педагог может либо испытывать проблемы в адаптации на рабочем месте, либо не сталкивавшийся еще с трудностями на работе, но нуждающийся в сопровождении вхождения в коллектив коллег и освоения его традиций.

По результатам диагностических исследований проведенных на кафедре педагогики и психологии Социально-педагогического института ФГБОУ ВО Мичуринского ГАУ, выявлены особенности молодых педагогов сельских школ, свидетельствующие о необходимости введения института наставничества:

- малая мобильность, не может выехать, при которой предпочтительны дистанционные формы работы;
- ограниченность информационной и социальной среды, которые могут приводить к снижению и искажению мотивации профессионального роста; недостаточность информации об инновациях (они как бы перестают существовать, поступают в случайном порядке); ценности продолжают формироваться в обедненной среде;
- ограниченность экономических ресурсов, имеющихся по месту работы;
- потребность в кросс-профессиональном консультировании наставника-педагога и наставника-представителя сельского хозяйства, отражающих специфику подготовки выпускников сельских образовательных организаций.

Подбор наставников молодому педагогу сельской школы из числа возможных кандидатур также требует детального изучения.

Необходимо признать, как справедливо отмечают Нонака Н., Такеучи Х., что «наставник передает не только и не столько явное, письменно зафиксированное знание, что можно получить и самостоятельно, но, в первую очередь неявное, а зачастую и скрытое знание (интуитивные знания, ощущения, впечатления, мне-

¹ Томильцев А. В. Возрождение наставничества как тренд профессионального образования // Стратегии развития социальных общностей, институтов и территорий: материалы VII Международной научно-практической конференции. Екатеринбург, 19–20 апреля 2021 г.: в 2-х т. – Екатеринбург: Изд-во Урал. ун-та, 2021. – Т. 1. – С. 366–379.

ния). Рассмотрение соотношения неявных и явных знаний, показывает, что знание, поддающееся выражению словами и числами, всего лишь верхушка айсберга всего знания; другими словами, мы знаем больше, чем можем сказать»¹.

Специалистам образовательных организаций, запускающим программу наставничества, могут быть полезны методические и практические материалы национального ресурсного центра наставничества МЕНТОРИ www.mentori.ru. В статье «Что заставляет наставничество работать?» на сайте www.mentoring.org доктор Роудс выделяет четыре основных принципа для построения эффективных отношений в сфере наставничества: «проведение обоснованных и тщательных проверок потенциальных наставников; подбор наставников для наставляемых на основе схожести интересов; обучение наставников продолжительностью не менее шести часов; обеспечение обучения и поддержки на протяжении всего процесса взаимодействия наставника и наставляемого»².

К участию в реализуемых моделях в качестве наставника допускается также не произвольно выбранный опытный преподаватель университета либо педагог. Исследователи и практики сформулировали ряд требований к специалисту, который может стать наставником для молодого педагога. Л. Н. Нугуманова, Т. В. Яковенко и другие предлагают применять следующую систему требований к кандидатуре наставника. Это должен быть «участник программы наставничества, имеющий успешный опыт в достижении жизненного, личностного и профессионального результата, готовый и компетентный поделиться опытом и навыками, необходимыми для стимуляции и поддержки процессов самореализации и самосовершенствования наставляемого»³.

Наставник в педагогической профессии, по меньшей мере, это опытный педагог, обладающий значимыми профессиональными достижениями (автор учебных пособий и материалов, ведущий активную методическую работу; активный участник научной и практико-ориентированной деятельности (научных и практических конференций, семинаров и т.д.; руководитель учебных и педагогических практик); занимающий активную позицию в общественной деятельности; обладающий обширными связями в среде коллег; демонстрирующий высокий уровень коммуникативных способностей и мастерства в общении с коллегами и обучающимися.

¹ Нонака Н., Такеучи Х. Компания – создатель знания. Зарождение и развитие инноваций в японских фирмах / Пер. с англ. М.: ЗАО «Олимп-бизнес», 2003. – С. 18. С.18.

² Наставничество в системе образования России. Практическое пособие для кураторов в образовательных организациях / Под ред. Н. Ю. Синягиной, Т. Ю. Райфшнайдер. – М.: Рыбаков Фонд, 2016. – 153 с.

³ Наставничество в системе образования России. Практическое пособие для кураторов в образовательных организациях / Под ред. Н. Ю. Синягиной, Т. Ю. Райфшнайдер. – М.: Рыбаков Фонд, 2016. – С.6.

Для реализации различных задач в организации наставничества педагогических кадров сельских образовательных организаций возможно привлечение двух типов наставников.

Наставник-консультант из числа преподавателей университета, осуществляющий свои функции как в отношении молодого педагога, так и наставника-предметника – педагога сельской школы, в которой проходит адаптацию молодой специалист. Наставник-консультант обеспечивает теоретические и методические аспекты проводимой работы, помогает подобрать в соответствии с потребностями практики нужные технологии, методики, методы, формы работы, адаптировать их к конкретным условиям образовательного процесса; определяет в ходе наблюдения и совместной деятельности проблемы в деятельности молодого специалиста и дает рекомендации по их преодолению; совместно с наставником-предметником вырабатывает стратегии профессионального развития начинающего педагога.

Наставник-предметник избирается из числа педагогов-мастеров того же предметного направления, что и молодой специалист. Зачастую он выбирается из числа педагогов той же образовательной организации, в которой начинает свою работу молодой учитель. Роль наставника здесь состоит как в методическом сопровождении, так и в поддержке и консультировании в частных вопросах взаимодействия с субъектами образовательного процесса. Существует также ряд требований, предъявляющихся не только к его профессиональному опыту, но и к качеству сложившихся в отношениях с окружающими людьми. Кандидатура может отклоняться по тем основаниям, что наставник подвергался сам когда-то моббингу; неустойчив или незрел эмоционально или идеологически (например, излишне идентифицирует себя с детьми или коллегами, застенчив, замкнут, вспыльчив, конфликтен и т.д.); часто меняет места работы; сам не желает брать ответственность за наставляемых и т.д.

Наставничество может быть организовано либо на базе самой сельской образовательной организации, где молодой педагог начинает свою деятельность, либо в университете. Помимо поиска наставника и установления холдинга в диаде «молодой педагог – наставник», базовая образовательная организация обеспечивает их отношения юридически путем разработки и заключения соответствующих договоров, а также индивидуальных программ обучения подопечных.

Кроме того, университет моделирует способы взаимодействия наставника с молодым педагогом. Так, А. Н. Нугуманова, Т. В. Яковенко¹ предлагают как варианты организации отношений:

¹ Настольная книга «Наставничество: эффективная форма обучения»: информационно-метод. материалы / авт.-сост. Нугуманова А. Н., Яковенко Т. В. – 2-е издание, доп., перераб. – Казань: ИРО РТ, 2020. – 51 с.

– Традиционное личное наставничество как личное общение в даиде «опытный педагог – молодой педагог» на срок 3–6–9–12 месяцев или ситуационное (обращение по мере необходимости).

– Краткосрочное или целеполагающее наставничество в форме встреч с определенным графиком для решения тактических профессиональных задач и получить быстрый результат по конкретным вопросам.

– Скоростное наставничество как однократная встреча с высококвалифицированным наставником, в том числе для установления нужных для профессионального роста контактов.

– Флеш-наставничество, реализованное в виде непродолжительной, не более часа, перекрестной дискуссии по обмену жизненным и профессиональным опытом с молодыми педагогами.

– Виртуальное наставничество организуется через различные интернет-платформы дистанционно.

– Реверсивное наставничество представляет собой «наставничество наоборот», где ведущую роль принимает молодой педагог в части сотворчества в тандеме опыта и новых технологий.

– Саморегулируемое наставничество предполагает самовыдвижение наставников, которое дает возможность отбора только мотивированных опытных педагогов для работы с начинающими.

– Командное наставничество реализуется группой наставников, обладающих исключительными компетенциями в отдельных сферах профессиональной деятельности, с группой молодых специалистов или отдельными кадрами (например, при подготовке к руководящей должности).

– «Обучение действием» представляет собой совместную практическую работу наставника и наставляемого непосредственно по месту профессиональной деятельности.

В качестве вывода отметим, что все перечисленные формы организации наставничества показывают довольно высокую продуктивность в работе с начинающими педагогами как по отдельности, так и в композициях. Но существуют и ограничения в их применении, связанные со спецификой работы сельских школ. Так, сельскому педагогу не будут доступны частые поездки в университет, а его наставнику-преподавателю в школу по месту работы наставляемого, тем более в ситуативном формате. Возникает необходимость организации интерактивной платформы, на которой могли бы встречаться наставники в онлайн-формате. Такая организация позволит реализовать практически все перечисленные выше модели в соответствии с потребностями и возможностями участников образовательных отношений. В том числе наиболее сложная для онлайн-работы форма обучения действием, кросс-профессиональная консультация с участием специалистов

различных профилей (например, наука, школьное образование, сельское хозяйство, IT-технологии) с некоторыми ограничениями доступна для реализации. Сложнее ситуация в организации наставничества с молодыми учителями сельских школ обстоит в отношении перестройки ценностей, системы потребностей, ожиданий, целей молодого специалиста под влиянием новой профессиональной среды. Здесь задача наставников, и в первую очередь, из научно-педагогической организации, состоит в поддержании связи науки и практики, а также соответствующей направленности у наставляемого.

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Section 3. Economic Sciences

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THE IMPACT OF REMITTANCES ON THE ECONOMY OF ALBANIANS

Abstract

*According to*¹*” Remittances, usually understood as the money or goods that migrants send back to families and friends in origin countries, are often the most direct and well-known link between migration and development “. Despite Global Headwinds, remittances Grow 5% in 2022 (World Bank, 2023).*

The paper is based on the theoretical and empirical literature on emigration and remittances, reports, and studies carried out by the main institutions such as the World Bank, INSTAT, and Bank of Albania, but also by various Albanian and foreign authors. For the descriptive analysis and the construction of the regression model, the database was provided by the survey of 300 individuals in the area of Tirana. The survey was conducted through a pre-structured interview, which was distributed online to about N = 400 individuals. The collected data were processed with the SPSS statistical program. This study emphasizes that remittances constitute an important item in Albania's balance of payments statistics, a fact that is highlighted by the relative weight that this item has in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and other macroeconomic indicators.

Keywords: Remittances, economy, emigrants, money transfer, Albania.

¹ Remittances. URL: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/remittances>, 2023.

Introduction

Remittance

Albania, one of the developing countries, has witnessed large migratory flows both internally and externally following the fall of the communist regime in the early 1990s. Remittances refer to the transfer of money or resources by individuals who are working or residing in a foreign country to their home country. Remittances are typically sent through various channels, such as bank transfers, money transfer operators, online platforms, or even informal networks. Remittances constitute the largest inflow in the Albanian economy, leaving behind foreign direct investments and exports¹.

In years, they have been the most stable and secure financial flow in the Albanian economy. During the last 5 years, the income from immigrants, or as they are called “*Remittances*” are on average 618 million euros per year and this is income injected into the economy². Remittances play a significant role in the global economy, particularly in developing countries. They serve as a vital source of income for many households and contribute to poverty reduction, economic growth, and development in recipient countries. In some cases, remittances exceed foreign direct investment and official development assistance in terms of financial inflows to developing nations. Remittances have a positive impact on economic growth into increased household consumption, investment, and overall economic activity in recipient countries³. By empirically examining the relevance of remittances as a factor of economic growth using data from questionnaires administered to Albanian consumers, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of the role of remittances in Albania’s economic development. The results can potentially inform policy decisions aimed at leveraging remittance inflows to foster sustainable economic growth and improve the well-being of the population. During the global financial crisis of 2008, remittances to SEE countries remained relatively stable and more sustainable than FDI and other capital inflows, mainly due to the social contract that binds migrants to their families in their home countries⁴. The impact of remittances on economic growth may vary depending on several factors, including the scale of remittance inflows, the institutional environment, the absorptive capacity of the economy, and the efficiency of resource allocation⁵. The objective of

¹ Albania B. O. Fletëpalosja “Një vështrim mbi Remitancat”. 2019. URL: https://www.bankofalbania.org/Botime/Botime_educative/Fletepalosja_Remitancat.html

² Instat. Konferenca Ndërkombëtare mbi Sfidat e Migracionit. 2018. URL: <https://www.instat.gov.al/al/rreth-nesh/aktivitetet/promovimi-i-aktiviteve-statistikore/konferenca-nd%C3%ABrkomb%C3%ABtare-mbi-sfidat-e-migracionit>

³ Jude Eggoh C. B. Do remittances spur economic growth? Evidence from developing countries. 2019. URL: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09638199.2019.1568522>

⁴ Bucevska V. Impact of Remittances on Economic Growth: Empirical Evidence From South-East European Countries. 2022. URL: <https://sciendo.com/article/10.2478/jeb-2022-0006>

⁵ Rasha Qutb. (2020). Migrants’remittancesandeconomic growthinEgypt: anempirical

the paper empirically examines the relevance of remittances as a factor of economic growth, using the data from questionnaires' of Albanian consumers.

Literature Review

Remittances refer to the transfer of money or other resources sent by individuals who have migrated to another country, typically for work purposes, to their families or households in their home country. Remittances primarily represent household income received from abroad and are a direct result of international migration¹. Overall, remittance inflows to developing economies have the potential to significantly contribute to economic growth, poverty reduction, financial inclusion, investment, and various aspects of human development². Migrants may seek higher wages and better job opportunities in destination countries, with the intention of improving their own living standards and supporting their families back home through remittances³. Lucas and Stark studied remittances on a household level and hypothesized the main determinants to be “pure altruism”, “pure self-interest” and “tempered altruism or enlightened self-interest”. Migrants send remittances to their families as a form of insurance against adverse events or economic shocks. The remittances act as a safety net, helping households manage risks such as unemployment, illness, or natural disasters. In return, migrants receive peace of mind knowing that their families are financially protected⁴. When examining migration from a perspective of mutual benefit between migrants and their families back home, it is important to understand that the concept of an explicit contractual arrangement may not be applicable in all cases. However, there are indeed several ways in which both parties can benefit from migration. Economic opportunities: Migrants often seek better job prospects and higher wages in their destination countries. By doing so, they can improve their financial situation and support their families back home by remitting money. Improved standard of living: Migration can lead to an overall improvement in the standard of living for both the migrant and their family. The migrant gains access to better living conditions, education, healthcare, and other amenities in the host country. The benefits of migration can vary depending on individual circumstances, such as the migrant's skills, education, legal status in the host country, and the socio-economic conditions in their home country.

analysis from 1980 to 2017. URL: <https://chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/REPS-10-2018-0011/full/pdf>

¹ Yang D. Migrant Remittances. 2009. URL: <https://chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/jep.25.3.129>

² Aggarwal R. “Do Workers' Remittances Promote Financial Development?”. World Bank. 2006.

³ Yang D. (2011). Migrant Remittances. URL: <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jep.25.3.129>

⁴ Jessica Hagen-Zanker M. S. The determinants of remittances: A review of the literature. 2007. file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/SSRN-id1095719.pdf

Results of the study

The paper represents data collected from 300 immigrant respondents living abroad from Albania. The statistical analysis was conducted using the SPSS Statistical Software Program. The conclusions and discussion presented in the paper highlight the relationships and interdependencies between various independent variables (such as Age, Education, Number of Family Members, Employment, and Way of Sending Money) and the dependent variable (Remittances from Immigrants). The reported coefficients (B), t-values, and p-values provide insights into the statistical significance and directionality of these relationships.

Table 1. – Gender of the interviews

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	161	53.7	53.7	53.7
	Male	139	46.3	46.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, 2023

The data above shows the gender of the interviewees. 53.7% are female and 46.3% are male 300 respondents in total.

Table 2. – The living place of the interviews

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Urban	206	68.7	68.7	68.7
	Rural	94	31.3	31.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, 2023

The data above shows the living place of the interviewees. 68.7% lives in urban area and 31.3% lives in rural area.

Table 3. – Number of family members employed

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	3	1.0	1.0	1.0
	1	71	23.7	23.7	24.7
	2	128	42.7	42.7	67.3
	3	77	25.7	25.7	93.0
	4	21	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, 2023

These figures represent the proportion of families within the studied population that have a specific number of employed individuals. The results above show the family members employed. 23.7% have one person employed, 42.7% have two persons employed, 25.7% have three persons employed and 7% have four persons employed in their families.

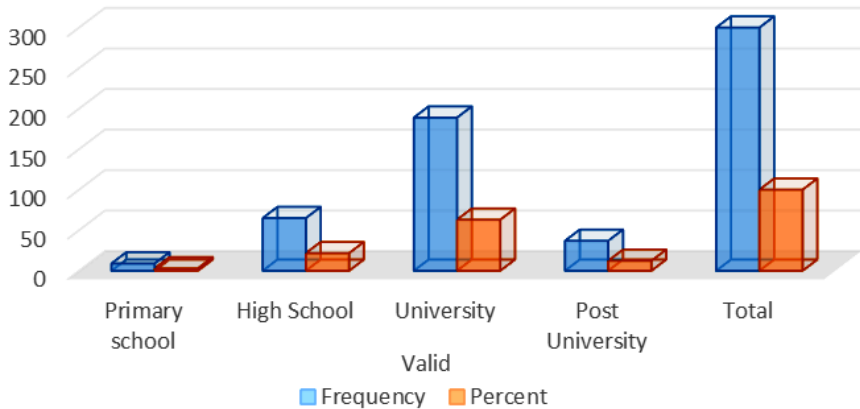


Figure 1. Education of the interviews
 Source: Author, 2023

The results above shows the education of the interviews. 3% are with primary school, 21.7% with high school, 63% with university, and 12.3% with post-university 300 respondents in total.

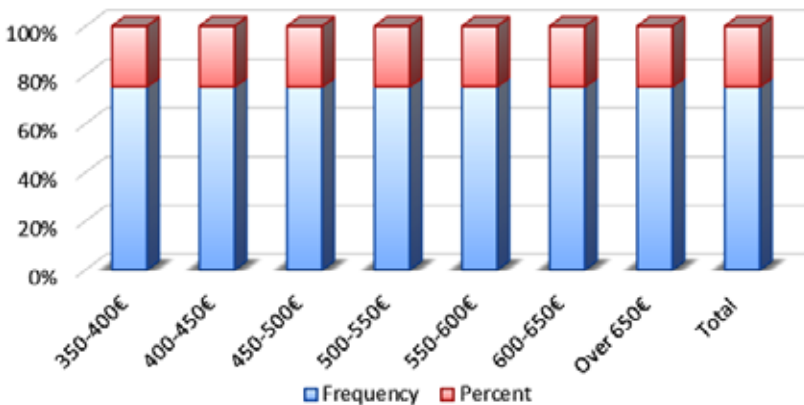


Figure 2. Monthly income of the family interviewers
 Source: Author, 2023

Table 4. – Do you have immigrant family members who help you financially?

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	50	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Yes	250	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source, Author, 2023

These percentages represent the proportion of immigrants surveyed who either have or do not have family members abroad in Albania and receive financial support from them. 16.7% of immigrants surveyed stated that they do not have family members abroad in Albania, 83.3% of immigrants surveyed have family members abroad who provide financial assistance.

Table 5. – How many times a year do your relatives bring you money?

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	100	33.3	33.3	33.3
	2	36	12.0	12.0	45.3
	3	34	11.3	11.3	56.7
	4	39	13.0	13.0	69.7
	5	19	6.3	6.3	76.0
	Over 6	72	24.0	24.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, 2023

The data above show the percentage of relatives who bring money for their family. 33.3% send money once per month, 12% twice a month, 11.3% three times per month, 13% four times a month, 6.3% five times a month and 24% send money over six times in a month from 300 respondents.

Table 6. – The ways of sending money from Immigrants

Description		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	2	3	4	5	6
Valid	Bank	19	6.3	6.3	6.3
	RIA	52	17.3	17.3	23.6
	MoneyGram	94	31.3	31.3	54.9
	Post	30	10.0	10.0	64.9

1	2	3	4	5	6
	PayPal	41	13.7	13.7	78.6
	Western Union	64	21.3	21.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, 2023

The data above represent the frequency at which immigrants send money. 6.3% of the money is sent using Bank.17.3% of the money is sent using RIA, 31.3% of the money is sent using MoneyGram, 10% of the money is sent using the Post, 13.7% of the money is sent using PayPal, and 21.3% of the money is sent using Western Union. These percentages represent the distribution of money sent by immigrants using different methods or services.

Hypothesis: Remittances from Immigrants have a positive effect on age, gender, education, residence, income, number of family members, ways of sending.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.397 ^a	.158	.137	606.990	.158	7.800	7	292	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Method of delivery, Average monthly income per family, Age, Place of residence, Number of members in the family, Employment status, Education

Anova ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20116470.401	7	2873781.486	7.800	.000 ^b
	Residual	107583429.266	292	368436.402		
	Total	127699899.667	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Remittances from Immigrants

b. Predictors: (Constant), Method of delivery, Average monthly income per family, Age, Place of residence, Number of members in the family, Employment status, Education

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	(Constant)	-529.100	354.756		-1.491	.137	-1227.303	169.102
	Age	11.038	3.769	.172	2.928	.004	3.620	18.457

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Living Place	66.583	81.504	.047	.817	.415	-93.826	226.993
	Education	231.573	59.423	.234	3.897	.000	114.621	348.525
	Monthly income	88.401	16.606	.299	5.323	.000	55.718	121.085
	Number of family members	-80.059	27.720	-.166	-2.888	.004	-134.615	-25.503
	Employment status	-51.679	13.622	-.222	-3.794	.000	-78.490	-24.869
	Way of sending money	-41.726	19.597	-.119	-2.129	.034	-80.296	-3.157

Dependent Variable: Remittances from Immigrants

Conclusion and Discussion

Based on the results of the study that the variables Age, Education, Monthly Income, Number of Family Members, Employment, and Way of Sending Money have been examined in relation to the dependent variable, which is Remittances from Immigrants. Here are the conclusions drawn from the analysis:

Age: The variable Age shows a positive relationship with Remittances from Immigrants. As Age increases, the remittances also increase. The coefficient (B) is 0.172, indicating that for every unit increase in Age, there is an estimated increase of 0.172 in remittances. The t-value of 2.928 is statistically significant at $p = 0.004$.

Education: The variable Education also demonstrates a positive relationship with Remittances from Immigrants. As the level of education increases, remittances tend to increase as well. The coefficient (B) is 0.234, indicating that for every unit increase in Education, there is an estimated increase of 0.234 in remittances. The t-value of 3.897 is statistically significant at $p = 0.000$.

Monthly Income: Monthly Income is not explicitly mentioned in the provided information. It's unclear whether Monthly Income was included as an independent variable in the analysis. Without further details, it's difficult to draw conclusions about its relationship with Remittances from Immigrants.

The number of Family Members: The variable Number of Family Members shows a negative relationship with Remittances from Immigrants. As the number of family member's increases, remittances tend to decrease. The coefficient (B) is -0.166, indicating that for every unit increase in the Number of Family Members, there is an estimated decrease of 0.166 in remittances. The t-value of -2.888 is statistically significant at $p = 0.004$.

Employment: The variable Employment also exhibits a negative relationship with Remittances from Immigrants. Being employed is associated with lower remittances. The coefficient (B) is -0.222 , indicating that being employed results in an estimated decrease of 0.222 in remittances. The t-value of -3.794 is statistically significant at $p = 0.000$.

Way of Sending Money: The variable Way of Sending Money shows a negative relationship with Remittances from Immigrants. Specifically, the method used to send money impacts the amount of remittances. The coefficient (B) is -0.119 , suggesting that the choice of the way of sending money leads to an estimated decrease of 0.119 in remittances. The t-value of -2.129 is statistically significant at $p = 0.034$.

Overall, the findings indicate that Age and Education have a positive influence on Remittances from Immigrants, while Number of Family Members, Employment, and the Way of Sending Money have a negative influence. These relationships highlight the interdependence of various factors with the amount of remittances sent by immigrants.

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THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL CURRENCY IN THE MODERN ECONOMY

Abstract. New technologies favored by advances in cryptography are causing a radical change in the global economy, especially in the financial sector. One of the most important developments of digital technology in the financial sector is the birth and spread of cryptocurrencies or "virtual currencies", the most popular of which are Bitcoin, Ethereum, Litecoin, Ripple, etc. Digital currency has the potential to completely change the way society thinks about money. The rise of Bitcoin (BTC), Ethereum (ETH) and thousands of other cryptocurrencies that exist only in electronic form has led global central banks to explore how national digital currencies might work. This material aims to familiarize with the virtual currency infrastructure and evaluate the challenges and opportunities that the market entry of these currencies and their technology create for the financial policies of central banks. Like other technological innovations, virtual currencies represent a challenge for financial regulators, especially due to their anonymity and cross-border character. The infrastructure potential of digital currencies is considered the most promising premise for payment systems. The interest of the monetary authorities of large economies is focused in this direction. With this study, it is intended to create a broad and defined picture on the impact of digital currency and technologies in the modern economy. The results of this study will be able to contribute to policy formation and decision making.

Keywords: Cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, Ethereum, Digital Currency, Blockchain, DLT.

Introduction. Digital currencies, or cryptographic currencies, are a form of currency that moves only in the digital world. Their market value fluctuates as a result of individuals' demand for transactions or their expectations about the possible increase in the market price in the future. They have no physical form and are not connected to traditional financial institutions such as banks that control traditional currencies. One of the most popular crypto currencies is Bitcoin, but there are also many other currencies such as Ethereum, Ripple, Litecoin, etc. Digital currencies rely on technology known as blockchain, a public and distributed ledger that stores all transactions made with cryptographic currencies. The attention of the financial industry and academic actors has focused on the Bitcoin infrastructure. The technological innovation implemented in the infrastructure for carrying out Bitcoin transactions is referred to by the term "blockchain". "Distributed ledger

technology” (or DLT) is a more general term of “blockchain” technology, which includes modified versions of the infrastructure for the needs of different industries. DLT has the potential to revolutionize many areas of industry and society in general. Its applications include cryptocurrencies, financial services, supply chain management, electronic voting, data security, ownership transfer and many more. By using DLT, more transparent, efficient and secure systems can be built, eliminating the need for intermediaries and allowing direct and secure participation of stakeholders in a distributed network. Cryptocurrency exchanges, where digital currencies can be bought and sold, are highly volatile and investing in digital currencies is risky and can result in significant financial loss. It is always advisable to do research and consult with financial experts before starting to use or invest in digital currencies.

Beginning of the Digital Age. The concept of virtual money has a relatively short history compared to physical forms of currency. A brief history of key developments in the history of virtual money:

Early Digital Currencies (1980s-1990s): From the late 1980s and early 1990s, several digital currencies appeared. A notable example is Digi Cash, created by David Chaum in 1989, which aimed to provide secure electronic transactions through cryptographic protocols.

E-Gold (1996–2008): E-Gold, launched in 1996, was one of the early successful attempts to create a digital currency backed by tangible assets, in this case, gold. Users could open accounts, deposit funds and transact using e-gold units. However,

legal issues and concerns about possible use for money laundering led to its closure in 2008.

Bitcoin and the Birth of Cryptocurrencies (2008): The publication of the Bitcoin white paper in 2008 by an anonymous person (or group) known as Satoshi Nakamoto marked an important step in the history of virtual money. Bitcoin introduced the concept of a decentralized digital currency based on blockchain technology. It gained attention as the first cryptocurrency, allowing secure peer-to-peer transactions without the need for intermediaries.

Expansion of Cryptocurrencies (2010s): The success of Bitcoin paved the way for the development of many other cryptocurrencies, also known as altcoins. These include Ethereum, Ripple, Litecoin and many others. Each cryptocurrency operates according to a unique set of characteristics and features, but all share the common characteristic of being digital and decentralized.

Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs): In the mid-2010s, the cryptocurrency industry saw the rise of Initial Coin Offerings. ICOs enabled cryptocurrency firms to raise funds by selling their new coins in exchange for popular cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin or Ethereum. This method contained regulatory risks due to bogus projects and undefined security offerings, leading to increased oversight and tighter regulation.

Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs): In recent years, many central banks around the world have begun to explore the idea of issuing their own digital currencies. These CBDCs will function as digital versions of their fiat currencies, offering benefits such as faster transactions, improved security and increased financial inclusion. Several countries, including China, Sweden and the Bahamas, have made significant progress in developing and testing their CBDCs.

The story of virtual money continues to evolve rapidly as technology advances and financial systems adapt to the digital area. The impact of cryptocurrencies and digital money on the global economy, finance, and everyday transactions remains an ongoing topic of discussion and exploration.

The Benefits of digital currencies:

Mobility: Digital currencies are easy to transport and transfer over the Internet. This property makes them highly mobile compared to physical currencies and traditional credits.

Security: Transactions with digital currencies are secure and encrypted. Blockchain technology, used to record transactions, provides a high level of security and traceability.

Low costs: Due to the absence of traditional financial institutions such as banks, digital currencies can reduce transaction costs and eliminate the need for transfer taxes.

Independence from the banking system: Digital currencies allow individuals to transact and store their wealth without the need for a traditional bank account. This gives individuals more independence and control over their money.

The Challenges of digital currencies:

Cyber security risk: Cyber security is an important issue for digital currencies and for the digital environment in general. With the increased use of digital currencies and related technologies, the risk of cyber-attacks and cyber-theft has increased. Hackers can attack and steal digital currencies if proper measures are not taken to protect users' identities and money.

Volatility: The price of digital currencies can change a lot in a short period of time. This makes trading them very risky and makes it difficult to use them for everyday purposes.

Lack of regulation and consumer protection: Digital currencies are not yet regulated and protected to the same level as traditional financial systems. This can be shown as a risk to users if security problems or violations of their financial rights occur.

Lack of universal acceptance: Although the acceptance of digital currencies is expanding, they are still not accepted in all countries and businesses. This lack of universal acceptability may limit their use in some circumstances.

What is Blockchain? Blockchain technology is the result of combining the early principles of cryptography and collective collaboration in solving algorithms, which

allows storing and verifying data in a transparent, secure and irreversible way. Contains a permanent record (block) of transactions linked to a distributed network of computers that work together to validate and confirm transactions. Basically, blockchain is a chain of data blocks, where each block contains defined information and is linked to other blocks in a way to create a history of all transactions. This history is encrypted and secure, using cryptographic techniques to prevent data alteration and block manipulation. One of the key characteristics of blockchain is its distributed nature, meaning that the ledger is stored on all the computers that are part of the network, rather than being persistent on a single server. This makes it very difficult to manipulate data or breach its security. Blockchain is a fundamental technology used in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, but has potential applications in many other areas, such as financial transactions, identity management, logistics, justice, and many others.

Another innovation that can be implemented through blockchain technology is the use of smart contracts. Smart contracts are a type of contracts that use blockchain technology to execute and enforce agreements. The use of blockchain technology gives smart contracts the ability to execute and store their information in a transparent, sure and verifiable manner. Smart contracts are programmed to operate automatically when certain conditions are met. This is because the contract information is encoded in a blockchain and the programmed code is automatically executed. This process reduces the need to rely on a third party to enforce the contract, as enforcement is automatic and transparent. The use of smart contracts has a tremendous potential in reducing the costs of economic transactions, replacing traditional transaction intermediaries, such as: notaries or payment systems with automated programs. This is one of several aspects of this technology that are thought to be able to fundamentally change the financial sector in particular and the service sector in general. For example, a smart contract for the purchase of a property can be programmed to release funds to the seller's account only if the buyer has transferred the entire required amount. This ensures that both parties get what they agreed to in the agreement, without the need for a notary or third party agent to verify and enforce the contract. In addition to the automatic execution of contracts, blockchain technology makes it possible to store data securely and transparently. Smart contract information is encoded in the blockchain, making it impossible to change the data or manipulate the agreement. This helps reduce conflicts and the need to rely on judicial authorities to resolve disputes. Although smart contracts offer several advantages, it is also important to consider the challenges and risks that come with them. Some challenges may include the protection of privacy and personal data, the security of blockchain technology, and the impact of various regulations and laws. To use smart contracts, technical knowledge is needed to program and implement the contract code on a given blockchain. Also, it is necessary to have a platform or an environment that enables the creation and implementation

of smart contracts. In conclusion, smart contracts are contracts that use blockchain technology to execute and enforce agreements in a transparent, sure and automatic manner. They offer the potential to increase efficiency, reduce costs and eliminate the need for third parties in the contract enforcement process.

The Opportunities that this Technology offers in Albania Payment systems and payment methods are areas where a comprehensive transformation has been happening for years and will continue to happen, driven by the demands and needs of a more connected and interactive world, as well as the opportunities offered by technological development. Since cryptocurrency is now relatively widely used, the need for legal regulation has arisen. Albania is among the first countries to have adopted a law regulating the cryptocurrency market. On May 20, 2020, Law No. 66/2020 “For financial markets based on distributed ledger technology”, otherwise known as the “law on cryptocurrency”, making Albania the 3rd country in Europe for the official legalization of cryptocurrency. At first glance, the law seems quite detailed, although it has received many criticisms, characterizing it as a hasty and ill-considered decision-making with the argument that Albania, as a whole of its economic elements, is not yet ready and prepared for cryptocurrency. Law No. 66/2020 aims to regulate the issuance of digital and/or virtual currencies, the licensing, monitoring and supervision of entities operating in the activity of distribution, trading and storage of these currencies, digital currency agents, innovative service providers and automated enterprises to collective investments.

Digital currency technology has the potential to bring great changes and advantages to Albania’s economy. The implementation of technology will affect the minimization of liquidity and credit risk. Here are some opportunities that digital currency technology can bring to Albania:

Easier movement of funds: Through digital currency, financial transactions can be done easily and quickly. This would help reduce the cost and time of international and interbank transactions.

The remittance sector: In a massive market with a flow of around 2 billion euros per year, it is the first to be positively affected by this new development. In the field of remittances, transferring money to other countries through traditional channels often has high costs, complicated procedures, and the time required to complete transactions can be long. Blockchain technology can provide solutions to these challenges.

The financing of small and medium-sized enterprises through ICOs (digital methods of collecting funds, similar to public offers on stock exchanges) allows Albanian commercial companies to have access to more opportunities to raise capital, thus diversifying financing methods. of projects, not simply remaining at the mercy of bank loans.

Financing of innovation and startups: Digital currency technology, including blockchain-based open financing platforms (crowdfunding), can help increase opportunities

for financing innovative projects and startups in Albania. This type of financing has the potential to lower barriers to market entry and increase the level of investment in new and technology sectors.

Reduction of corruption: The use of digital currency technology and blockchain ledgers can help reduce levels of corruption. For example, the use of smart contracts (the inability to change data after creation) through blockchain technology can reduce the risk of fraud as well as fraud with public funds.

Building the fintech ecosystem: Through digital currency technology, a fintech (financial technology) ecosystem developed in Albania can be created. This would enable innovation and improvement of financial services, bringing great benefits to consumers and local businesses.

The attention of the authorities is focused on the potential of the technological infrastructure of the electronic register of transactions (blockchain) for the improvement of the current payment system. The implementation of the technological infrastructure in order to improve the existing payment system is in the attention of the authorities of many developed countries, in a long-term time horizon. A large number of other virtual currencies not regulated by authorities are based on similar technology. Also, the financial and IT industries are showing interest in implementing this technology in a new wave of financial products. In this regard, the modification of the electronic protocol makes it possible to format the “blockchain” technology according to the needs of public regulatory authorities or private entrepreneurs. However, it is important to note that in order to bring digital currency technology to Albania, several factors must be considered. These factors include the support of government and financial institutions, the drafting of appropriate laws and regulations, and the security of technology to protect consumers from potential risks. In conclusion, while there is great potential for the advancement of the financial sector in Albania, the implementation of digital currency technology requires extensive commitment and cooperation between the public and private sectors, as well as international stakeholders.

Conclusions. Bitcoin and the blockchain technology infrastructure have the potential to have major impacts in several areas. Following are some potential impacts of Bitcoin and blockchain technology:

The financial system: Bitcoin has the potential to change the way the financial system works. Cryptocurrencies can provide alternatives to traditional transactions and payments, allowing fast and cheap transfers without the intervention of banks or traditional financial institutions. This can have the effect of reducing the cost of transactions and improving financial access for non-exempt participants.

International remittances: Bitcoin and blockchain technology can improve international money transfers, reducing the costs and time needed to make transfers, es-

pecially for migrants sending money back to their countries of origin. This can help increase efficiency and reduce financial barriers.

Financial inclusion: Bitcoin can improve financial access for those who do not have access to traditional banking services. By providing a means of transferring value and a way to store wealth outside of the banking system, Bitcoin can help increase financial inclusion for low-income populations and those living in countries with weak financial systems. To promote financial inclusion, there have been developments and innovations in the financial technology (Fin Tech) sector. The use of alternative payment methods, such as electronic and mobile means, has opened the way for individuals to access financial services through their mobile devices. Also, the development of online financial services and mobile applications has helped to extend financial services to areas where traditional infrastructure is insufficient.

Data security and privacy: Blockchain technology can ensure a high level of data security and integrity. Using blockchain to store and verify data can help fight identity crime and security breaches. However, it has been estimated that appropriate mechanisms for privacy management should be developed in this context.

Technology and innovation: Bitcoin and blockchain technology have inspired the development of new projects and applications. Many companies and start-ups are exploring the use of blockchain to change various sectors, including logistics, medicine, energy and many others. This opens up opportunities for new innovation and change in the way industry and society in general operate.

However, it is important to note that these impacts are potential and are currently in the development phase. To achieve this full potential, the technical, legal and regulatory challenges associated with Bitcoin and blockchain technology must be addressed. The future of virtual currencies is expected to be determined by technological advances, legal developments and continued adoption by various actors.

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VALUE ADDED AND FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES: A QUANTITATIVE REGIONAL STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Foreign capital in the form of portfolio and direct investments acts as an additional source of funds in the face of limited domestic savings. The degree and nature of its impact on the economy of a country are determined by many factors and are not always unambiguous. In modern economic thought, there has not yet been a single dominant paradigm for studying the causes and consequences of investing foreign capital in the economy of the host country, both at the micro and macro levels, and the search directions are very diverse and sometimes contradictory. In the 1970s and 1980s, different constructs and models linking FDI flows and exchange rates, indicators of the inclusion of the recipient country's economy in the world economy, characteristics of the institutional environment in all their diversity, including the quality of elites, began to gain popularity. In the early 2000s, the theory of internalization and the oligopolistic model of FDI were promulgated, which was an attempt to link together elements of the micro and macro environment, taking into account the imperfections of both global and local markets. And the localization factor, understood as the advantage of location, is beginning to be considered as significant one¹. However, different researchers interpret it differently. Thus, the concept of the "track effect", or path development theory, is starting to attract more and more interest. The foreign literature emphasizes the versatility of the factors generating this phenomenon². However, the "track effect" is based on a technological component. Equipment, buildings, industrial infrastructure (fixed accumulated capital) and a workforce with a certain level of education, skills and technology (human capital) represent a single system consisting of complementary elements, and it is not so easy to change it quickly and without loss. In SSA countries this dependence on previous stages of development is especially pronounced, and foreign direct investment can play the role of a trigger. Moreover, the regional spread of countries allows us to take into account the geographical component.

In our opinion, one of the indicators of the productive use of factors of production in a particular country can be the volume of added value created in the main sectors

¹ Loschenkova A. N., Zaitsev Yu. K. "The influence of the dynamics of the ruble exchange rate on the inflow of foreign investment" // Journal of the NEA. – No. 4. – (44). 2019. – P. 127–142.

² Puffert D. Path Dependence. 2003 // EH. Net Encyclopedia. Ed. by R. Whaples. URL: <http://www.eh.net/encyclopedia/contents/puffert.path.dependence.php>

of the economy. It can be assumed that industries and sectors with relatively higher productivity will potentially be more attractive to foreign direct investment. In this study, an attempt was made to test this assumption on an array of African countries grouped according to the UNCTAD regional classification: 9 countries represent the North African region, 19 countries – East Africa, 9 countries belong to Central Africa, 5 countries – to South and 17 countries – to West Africa. The location element is thus georeferenced. Despite the diversity of African countries, the analysis of the studied relationship of FDI, measured by net investment inflows (net inflow), and the value added, adjusted to the main sectors of the economy, is possible either at the country level – in this case, we can talk about a phenomenon – or at an aggregate level, suggesting one or another principle of grouping countries. Of course, such an approach will not allow us to see the specifics of the studied relationships in individual countries to conduct a comparative situational analysis. But it will significantly improve the characteristics of the sample and will allow us to test the hypothesis about the significance of the “localized” structure of value added for FDI in the regional context. The on-line UNCTAD electronic database¹ [4] provides all necessary statistical information. We studied such parameters as GDP, total value added (TVA) in absolute and relative terms, as well as its structure by sectors of the economy, FDI (by net inflow) in international dollars. The time series of these indicators cover the period from 1970 to 2021. As the main quantitative methods of data processing ANOVA and regression were used. Additional tests such as the indicator of internal consistency of the characteristics of model of Cronbach’s alpha, the Tukey -Cramer test for a honestly significant difference, the dispersion inflation factor (VIF), etc. The studies showed that in the period of 1970–2021 there was a statistically significant relationship between the GDP indicator and the indicator of net FDI inflow in all the above regions of the African continent. Moreover, the “sensitivity” of GDP to FDI was expectedly higher in the regions of South and West Africa. The lowest value of this parameter is noted in the Central African region: the ratio of GDP growth to FDI growth is only 8.6 versus 31.4 for West Africa. At the same time, the analysis of variance of regionally aggregated data on value added and FDI brought rather contradictory results: when comparing both the net FDI inflow and the total value added (TVA) indicator in relation to African regions, an alternative hypothesis about the significance of the location element was adopted: with $\alpha = 0.05$ for FDI $F = 2.76$ with $F_{crit} = 2.41$, $p\text{-value} = 0.028$; for TVA, the F -test value was 13.78 (at $F_{crit} = 2.4$). However, an a posteriori analysis in the form of the Tukey -Kramer test showed that the hypothesis of the significance of the location component can only be partially accepted for TVA: 5 out of ten pairwise regional comparisons gave statistically significant differences in the value of the studied

¹ UNCTAD stat. URL: <https://unctadstat.unctad.org>

indicator. As for FDI, only for one pair (regions of central and southern Africa) the p-value of the Tukey test is equal to the critical one (0.05). This gives reason to reject the previously accepted hypothesis about the significance of the location element for FDI. Nevertheless, further quantitative analysis of the structure of value added with reference to regions revealed some interesting dependencies. Namely, in four of the five African regions examined (except for South Africa), FDI reacts differently to the value added by sectors. For example, the value added created in the industrial sector is a statistically significant variable for all regions. At the same time the size of the VA, created in agriculture, is important in the countries of northern and western Africa, and the degree of sensitivity of FDI on this parameter is higher than for industry. Cronbach's alpha of all regional models takes a value from 0.81 to 0.87, which indicates a high degree of consistency of characteristics. It should be noted that this research did not take into consideration the variety of the countries within the sub-African regions and such important geographical aspect as a landlock. It can play a crucial role for FDI's attraction in the particular countries and sectors of their economy.

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ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE INNOVATION INDEX AND THE READINESS FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES INDEX, UNDER A HOLISTIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Abstract. Innovation and technology have been related from the beginning of human society. The primary goal of this research was to determine the relationships between the innovation index and readiness frontier technologies index, under a quality management approach, since quality and quality management are important concepts nowadays and for the future. The research methodology was (1) collecting data and information on the innovation index and frontier readiness technology index worldwide, (2) describing the newly introduced ISO 56000 family of standards (ISO standards for innovation), (3) dealing with correlation and regression analysis (inferential statistics) for relationships between innovation index and frontier readiness technology index. This procedure resulted in the main outcome of this research that the relationships between innovation and technology statistically verified, are strong. Saying this, the general application of ISO standards and specifically, the ISO 56000 family of standards, combined with advanced technology, are necessary to achieve a competitive advantage. The key recommendation of the research is that the application of ISO standards and the application of the ISO 56000 family of standards in conjunction with technology advancement, help companies to strengthen their commitment to their customers, improve outcomes of innovation and knowledge & technology output activities, improve processes and procedures and economies around the world to gain a competitive advantage in response to the crisis and post-crisis.

Keywords: **innovation index**, readiness frontier technologies index, ISO 56000, quality management, life quality.

1. Introduction

Technology development requires innovation. It is considered that there is a substantial relationship between innovation and technology, and both are related to quality management too. This was the main question investigated in this study, which employed quantitative approaches in conjunction with regression analysis to investigate the correlations between the Innovation Index and Frontier Readiness Technology Index. There were previously separated existing data and materials about the innovation index and preparedness frontier technologies index, as well as previously published works and research publications, books, and online libraries. It is believed that scientific management,

including quality management, especially ISO 56000 family, which is related to innovation, combined with technology use, creates opportunities for achieving a competitive advantage. To achieve and maintain the competitive advantage, all interested parties, individuals, and public and private institutions, particularly decision-makers and civil society, must improve and maintain the relations between innovation and technology usage, to improve the quality of life for individuals and societies. When discussing innovation and technology we immediately think of innovative goods and services, new combinations thereof leading to improved ones, new methods of processing, manufacturing, and assembly, opening up new markets, a new way of using resources, innovative business models, etc., included. This is about the effectiveness and efficiency of processes, procedures, methods, methods, tools, and technologies involved in the production process of goods and services, as part of economic theory, especially in relation to theory. As a general concept, innovation includes innovation processes, structures required for the process, results of activities, previous variants of products/services, and relationships at the organizational level in private and public issues, including specific, regional, and cluster levels, as part of economic theory, particularly concerning factors of production, which should be materialized at the technology and technology usage. Technology accompanied by innovation and vice versa, does not always require invention, but simple practical implementation of problem-solving techniques and decision-making, implementation of ideas based on individual and group activities. There is currently an impressive drive and interest in innovation and technology, particularly in a culture of quality and ISO standards. The culture of quality serves as a guide for continuous improvement, belongs to all members of the organization (s), and also forms a link between internal customers and suppliers. They enshrine the core value of a quality culture in ISO standards, which are of increasing interest around the world to gain a competitive advantage. Between them, in particular the family of standards ISO 56000, directly related to innovation management, have been introduced during 2019, which also coincides with the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, are the most required standards. Innovation, technology output, quality, quality culture, quality culture management, and ISO standards are becoming an important part of achieving business models' competitive advantage, under the new reality and the new normal.

2. Literature review

At present, the literature on innovation, technology, quality, ISO standards, quality culture, etc. has been improved around the world, alongside the country and level of economic development. This is because concepts of innovation, knowledge, technological output, quality, quality management, and ISO standards when applied correctly, help private and public organizations to be more competitive in an open market when and where supply is much higher than demand. one of the main characteristics of the last 50 years of the global economy.

2.1 Innovation as we know it today

According to an OECD report, for about 35 years entrepreneurship has been defined as an attempt to use innovative aspects that involve the use of factors of production already involved, within the framework of a new approach to the use of productive capacity, with its core the realization and use of entrepreneurial resources and as an activity of creation that takes place and is completed along the way of the manufacturing process (Drucker, 1985, Ahmad. et al. 2007, Shane 2003). The OECD-Oslo Handbook Innovation was defined as the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service) or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization, or external relations. In terms of economic theory, innovation is an industrial mutation that is progressively revolutionizing the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one and incessantly creating a new one, which is a concept of today's global economic approach when skills, knowledge, and competencies are important.

According to the International Organization of Standards, innovation is a new or improved product or process that differs significantly from previous products or processes and is made available to users. This definition is consistent with those in ISO standards, so they can be useful tools for comparing and evaluating innovations within and between organizations (Schumpeter. 1942 & 1993. ISO 2019).

In the face of increasing global competition, global products, services, manufacturing processes, business models and markets, and the implementation of new technologies, it seems that the results of doing business are in the hands of productivity (effectiveness and efficiency) as well as in the hands of intense innovative activities, which have been considered as the main problems of the competitive advantage of doing business, as a process that arises through interactions between different actors and becomes issues of importance for the future of business and corporate success.

As described above, considering competitive advantage as the main driving force for business and entrepreneurial activities, innovation and technology usage should be considered as key factors that require physical and non-physical support for an optimal result. Innovation and technology are development tools that plays an increasingly important role in global trade. In the last two decades in particular, the arena of world trade has changed, with economies of scale gradually being replaced by an innovation economy focused on high-value-added products and services (GII. 2021).

2.2 Innovation as an ISO family of standards. ISO 56000

A large number of standards have been developed to help and support companies and public organizations to streamline their internal systems, processes, procedures, and records to have an open approach to innovative aspects and activities and to address any issues that contribute to the bottom line of operational activities of public and private entities that implement IMSs in innovative ways. Innovation serves as a

force that propels companies into a time and period of success. A family of standards with the number 56000 was published in 2019 on innovation and innovation management, which helps companies to manage innovations and innovative measures effectively and in a more structured way. Innovation is about creating something new that adds value; This can be a product, a service, a business model, or an organization. And the added value that is created is not necessarily of a financial nature, it can also be social or ecological. The ISO 56000 family will help organizations significantly improve their ability to survive in our changing and uncertain world. They enable organizations to constantly reinvent themselves (ISO. 2020. Naden. Feb 2020). The ISO 56000 family includes:

- 56000:2019 – Management of innovation – Innovation MS – Guidance
- 56002, Management of innovation – *Innovation MS – Guidance*
- 56003, Management of *innovation – partnership on innovation, methods, and tools – Guidance*
- 56004, Management of innovation – assessment – *Guidance*
- 56005, Management of *innovation – Int. Prop, Mngmt, Methods, and tools – Guidance*
- 56006, *Management of Innovation – SIM – Guidance*
- 56007, Management of innovation – *Management of ideas*
- 56008, Management of innovation – *IOM, methods, and tools – Guidance*

It is clear that even for the International Standards Organization the ties between innovation and creativity are strong, as the ISO 56000 family of innovation standards clearly expresses the connection by saying that the application of ISO standards in general and the Applying the ISO 56000 family of standards helps organizations strengthen their commitment to their customers, improve innovation and creativity activities, processes and procedures, and economies worldwide to gain a competitive advantage in response to crisis and post-crisis times.

2.3 Readiness frontier technology index

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) published a report titled “Technology and Innovation” in 2022. The study is a valuable tool for guiding policies and strategies for leading-edge technology adoption. UNCTAD ranks countries’ economies in terms of their respective “Country-Readiness Index” in this report. The Index assesses economies based on their ability to use, adopt, and adapt “frontier technologies” equitably. The index is made up of five components, which are as follows (UNCTAD, 2022):

ICT Infrastructure Deployment – This is the level of ICT infrastructure. Using, adopting, and adapting cutting-edge technologies necessitates adequate ICT infrastructure, particularly as AI, IoT, big data, and blockchain are all internet-based technologies. Two components of ICT infrastructure must be considered: the prevalence

of access to ensure that no one is left behind, and the quality of infrastructure that allows for more advanced and efficient use. For these reasons, internet users as a percentage of the population reflect the presence of internet infrastructure, whereas mean download speed reflects the quality of the internet connection (UNCTAD, 2022).

Skills – Using, adopting, and adapting frontier technologies needs people equipped with relevant skills. These may be advanced but are generally lower than those required to originate the technologies. Two types of skills need to be considered: skills acquired through education and skills acquired in the workplace through practical training or learning by doing. The overall educational attainment of the population is measured through expected years of schooling, while the skill level in the labor market is measured by the extent of high-skill employment – defined by the ILO as the sum of managers, professionals, and technicians and associate professionals following the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). These indicators need to be interpreted with caution, especially in developing countries, because of the emigration of highly trained or skilled people, the “brain drain”, as a result of which the actual skill level could be lower than the official estimate (UNCTAD, 2022).

Research & Development – R&D work is required not only for the development of cutting-edge technologies but also for their adoption and adaptation, as these technologies frequently require adjustment or modification for local applications. The number of publications and patents filed on a country’s 11 frontier technologies is used to measure R&D activities. The publication and patent search queries used are identical to those described in the Technical note in Annex B, except for the year of interest, which is a single year for the index rather than 1996–2018. The authors’ and patent assignees’ countries of publication were investigated. It should be noted that there are informal R&D operations that may not result in a publication or patent, so the R&D scores may not reflect the actual scale of activities (UNCTAD, 2022).

Industry Activity – This building element intends to record ongoing industry actions relating to the use, adoption, and adaptation of cutting-edge technologies. It looks at three industries that are early adopters: manufacturing, with high-tech manufacturing leading the way; finance; and ICT, which interacts with other technologies. Then it employs export data on high-tech manufacturers as well as digitally deliverable services in finance and ICT. However, particularly in developing nations, operations are carried out by enterprises in the informal sector, which are frequently excluded from official statistics. As a result, the scores from these countries may be lower than the real activity (UNCTAD, 2022).

Finance – This analyzes the availability of private-sector finance. Better access to funding could hasten the use, adoption, and adaptation of cutting-edge technologies. Domestic credit to the private sector as a proportion of GDP was chosen as part of the index for this purpose. This statistic measures financial corporations’ resources, such as

finance and leasing companies, money lenders, insurance companies, pension funds, and foreign exchange companies. It also comprises a variety of financial instruments like loans, non-equity securities purchases, trade credits, and other accounts receivable. However, alternative, unorthodox finance providers or financial instruments may exist that are not adequately represented by this measure. And based on data for these five subindexes, the Readiness Frontier Technology Index was calculated (UNCTAD, 2022).

3. Research framework, the purpose of the case study

The research framework was the worldwide and global ecosystem linkages between the Innovation Index and Readiness Frontier Technologies Index.

Given the scarcity of numerical, statistical, and algebraic reasoning on the links between the Innovation Index and RFT Index, this study employs a theory-building technique to address the following research questions:

1. H_0 : There is not any connection/relation between Innovation Index and RFT Index.
2. H_1 : There is a strong connection/relation between Innovation Index and RFT Index.

4. Methodology

While acknowledging the significance of connections/relationships between readiness frontier technologies and ISO standards, particularly ISO 56000, Innovation management, prior empirical research does not explain statistically verified, if there is any connection/relationship between them; thus, theory development, supported by analysis and evidence, is required. The exploratory technique should be used in conjunction with a single-depth case study approach, which is ideal for building a full understanding of a phenomenon and allowing for a closer exploration of theoretical structures.

Case selection

The scenario was chosen based on three major criteria: a theoretical approach, the applicability of genuine beneficial impacts of relationships on the Innovation Index, and RFT Index links. The case project was separated into three stages: (1) identifying needs for innovation, (2) identifying needs for technology usage, and (3) identifying nations' rankings for Innovation and RFT.

Data collection

The data for the Innovation Index came from the GII Report 2022, an annual ranking of countries based on their innovation properties.

The RFT Index came from UNCTAD Report 2022.

Data analysis

Innovation and RFT ranking indicators were correlated and regressively analyzed (inferential statistics) in 128 countries worldwide.

The RFT Index (taken from the UNCTAD Report 2022) and the ISO 9001:2015 Index (created as indicated in the preceding paragraph) are mentioned in the table below.

I developed and ran a regression analysis between the Innovation index and RFT Index confirming the H1 hypothesis, “There is a strong relation between the Innovation Index and RFT Index, as opposed to the Ho hypothesis, “There is not a strong relation between the Innovation index and RFT Index.”

Table 1. – List of countries based on the Innovation Index and Readiness Frontier Technology Index

No	Country	Innovation Ranking	Readiness Ranking
1	2	3	4
1	Albania	84	85
2	Algeria	120	98
3	Argentina	73	65
4	Armenia	69	83
5	Australia	25	12
6	Austria	18	22
7	Azerbaijan	80	100
8	Bahrain	78	56
9	Bangladesh	116	112
10	Belarus	62	59
11	Belgium	22	11
12	Benin	128	139
13	Bolivia	104	116
14	B&H	75	80
15	Botswana	106	111
16	Brazil	57	41
17	Brunei Drsl	82	69
18	Bulgaria	35	51
19	Burkina Faso	115	148
20	Cabo Verde	89	101
21	Cambodia	109	113
22	Cameroon	123	132
23	Canada	16	14
24	Chile	53	49
25	China	12	25

1	2	3	4
26	Colombia	67	78
27	Costa Rica	56	61
28	Côte d'Ivoire	114	131
29	Croatia	42	52
30	Cyprus	28	34
31	Czech Republic	24	26
32	Denmark	9	10
33	Dominic. Rep	93	95
34	Ecuador	91	90
35	Egypt	94	87
36	El Salvador	96	106
37	Estonia	21	29
38	Ethiopia	126	150
39	Finland	7	17
40	France	11	13
41	Georgia	63	79
42	Germany	10	9
43	Ghana	112	103
44	Greece	47	38
45	Guatemala	101	104
46	Guinea	130	153
47	Honduras	108	122
48	Hong Kong (Ch)	14	15
49	Hungary	34	37
50	Iceland	17	30
51	India	46	43
52	Indonesia	87	82
53	Iran	60	71
54	Ireland	19	8
55	Israel	15	20
56	Italy	29	24
57	Jamaica	74	96
58	Japan	13	18
59	Jordan	81	64
60	Kazakhstan	79	62

1	2	3	4
61	Kenya	85	105
62	Korea RD	5	7
63	Kuwait	72	58
64	Kyrgyzstan	98	115
65	Laos	117	127
66	Latvia	38	40
67	Lebanon	92	63
68	Lithuania	39	39
69	Luxembourg	23	16
70	Madagascar	110	130
71	Malawi	107	137
72	Malaysia	36	31
73	Mali	124	141
74	Malta	27	35
75	Mauritius	52	77
76	Mexico	55	57
77	Mongolia	58	110
78	Montenegro	50	70
79	Morocco	77	76
80	Mozambique	122	149
81	Myanmar	127	121
82	Namibia	100	91
83	Nepal	111	109
84	Netherlands	6	6
85	New Zealand	26	23
86	Nigeria	118	124
87	NR Macedonia	59	73
88	Norway	20	19
89	Oman	76	74
90	Pakistan	99	123
91	Panama	83	67
92	Paraguay	88	102
93	Peru	70	89
94	Philippines	51	44
95	Poland	40	28

1	2	3	4
96	Portugal	31	32
97	Qatar	68	72
98	Moldova	64	81
99	Romania	48	45
100	Russia	45	27
101	Rwanda	102	133
102	Saudi Arabia	66	50
103	Senegal	105	118
104	Serbia	54	47
105	Singapore	8	5
106	Slovakia	37	36
107	Slovenia	32	33
108	South Africa	61	54
109	Spain	30	21
110	Sri Lanka	95	86
111	Sweden	2	4
112	Switzerland	1	2
113	Tajikistan	103	143
114	Thailand	43	46
115	Tanzania	90	138
116	Togo	125	129
117	Trnd&Tbg	97	75
118	Tunisia	71	60
119	Turkey	41	55
120	Uganda	119	128
121	UK	4	3
122	Ukraine	49	53
123	UAE	33	42
124	Uruguay	65	68
125	USA	3	1
126	Viet Nam	44	66
127	Yemen	131	156
128	Zambia	121	134
129	Zimbabwe	113	136

The graph below represents a graphical regression analysis that shows there is no strong connection/relationship between the RFT Index and the ISO 9001: 2015 Index.

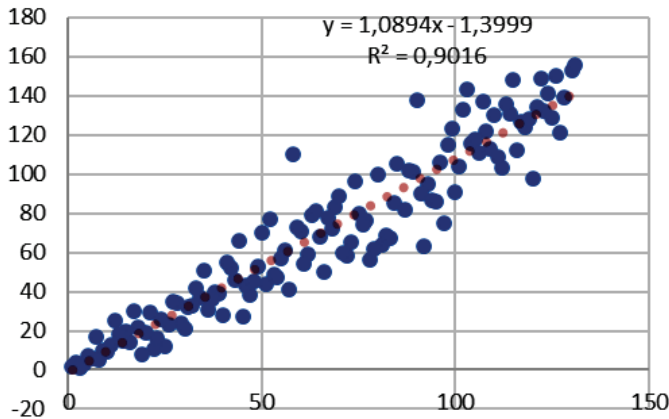


Diagrama 1.

The three tables that follow provide statistical information on the connections/relationships between the RFT Index and the ISO 9001:2015 index, with $R_2 = 0.12414$ suggesting a weak connection/relationship between these two indexes.

Table 2.

SUMMARY OUTPUT	
Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.949526
R Square	0.9016
Adjusted R Square	0.900825
Standard Error	13.65795
Observations	129

Table 3.

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	217065.2	217065.2	1163.647	8.44E-66
Residual	127	23690.53	186.5396		
Total	128	240755.8			

Table 4.

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	-1.39985	2.408806	-0.58114	0.562176	-6.16644	3.366741	-6.16644	3.366741
Innovation Ind.	1.089382	0.031935	34.11227	8.44E-66	1.026188	1.152576	1.026188	1.152576

These findings demonstrate that there is a strong connection/relationship between the Innovation index and Readiness Frontier Technology Index.

Theory and Practice Implications

Concerning the theory, based on the final results of this research, a new window has been opened for further research on the field of relationships between innovation and technologies usage, under a quality management approach, particularly between

the RFT Index and the ISO 56000 standards family (Innovation family), both of which are regarded as tools for improving life quality all over the world.

Limitations and further research

This study was conducted utilizing a large amount of Innovation Index data and RFT Index data and presenting for the first time statistics on the issue of these relations.

More study is needed to confirm that these relationships will be strengthened in the future, making Innovation and RFT real tools for achieving competitive advantage.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Towards fixedness of natural resources and restrictions on boundless economic growth approach, the direction of innovation and technology usage and developments, and the output are important in overcoming resource constraints.

2. There is a tendency for innovations to save on scarce resources. If technological progress will be fixed-factor saving, then fixed factors may not be a large barrier to growth.

3. Achieving competitive advantage requires a positive approach towards innovation, technology usage, and quality management, requiring improvement of innovation, technology usage, quality management, and business climate in SMEs, seeing this as a general microeconomic perspective too, while, in a broader context, this study extends the general understanding of the innovation, technology usage and quality management relations to be used for a future managerial approach/mechanism in real-world situations, suggesting future research could focus on developing and validating the proposed framework and investigate the issue in more contexts and settings.

4. A connection between the innovation index and the readiness frontier technologies index has not only been demonstrated in theoretical aspects but verified by a regressive analysis and ISO 56000 family of standards helps companies to strengthen their commitment to their customers, innovation, and knowledge & technology output Improve activities, processes and procedures and economies around the world to gain a competitive advantage in response to crisis and post-crisis times.

5. The research concludes that all interested parties, including individuals, public and private institutions, decision-makers, and civil society, should strive for and maintain sustainable development scenarios by utilizing quality management principles and ISO standards as efficient and effective tools. As an immediate priority, all stakeholders should work to improve and maintain existing relationships and links between innovation and technology usage.

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Section 5. Legal Sciences

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DISPUTE OF COMPETENCIES BETWEEN CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ALBANIA

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the relationship between the central and local governments regarding the competencies that have been given to each of them in the exercise of public functions. The paper deals with the nature of this dispute, the bodies that can resolve the dispute and the consequences that arise from this relationship between the two bodies. The fact that the law has defined the Constitutional Court, which is the most important court in the Republic of Albania, as the body that resolves the dispute makes the handling of this work even more special.

In Law 139/2015 “On Local Self-Government” it is defined that competence is the authority given by law to a single body of local self-government to perform a function or part of it. From this definition, we understand that it is only the law that can give local government bodies the right to perform certain functions. By “function” we understand the field of activity, for which the local self-government unit is established and has the legal competence to exercise freely in accordance with the laws and by-laws. Regarding the latter, there is the Law mentioned above, which lists the functions of local self-government bodies. The functions of local bodies are focused on the field of infrastructures and public services, social services, cultures, sports, entertainment services, environmental protection, agriculture, rural areas, economic users and public safety. We also have delegated functions that are transferred to local self-government units by law or by agreement, being accompanied in each case by the transfer of money centers to finance the cost of exercising these functions. What is important has to do with the fact that local government units must exercise their functions in accordance with the Constitution, the European Charter of Local Autonomy, the laws in force, as well as respecting national and regional policies.

In the Republic of Albania, local self-government is presented with a constitutional status. Determining the powers directly in the Constitution is of particular

importance, because such a solution would make powerless the governing tendency to change the laws at any time. Of course, such a solution guarantees the stability of the powers of the local government and renders powerless the political pressure of the government that can be exerted at any time.

Exactly such a model has been chosen by the Constitution of the Republic of Albania. Local self-government is presented with a constitutional status and its independence is guaranteed through it. This independence lies in the right that citizens have to form representative bodies and to exercise the function of self-government (referendums) [articles 108/4; 109, 110 of the Constitution; in the organizational independence of local institutions (Article 113); in the exercise of affairs within their jurisdiction, without the intervention of the central bodies of power (Article 113); in the existence of financial means and other means, with which it disposes independently (articles 111, 113/b, c, ç); in the existence of independent administration without the interference of central bodies (Article 113/d); in the existence of norms for the functioning of local self-government and the constitutional protection of self-government rights (articles 113/, points 2, 3) etc.¹

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania in its article 13 sanctions that “Local government in the Republic of Albania is established on the basis of the principle of decentralization of power and is exercised according to the principle of local autonomy”

The court emphasized that the essence of Article 13 of the Constitution are the principles of decentralization of power and local autonomy. Local government means the right of the people in the given territorial community to independently govern their affairs through self-elected bodies or directly. The principle of decentralization of power is the essential principle on which local government is established and functions. It is exercised through the constitutional principle of local autonomy and conditions the existence of a local self-governing power, according to advanced concepts of the organization of the democratic state. The manner of organization and operation of local government, as well as the relationship it has with the central government, depend on the constitutional and legal meaning given to the decentralization of power, local autonomy and self-government². Decentralization is a process where authority and responsibility for certain functions is transferred from the central government to local government units. At the foundation of decentralization is the principle of subsidiarity, according to which “the exercise of public responsibilities should, in general, belong to the authorities closest to the citizens.” And autonomy is such a legal regime, in which the bodies of local units act independently to solve those issues that the Constitution and laws have left under their competence. Its most visible aspect, the autonomy of the local government is expressed in the division of powers, which

¹ Decision no. 37 dated 12.06.2015 of the Constitutional Court.

² Decision no. 29, dated 21.12.2006 of the Constitutional Court.

is about the initiative that local government bodies have or should have, based on the Constitution and the law, to decide on their own about the problems that come under their jurisdiction.

The European Charter of Local Autonomy, ratified by law no. 8548, dated 11.11.1999, in its article 4, point 3, reiterates the principle of subsidiarity according to which: "The exercise of public responsibilities should, in general, belong to the authorities closest to citizens. Giving a responsibility to another authority should be done taking into account the importance and nature of the task, as well as the requirements of ability and economy". The aforementioned provision of the Charter allows the assignment of a responsibility to another authority, provided that certain criteria are taken into account, such as the importance, the nature of the task, as well as the requirements of ability and economy. The Court has emphasized that the purpose of the European Charter of Local Autonomy is for the state parties to create the necessary framework for local authorities to have a wide range of responsibilities, which can be carried out at the local level. When areas of activity have implications at the local level, it is important that in the conception of local authorities acting to develop the general well-being of their residents, they have the right to exercise initiative in these matters. Therefore, according to paragraph 3, article 4 of this Charter, the exercise of responsibilities should go towards decentralization. This principle requires that, except in cases where the nature and size of the problem is such that it belongs to a very large territorial area and with important economic interests, the solution must be entrusted to the local government (see decision no. 29, dated 21.12.2006 of Constitutional Court) (04/2015).

The reasons for the creation of competence disputes and the characteristics of this dispute.

The powers with which the law provides local government bodies should be such that a good part of public issues are regulated according to the principle of subsidiarity. The legal right to regulate and manage certain public issues must be exercised by bodies that are as close as possible to the citizens and be accompanied by effective means for their concretization. In reality, many issues have both local and national implications, and responsibility for them varies across space and time and, moreover, this responsibility can be shared between different levels of government. However, limiting the activity of local authorities only to matters that do not have wide implications carries the risk of turning them into authorities with an insignificant role. On the other hand, it is necessary to reserve some important functions of national and strategic importance to the central government. Determining the interest of the community is also related to the need for the existence of limits for the local government itself, which must not exceed its powers by deciding on issues that belong to a purely political decision-making or on issues that have economic consequences for the entire country. and not only for the relevant local community.

Referring to constitutional doctrine and jurisprudence, the Constitutional Court assesses that the competence dispute can be presented in the form of a “normative” conflict when the competence that constitutes the object of the dispute is provided for in laws, as well as in the form of an “individual” conflict, when the institutions in conflict issue the relevant acts of implementation of the concrete law. Competence disputes can be caused when a law attributes the same competence to two or more institutions, when the same competence is attributed to two institutions according to different laws, as well as when the law provides for the competence, but has not specified the body that should exercise it. The resolution of issues of this nature cannot be done by constitutional control in abstracto and by abstracting from the concrete case. Therefore, the fact of which body belongs to a debated competence is determined starting from a concrete case, when the body has implemented the conflicting law and, on this basis, issued the individual implementation act.

The conflict between laws that has arisen on the question of competences between constitutional bodies constitutes a constitutional issue, unlike other cases of legal conflict, for which the ordinary court is competent to decide which of the laws is applicable to the case under consideration before it. This is the distinguishing aspect that presents the issue of competence disputes as a prerogative of the Constitutional Court, regardless of whether the relevant dispute arose on the basis of the law as a normative act or the act of its implementation as an individual act of the relevant body. In addition, when the resolution of the competence dispute concerns legal or by-law acts issued by the parties to the conflict, it also examines the constitutionality or legality of the act. In this way, the judgment in the Constitutional Court is focused first of all on the resolution of disputes of competence regarding the functions of the constitutional level, finding and eliminating the decisive cause that has led to the birth of the dispute¹.

For example, in Decision number 60 dated 29.12.2014 of the Constitutional Court, it was determined by the latter that the elements of a disagreement of powers are present, since on the one hand we have a body of the central government, such as the National Council of the Territory, which functions under the Council of Ministers and on the other hand, we have the municipalities of Kashar and Farke as the basic unit of local self-government. The object of the disagreement was a Decision of the NCT, which, among other things, decided to suspend the granting of development permits by the planning authorities until the approval of the National General Plan. The municipalities of Kashar and Farkë, as basic units of local government, claim that the suspension of the granting of development permits within their territorial jurisdiction, without any deadline and without any criteria, constitutes an infringement of the

¹ Decision no. 29, dated 21.12.2006 of the Constitutional Court.

powers of the local government bodies, contrary to the principles of decentralization of power and local autonomy, provided for in Article 13 of the Constitution.

A dispute of competences between powers may arise when an act or conduct, which is considered illegal, brings harm to the applicant because it interferes with the sphere of competences fully or partially known to him. So, for such a conflict to arise, there must be a violation of the sphere of competences. The conflict is considered acceptable even when the affiliation of the power has not been contested, but the “bad use” that has been made of it reflects a reduction of the powers constitutionally guaranteed to the requesting subject. In such a case, the aggrieved body does not claim for itself the competence to fulfill a certain act, but claims that an act of another body or its inactive behavior have reduced the competences or prevented it from exercising them.

The requesting subjects

The requesting subjects must be defined in the Constitution and in the organic law of the Constitutional Court. Article 134 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania provides that:

“1. The Constitutional Court is set in motion at the request of:

a) the President of the Republic; b) the Prime Minister; c) not less than one fifth of the deputies; ç) People’s Advocate; d) Chairman of the Supreme State Audit Office; dh) any court, according to Article 145, point 2, of this Constitution; e) every commissioner established by law for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution; ë) The High Judicial Council and the High Prosecution Council; f) local government bodies; g) bodies of religious communities; gj) political parties; h) organizations; i) individuals.

2. Subjects provided by subparagraphs “d”, “dh”, “e”, “ë”, “f”, “g”, “gj”, “h” and “i”, of paragraph 1, of this article, can only apply for issues related to their interests. Also in law No. 8557 dated 10.02.2000 amended by law no. 99/2016 “On the Organization and Functioning of the Constitutional Court”, in article 54 point 3 it is determined that: “The claim before the Constitutional Court is raised by the subjects in conflict or by the subjects directly affected by the conflict”. As we said above, the subjects that can move the court are divided into two categories. In the first category are included all those subjects who are in conflict of competences between them and each of them can move the court to seek his right. The second category is related to those subjects who, although they are not part of the conflict that is created, they have the right to file a claim in court as they are directly affected by this conflict. So what is important regarding these subjects is to prove the direct connection between their situation, the activity they exercise and the norm they oppose. In relation to these subjects, the Constitutional Court also expressed itself when it dealt with the case of the Association of Municipalities of Albania regarding the fact that it is legitimate to apply to the Constitutional Court. In its decision no. 37 dated 12.06.2015 it states: “In the

judgments of the control of the constitutionality of the norm, the initiating entities provided for in Article 134/2 of the Constitution have the obligation to prove the necessary connection that must exist between the legal activity that they perform and the constitutional issue raised. Associations, in the capacity of “other organizations”, are specified in article 134, point 1, letter “f”, of the Constitution, as one of the subjects that conditionally exercise the right to address the Court, having constitutional legitimacy only for issues related to their interests. They must prove the direct connection between the mission for which they were created or the activity they carry out and the consequences derived from the provisions that seek to be declared incompatible with the Constitution¹.

The court stated that the assessment of whether or not an organization has sufficient interest is done on a case-by-case basis, depending on the circumstances of each particular case. The organization that moves the Court must prove in what way it can be affected in some aspect of its situation, that is, it must prove the direct and individualized connection that exists between its situation and the norm it opposes. The interest to act must be certain, direct and personal. This interest consists in the violated right, in the real or potential damage and not in the theoretical premises on the unconstitutionality of the norm that brought about this violation of interest².

Review of the disagreement on competences by the Constitutional Court.

On the basis of Article 131 letter “ç” of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court decides on disputes of competence between powers, as well as between the central government and local government. Issues of this nature are raised by the competent constitutional body asking the Constitutional Court to finally declare the body, which is responsible for exercising its will in the specific sphere of state activity, and to determine the range of its powers

The provision of the letter “ç” of Article 131 of the Constitution includes disputes that arise in the sphere of the division of powers on a horizontal plane (legislative, executive and judicial), as well as on a vertical plane (central powers-local government). In addition, based on constitutional jurisprudence, this provision also includes another range of disputes, such as those that may arise between bodies or entities that do not belong, in a defined and categorical manner, to this or that power, such as the President, The Constitutional Court, the prosecution and other constitutional bodies. Elaborating on the provision of Article 131 letter “ç” of the Constitution, the legislator in Article 54 of Law No. 8577, dated 10.2.2000 “On the organization and functioning of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Albania” specifies that

¹ Decisions no. 35, dated 10.10.2007; no. 11, dated 06.04.2010; No. 5, dated 16.02.2012 and No. 11, dated 06.03.2014 of the Constitutional Court.

² Decisions no. 16, dated 25.07.2008; no. 4, dated 23.02.2011; No. 43, dated 06.10.2011 and No. 11, dated 06.03.2014 of the Constitutional Court).

“the Constitutional Court examines these conflicts when the relevant subjects have considered themselves competent to decide on specific issues and, as the case may be, have issued the acts for its regulation, or when the subjects have not considered themselves competent to decide in particular cases.” First of all, this provision refers to disputes between bodies that belong to different powers, the subject of which is the affiliation of a competence, as well as to the body that complains that its sphere of competence has been violated and that therefore addresses the Court Constitutional to declare the body to which the competence in question belongs.

The Constitutional Court decides, according to Article 56 of the above-mentioned law, which body of power has the competence to resolve the concrete issue, for which the dispute has arisen. In addition, when the resolution of the competence dispute concerns legal or by-law acts issued by the parties to the conflict, it also examines the constitutionality or legality of the act. In this way, the trial at the Constitutional Court is focused first of all on the resolution of disputes of competence regarding the functions of the constitutional level, finding and eliminating the decisive cause that has brought about the birth of the dispute.

Based on what was presented above, it is concluded that any power body is legitimate to file a request before the Constitutional Court when it claims to be faced with a conflict of competence, which may have arisen due to the law or a factual activity. It is decisive that the sphere of competences of conflicting bodies or entities must be defined by the constitutional norm.

Conclusions

Many issues have both local and national implications and responsibility for them varies across space and time and, moreover, this responsibility can also be shared between different levels of government. However, limiting the activity of local authorities only to matters that do not have wide implications, carries the risk of turning them into authorities with an insignificant role. On the other hand, it is necessary to reserve some important functions of national and strategic importance to the central government. Determining the interest of the community is also related to the need for the existence of limits for the local government itself, which must not exceed its powers by deciding on issues that belong to a purely political decision-making or on issues that have economic consequences for it. the whole country and not only for the respective local community. It is permissible for matters of national and strategic importance for the country's interests to be exercised under the authority of the central government, which is responsible for the country's economic and political development policy. However, the limitation of the powers of the local government bodies should not be such as to conflict with the principle of decentralization and local autonomy by weakening the role of these bodies, so that their existence or self-governance would become insensitive.

The fact that the resolution of this disagreement is done by the constitutional court shows the importance of both powers in the life of the country. On the one hand, we have the local government, which, as we said above, guarantees for its protection are raised to the constitutional level by defining some of the powers directly in the latter, and on the other hand, we have the central government, which is responsible for the political and economic development of all country. Considering how delicate the nature of the disagreement is, the constitutional court must make a fair solution to the issue in order to continue the normal functioning of the relevant bodies, whose powers and decision-making belong to ordinary citizens.

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