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A Case Study of Chinese Open Network

Agreement between Macedonia & Greece

Highlights

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Discovering Thoughts, Inventing Future

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By Igor Janev
Institute for Political Studies in Belgrade

Abstract- In this paper, we have shown how Macedonia, in its misperception that Security Council Resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1995) were legal UN acts, nonsensically negotiated for three decades over the legally impermissible sovereign matter of *national identity,* virtually not understanding that the *legal identity* is the basic element of sovereignty and the *juridical personality* of any state and at the same time an inviolable category of "national identity of a sovereign people" (which is an essence of the *cultural sovereignty*). In their apparent ignorance, all Macedonian governments didn't notice that the Macedonian state without the *legal identity* (as a *de facto, even de jure* nameless State) was admitted to the UN membership by an error and an omission *(delict of omission)* committed by the main political bodies of the UN when they admitted Macedonia under prohibited *additional conditions* extraneous to the legally defined scope of general UN membership conditions, prescribed by Article 4 (paragraph 1) of the UN Charter.

Keywords: *prespa agreement, UN, conditions, national identity, treaty, assimilation, personality.*

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The Cultural Genocide that Resulted from the Agreement between Macedonia and Greece Concluded in Prespa Village ("Prespa Agreement", 2018) and the Process of Assimilation of the Macedonian Identity ("Bulgarization") as a Result of the Dismantling and Annihilation of the National Identity of Ethnic Macedonians

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Therefore, begging from the fact that to the Macedonians were indisputably denied the basic *right to national identity* by new ID-modifiers provided in the Prespa treaty including revised contractual identity definition(s), both internally and internationally (including a deprivation of the right previously guaranteed to Macedonian minorities in neighbouring countries, particularly by PA in Greece), we came to conclusion that the Prespa Agreement is an act of *ethnocide* (a cultural genocide in the broader and comprehensive sense, extended to the administrative sphere of bans, limits and national annulation(s)), that flagrantly violates basic collective (and individual) human rights, in addition to violations of basic rights of the state: the right to sovereignty, political independence and non-interference in the internal domestic jurisdiction of states (including interference to internal and external relations of the state). These violations, especially in area of *cultural sovereignty*, which were reflected in the complete contractual annihilation of the *national identity*, contributed to the further re-definition attempts (of the derogated identity) through the process of *assimilation* accepting under impositions Bulgarian interpretation of the Macedonian origin (as "Bulgarians"). The ignorance of the Macedonian diplomacy and the authorities in Skopje contributed to the Macedonian acceptance of Bulgarian-EU condition that requires the new identity (basically annulled by Prespa Agreement) to be "specified" and refined in accordance with the Bulgarian identity "inputs" in a new re-negotiations process. In the Bulgarian view, the Prespa Agreement in fact created the "North Macedonian(s)" as new "indeterminate identity" and according to the Bulgarian demands, as condition for EU membership of RNM candidate, such identity needs additionally to be re-defined reflecting "Bulgarian roots" i.e. "Bulgarian origin of Macedonian people". This blackmail was internationalized by the well-known EU

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"French proposal" (that was accepted by the authorities in Macedonia, in similar way and ignorant manner as was in the case of UN-conditioning before, from 1993) and thus the Bulgarian conditions become one of the EU's (pre)conditions for the admission of the ("new nation-state") of the Republic of North Macedonia to EU.

In this case, the generally known rule was proven ones again: that after (or simultaneously with) the process of *annulment* of national identity, there is always, by the nature of that illegal process, parallel forceful or "conditional" *national assimilation*, as a process that violates the basic imperative International Law. On the basis of the Treaty of Prespa (PA), that annulled the original identity (of the former ethnic Macedonians), Bulgaria was given a chance (and skilfully used it) to start the process of "Bulgarization" of the people in Macedonia, which the Bulgarians themselves called "the process of self-re-awareness of the Macedonians as Bulgarians" and finally Bulgarian strategy planned for the formal (self-)recognition of those (Macedonians) by a treaty, that they are/were "the same people with the Bulgarians", actually identifying two cultures as one.

With the full support of the Albanian political factor(s) in Macedonia, who supports the Bulgarian initiatives for the supplementary redefinition of the "new artificial nation", analytical observation led us to a more general conclusion that in fact, the ultimate goal of the process of so-called "Bulgarization" (assimilation into Bulgarians) is in fact preparation for federalization of the territory of today's Macedonia (former Republic of Macedonia) and, in the mutual deal (where one party is Bulgaria) with the Albanian political factor(s) in the Balkans (i.e. the authorities in Kosovo and Metohija and the Republic of Albania). In conclusion, it appears that a mutual main goal of Albanians and Bulgarians was to achieve the final dismemberment or dissolution of Macedonian territory in favour of the formation/creation of the Greater Bulgaria and the Greater Albania. In this context, the old rule known from history is once again proved: territorial occupation or division is often preceded by forceful *national assimilation* and forceful *national (cultural) annulment.*

Keywords: prespa agreement, UN, conditions, national identity, treaty, assimilation, personality.

I. Introduction

By the agreement between Macedonia and Greece reached in Prespa village (Macedonia) in 2018, known also as the "Prespa Agreement" (Eng. full title: "Final Agreement for the settlement of the differences as described in the United Nations Security Council resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993), the termination of the Interim Accord of 1995, and the establishment of a strategic partnership between the Parties.") for the first time in the history of the development of International Law, an attempt was made to redefine the *national identity* of a sovereign nation with an external international act-treaty. This attempt itself caused, in our opinion, justified doubts as to whether challenging the nation's sovereign identity placed in the negotiation process and imposing a solution on such a sensitive internal issue through an international (legal) act is legally admissible, i.e. a decision or an agreement (contract) or a treaty under International Law. Starting from the principles of cultural and general sovereignty (sovereign equality of UN members) and sovereign autonomy and political independence, including non-interference in domestic jurisdiction, norms contained in Article 2 of the UN Charter and other UN and UNESCO documents, bearing in mind especially the principles of self-determination of peoples (especially self-identification of nations), as well as Charter's norm in Article 2(7) banning UN and member-state to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of states, we came to a conclusion that the Agreement between Macedonia and Greece signed in Prespa in 1918, is contrary to the basic norms, principles and rules of International Law. In accordance with Prespa Agreement (hereinafter: PA) the *national identity* of the Macedonian people was illegitimately and illegally changed, thus abolishing the *basic international right to national identity*, so that such treaty in fact constitute an act of ethnocide and cultural genocide that was committed against the people of Macedonia (that were subject of identity redefinition), and furthermore against the basic principles of self-identification, self-determination, sovereignty and political independence of state(s). In particular, this apparently illegal Prespa Agreement (using provisions of ID-modifiers) violated an inalienable and inviolable right of the people to their *national identity* (as the basic collective human right), and the self-determination and independent choice of it, as well as numerous other violations of basic rights of a sovereign people or a nation, such as the right to constitute and exercise its statehood and sovereign identify of its home state as the sovereign and independent subject of international law. This right on state's ID is obviously inviolable, having in mind that state's name constitute an essential element of the juridical personality of such an international subject. As a consequence of the blatant denial of the right to national ID and state self-identification, after the entry into force of the Prespa Agreement (signed in 2018, which entered into force in 2019) and consequent linked Constitutional changes (redefinitions of the Macedonian Constitution in accordance with the PA), the redefined “Macedonian people” became the subject of a new Bulgarian campaign for imposed assimilation on Macedonians (as the "newly re-defined people") into the Bulgarian identity, as they were a same nation or people. That was an action taken by the Bulgarian state only a few months after the PA entered into force (i.e. after registration of the PA in the UN Secretariat). The Bulgarian diplomacy nowadays, among other things, is seeking for new changes in the (already revised) Constitution of the "Republic of North Macedonia" in order to "reflect the Bulgarian origin of this people" who lives in "North Macedonian" territory. This policy towards aggressive "Bulgarianization" of the contested "Macedonian identity" (i.e. imposed assimilation into

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Bulgarians) is fully supported by all Albanian political parties in Macedonia and certain Western powers, whose interest was/is a dissolution of the territory of present Macedonia and the creation of the Greater Albania, and even Greater Bulgaria, with an intention of weakening Serbia and so-called "Russian influence" in the Balkans.

I. The Origin of the "Prespa Agreement" Signed in 2018 in Nivici (Macedonia) in UN Resolutions

In order to understand the problem of the origin and consequences of the Prespa Agreement[1], it is necessary to refer to the specific additional admission conditions imposed to Macedonia (only) in the process of applying for membership in the United Nations in 1993. The Treaty of Prespa (or hereinafter: the Prespa Agreement or PA) on redefinition and changing of the *State name* has its *legal basis* in Security Council (UNSC) resolutions 817 (1993)[2] and later 845 (1993)[3]. Based on a request from Greece (and its close allies in UN), for the first time in the history of the United Nations, a state (which applied under its constitutional name as "Republic of Macedonia") was subjected under imposed *additional conditions* for admission to the UN (in *addition* to the general and exhaustive conditions legally prescribed in Article 4 of the UN Charter). With UN Security Council Resolution 817 delivered on April 7, 1993, after the *affirmative statement* in the preamble of that resolution (817) that the candidate state "meets the conditions" for admission to the United Nations, it was proposed in the text of resolution to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) that the candidate should be admitted to UN membership under with the *reference* the "*Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*" (in the abbreviated version known as: the "FYROM"), with an implicit associated obligation *to negotiate* with Greece (which diplomatically did not recognize that state/ candidate as such subject, i.e. with that ID) about its own state Constitutional name (and in the meantime obliged bearing this mandatory provisional reference (the FYROM)). This Security Council resolution-recommendation of the UN Security Council (817) with specific "additional conditions" imposed to the recognized sovereign candidate was then accepted on April 8, 1993 by the UN General Assembly (by Assembly Resolution 47/225[4]), which "decided" to admit the sovereign candidate as a "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (or FYROM provisionally referred) into the full membership of the United Nations. As was shown in later analyses of this precedent admission[5], the Security Council of the United Nations, as well as the UN General Assembly, were not allowed and authorized to accept any candidate for UN membership under "additional conditions of admission to the UN", since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1948 prohibited voting for such conditions stating that otherwise they violate(s) basic rules enshrined in Article 4 (paragraph 1.) of the UN Charter, as was ruled out in an ICJ Advisory Opinion of the delivered on May 28, 1948, according to which additional conditions are/were not legal conditions for admission to the UN[6]. However, the Advisory Opinion of the ICJ (1948), in its negligence and recklessness, was completely forgotten and/or ignored or overlooked by the UN Security Council in the Macedonian case (1993), and then by the UN General Assembly, which in its ignorance committed in fact *delicto omissio* (delict of omission). Instead of unconditional admittance to UN membership, as only legal way to be admitted, UN organs invented the *de facto* "conditional admission" (actually non-existing in the UN order) or ungrounded admission with additional illegal conditions, contrary to the basic norm(s) of the UN Charter. For the first time in the UN history (not seen until the partially illegal case of admission of the "Republic of Macedonia"), one candidate-state was admitted to UN with a *denomination* given by the UN[7] (actually as *nameless subject*, although "sovereign" state, blatantly unlike all other sovereign candidate countries in the process of admission to full membership in the UN). That was the State which "name should not be mentioned" (not in UN and in accordance with the principle of "universality" preferably not even outside the UN, i.e. in bilateral relations).

As I was able to notice and discover in my research on the matter (especially in AJIL, Vol. 93, No. 1, 1999), Macedonia was admitted to the UN with two political *additional conditions* for membership, without which the admission could not be carried out (in a form: "take it or leave it"). Namely, in its application for membership, Macedonia requested for regular admission under its constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia", but in the recommendation of the Security Council 817 (1993) this requested Constitutional name of the state was completely ignored by the UN organs and on the other side the Greek request not to use that name including the alleged territorial claims stemming

[1] *Final Agreement for the settlement of the differences as described in the United Nations Security Council resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993), the termination of the Interim Accord of 1995, and the establishment of a strategic partnership between the Parties* (2018) (hereinafter: PA)
[2] UNSC Resolution 817 (1993)
[3] UNSC Resolution 845 (1993)
[4] UNGA Resolution 47/225 (1993)

[5] Starting from article published in American Journal of International Law (AJIL), Vol. 93, No. 1, 1999.
[6] That ICJ Advisory Opinion (1948) was accepted by the UNGA Resolution 197/3(1948) as official interpretation of the norm of admission to the UN membership and Article 2 of the UN Charter.
[7] As was pointed out in the *Memorandum on legal aspects of the problem of representation in the UN*, UN Doc. S/1466 (1950), recognition of States may not be a legal function of UN (including their names). Provisional reference clearly do not constitute a *legal ID* or cannot be the substitute for the *juridical identity*.

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from that name of the candidate were accepted by UN, so that finally resolution-recommendation of the Council (817) excluded the "disputed" state name and replaced it with the (unwanted by Macedonians) *denomination* "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", as a proposal for the temporary designation (reference) of the candidate for the final resolution-decision of the UN General Assembly on the membership status. (Janev 2002) In their rashness, neither the legal service of the UN, nor any other UN body, succeeded to notice a simple fact that a *denomination* or a *temporary reference* (for the purposes of the UN and their agencies) is not a valid *legal identity*, and that a *sovereign member* state cannot be accepted as a full member of the UN without international legal (juridical) identity, as it is a basic element of its legal personality, and therefore its statehood. In the absence of knowledge about the legality of admission to the UN under supplementary "additional conditions", the UN General Assembly, retaining the non-standard illegal admission conditions contained in Security Council Resolution 817 (1993), by its decision (Resolution 47/225[8]) admitted Macedonia to the UN under the reference "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (in fact pending *name resolution*, implying in fact *nameless state*), which flagrantly violates the rights of member states provided in the UN Charter (since UN is organization/association of sovereign states), and above all the principles of sovereignty (*sovereign equality of states*) and non-interference in internal affairs (or essential domestic jurisdiction, reserved for *states* only) contained in Article 2 of the UN Charter. In numerous analyses, it was concluded that Macedonia received (or rather was subjected to) special imposed additional conditions legally groundless for revised admission (constituting on indefinite basis illegal membership conditions for admission and therefore illegal membership status in the UN)(Janev 2021; Janev 2023): 1. the condition to carry and be represented with a UN-given reference the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, i.e. the "FYROM" (an indefinite in time *denomination*, limiting the right of the state to independently use, or even change its Constitutional name (universally denouncing its validity), limiting, as well, a free choice of its national or state name (subjecting it to political will of one UN member state), even though it is a sovereign fundamental right to have a legal ID (and in addition, there is not only a basic right of an international subject, but also an obligation to have a such legal ID as a legal necessity in any legal representation or any juridical valid conduct); 2nd condition was to negotiate with another UN member state (foreign country) on an indefinite basis with respect to its own state and Constitutional name (i.e. *juridical identity*) in order to change it (and if not, be condemned to carry shameful *denomination*, as long as necessary), ignoring the simple fact that *international legal identity* (of any state, particularly UN member) is an inviolable sovereign category from the list of essential strictly internal or domestic inviolable jurisdiction. Any interference in such domestic matters in particular, would limit essential *contractual* State capacity (juridical personality) and in addition an inviolable right to self-determination of the state and people with respect to national name, i.e. the right to self-identification and non-interference in strict internal jurisdiction, which is specifically protected by the UN Charter, and in addition a basic collective human right to choose its national name or national identity). The principles of the sovereign equality of states and the inviolability of their juridical personality lead to the conclusion that the choice of a name is an inalienable right of the state. Principles on Cultural sovereignty[9] and free expression on cultural believes and traditions[10] (or even myths) provides legal basis for inviolability of self-identification as a basic collective human right that may not be subject to foreign interference or any negotiations.

As I have shown in my previous research (Janev, 1999), both of the above-mentioned special (not general), not implying condition, added to the standard set of the Charter requirements, as rather arbitrary-additional, were in fact illegal political (apparently diplomatic, in nature) conditions imposed to the UN candidate. Therefore, as infinite requirements, these conditions were in sharp contradiction with normative ones described in an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued on May 28 1948. In addition, these illegal conditions were in obvious conflict with UN General Assembly Resolution 197/III, 1948, that accepts the Advisory Opinion of the Court delivered on May 1948. UN General Assembly Resolution 197/III, 1948 establishes an interpretation of the limited *admission norm* embedded in Article 4(1) of the UN Charter. In response to the question raised by the UN General Assembly, by its Resolution 117/II of 1947, whether members of UNSC and UNGA were authorized to vote on additional conditions[11], the ICJ responded in 1948 with an Advisory Opinion answering that additional admission conditions are not permitted (i.e. general conditions in Article 4 represent a close set of conditions), nor that members of the UNSC and UNGA may be voted for such (diplomatically

[8] Op. cit. UNGA Res. 47/225 (1993)

[9] See *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*, UNESCO (1982), see also *Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation*, UNESCO (1966).

[10] See *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, UN (2007).

[11] UNGA in Resolution 117/2 (1947) placed the following question for an Advisory opinion of the ICJ: „Is a Member of the United Nations which is called upon, in virtue of Article 4 of the Charter, to pronounce itself by its vote, either in the Security Council or in the General Assembly, on the admission of a State to membership in the United Nations, juridically entitled to make its consent to the admission dependent on conditions not expressly provided by paragraph 1 of the said Article?"

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superimposed), otherwise Article 4 of the Charter would be violated (particularly its paragraph 1. with normative rules for admission to the UN). Political bodies of the UN must not exceed the scope of these powers and jurisdictional authority, since otherwise the UN Charter is violated (Article 4 (paragraph 1) of the UN Charter) and consequently UN organ commits an *ultra vires* act. (Janev, 2006) In accordance with UN Resolution 197/III, from 1948, Advisory Opinion is accepted as an interpretation of the UN Charter, i.e. it recognized the legal norm of admission to the UN Charter and possible breaches of the norm (*ultra vires* acts). Based on this position of Resolution 197/III and the ICJ from 1948 seven candidate states for membership previously blocked by the power of Security Council VETO (all for reason of absence of *diplomatic recognition*) were admitted to the UN membership. As proved in 1999 (AJIL, Vol. 93, No. 1, 1999), Macedonia was admitted to the UN membership with an illegal additional condition(s), were one is directly politically linked to the diplomatic recognition (were absence of *diplomatic recognition* by a one UN member clearly constitute an *additional condition*), especially in 1993 *recognition* of its *legal identity* (i.e. the basic element of *international legal personality*) of candidate for admission. The Greek demand, formulated as Macedonian (UN) conditions, in fact, has proven to have a political nature of misrecognition in the UN, that creates obligations for the not-recognized party (obligation to negotiate for recognition) essentially not depend on one party (i.e. Macedonia), but rather on the other one. In addition, as pointed above, as those special conditions (for one member only) formally transcend in time, the act of admission itself (i.e. they last even after the act of admission to UN is completed) and therefore one-sided conditions that were blackmailing the state to change its ID apparently could not explicitly or even otherwise implicitly be part of the general conditions set forth in Article 4 of the UN Charter (not to mention that according to the preamble of the UNSC Res. 817 candidate "satisfied conditions"). These additional conditions (of a diplomatic and arbitrary nature) obviously had to be added in the text of the resolution 817, because otherwise they would not be presumed in any possible context as related or included to the normal conditions of the Charter. Such blackmailing conditions against one future member apparently could not fit into any legal conditions of UN admission, particularly taking into consideration that UN was/is an universal organization open to any country, where any candidate have a *right to admission*, after minimum requirements enlisted in Article 4 (1) were/are met. Fulfilling an individual diplomatic (conditions) of recognition (in the case of "state name change") from Greece obviously does not depend on the country-candidate for admission, but solely on the political will of Greece and a Greek capacity to place political pressure on weaker party and even create an obligation to Macedonia (where fulfilment of the conditions depend on one (foreign) state, solely).

In addition, as pointed above, conditions for Macedonia were not "exhaustive" (i.e., „necessary and sufficient", as they should be as elements of the *legal norm*. Namely, the assessment of the candidate should be made before, and not after the UN admission. These conditions (independently on Greece demands) fundamentally contradict(ed) the legal nature of Article 4 of the Charter as an *exhaustive* legal *norm* (where by definition the normative conditions are "necessary and sufficient", according to an Advisory opinion of the ICJ (1948)). According to the definition of the Advisory Opinion from 1948, the conditions of admission must have a time-bound character (which in Macedonian admission is not the case), because the "eligibility of a candidate for admission to the UN" is assessed on the basis of them (limited in time to the beginning of membership), and those that continue even after an admission are obviously not of such nature. In this respect, I may draw conclusion that in addition to the violation related to Article 4 (1), with two illegal conditions, from the moment of entering into membership and *after the admission* corresponding illegal obligations were created (in addition to the breaches of procedures specified in Article 4 of the UN Charter), namely Article 2 of the Charter were violated in paragraphs 1 (legal and *sovereign equality* of states), 4 (*independence* of states) and 7 (*non-interference* in strictly *essential* internal jurisdiction). That conclusion is almost self-evident because the newly admitted state FYROM with such special admission conditions acquired two more identical obligations (illegal, as well). Therefore, the *new illegal status* of member called by a reference "the FYROM" (in relation to other UN members and their status) defined legally discriminated and *unequal position-status* in apparent violation of the first principle of Article 2 *sovereign equality* of states.

However, in connection with the described illegal UN precedent from 1993 (that refers to the introduction of the binding unwanted reference "the FYROM" in the UN), it should be noted that in the political arena more and more of UN member states in bilateral relations steadily in time continued to recognize the official state name "Republic of Macedonia" and every year more and more UN members use(d) that Constitutional name ("Republic of Macedonia") for all purposes, despite protests from the Greece government. Process of recognition of the Constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia" continued progressively until the moment of signing the Prespa agreement 2018, and stopped after the entering into force of that agreement. Macedonia under the constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia" was recognized by more than two-thirds of the UN members (about 136 UN member states). Then in 2018, the process was interrupted and

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finally stopped in 2019, and on the basis of the Prespa agreement (2018) with respect of the change of its state identity, all UN member states recognized the *new state name* in 2019, as: "Republic of North Macedonia". That moment and particularly registration of the treaty in UN Secretariat actually represented the final diplomatic victory of Greece over week Macedonia in long-term diplomatic war (characterized with essentially inexperienced Macedonian diplomacy and new Government headed by political party SDSM (with PM Z. Zaev) without priority to preserve an identity)(Balkans Aljazeera News. 2017).

It should be pointed out, that during the process of admission of Macedonia to the UN, the Macedonian diplomacy (similarly as negligent services/lawyers in the UN Secretariat) did not grasp the illegality of special admission situation or even linked their case with the previous case of the Advisory Opinion of the ICJ from 1948 with respect to *additional conditions*, despite Macedonian apparently non-standard (political) admission requirements to the UN[12]. The Macedonian diplomacy in 1993 (and later) did not know at least three basic rules of international law: 1. States *do not have exclusive rights over state names* (Henkin 1993), and therefore Constitutional names are subject to the independent *sovereign choice* of each state or nation and in addition such names are basic inviolable elements of juridical personality and represent a UN membership rights (national name and national flag are elements of representation in the UN) for any member state in the UN (i.e. Member only inform UN organs on such matter, without any political decision for their endorsement); 2. Changes of the state name do not affect any territorial rights and obligations of their own countries, as well as right or obligations of any other or third states, and hence changing of the state legal identity does not endanger legal rights of other member states of the international community, i.e. members of the UN; 3. Consequently, the state name, as an internationally public legal category and *sovereign juridical* ID, cannot: a. be subject of theft, be deprived or appropriated, b. be imposed, shared, or be subject to any negotiation, discussion or contracting process (or a treaty), as well as, any valid denial on whatever grounds. Finally, the Macedonian diplomacy apparently didn't understood that the changes of the state name, as inviolable independent category, may not affect any historical interpretation, and by virtue of international public law principles, the *state name*, *per se*, could not have any relevant legal consequences in relation to historical interpretations, nor such interpretations may have any effect on the rules for membership in the UN defined by the Article 4 of the UN Charter. Greece's objections that Macedonia, by its very name ("Republic of Macedonia"), "steals the ancient history of Greece" and thus represents a "security" threat to Greece, seem unconvincing, ungrounded and even ridiculous from today's perspective (and even then in 1993) and from the point of International Law. Unfortunately, the Macedonian diplomacy and political elite at the time of country's admission to the UN in 1993 didn't have or obtain enough knowledge on basics in International Law and did not cope with the situation when country was supposed to be admitted to the UN without additional conditions.

Despite numerous indications and provided information to the Macedonian government that there was an illegal and harmful admission to Macedonia (1993) with very serious consequences, the Macedonian authorities did not dare to turn problem to the ICJ for an Advisory Opinion, and did not even initiate a more massive campaign of international recognitions under the constitutional name ("Republic of Macedonia"), but remained calm, showing a high degree of immaturity and absence of diplomatic and political knowledge and wisdom. When it became blatantly clear in 1999 that it was completely illegal to tolerate an imposed non-ID reference (which is not a legal identity of the state) and in this connection that negotiating the state name is an illegal and even a shameful request, the Macedonian authorities and diplomacy did not took any action at all to address this hot question. The so-called *name negotiation* process (as second additional condition, after illegal *denomination* (the FYROM)) was not stopped at the UN, but continued! After a discovery of the UN flagrant negligence (that is, the *delict of omission*), where UN itself had no any arguments to explain an increasingly obvious discrimination in respect to the meaningless supplementary additional conditions imposed to Macedonia, instead of weakening positions, the pressure from the Western powers on Macedonia to change, in agreement with Greece, its constitutional name was growing up. Thereby, Western powers and UN organs in fact wanted to "wash away" and obliterate an increasingly visible UN "mistake" (i.e. *maleficium omissionis*) of the UN Organization.

When Zoran Zaev (party SDSM) came to power in Macedonia becoming a new Prime Minister (2017), the Western powers and Greece have finally got a chance for „identity solution" and managed to force the Macedonian authorities headed by Zaev even to effectively expand the number of „negotiating" conditions from two (conditions, and allegedly only "name problem") to a very large number of (illegal) national demands, covering in fact an entire sphere of *national identity*. In addition to changes with respect to the state name (*legal state identity*), Greece also demanded for a change of the name of the people and nation, i.e. the national name revisions in every aspect, as well as numerous national systemic changes in the

[12] *Admission of a State to the United Nations (Charter, Art. 4*), Advisory Opinion, 1948 ICJ (May 28).

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Constitution of Macedonia, as well as cultural and administrative legal changes that extends to personal documents, passports, identity cards, driver's and other licenses, etc. In addition, the range of changes and solutions reached comprehensive national bans and mandatory revisions of local identity, and furthermore all-encompassing national changes has been extended to UN and organizations even outside the UN system, as well as to countries that are not members of the UN (i.e., to all countries according to the principle embedded in the Prespa agreement: *Erga Omnes*[13]). The problem of Macedonian diplomacy (and of basically all the authorities in Macedonia) was primarily that they didn't understood the gravity of the situation, especially that national identity (as a category) cannot and must not be negotiated, because as a result of a compromise-treaty on "identity revision" always conflict arises, since for the people, forceful, imposed and illegitimate quasi-identity is unacceptable. The people perceive such imposed new identity that denies the original one as an alienated and foreign identity, that is, an artificial identity, not theirs, but rather represents form of violence against the people and against the nation. After the new UN Security Council Resolution 845 from 1993, where both sides (the FYROM and the Greece) were requested to continue with "talks" (as later "talks" were formulated as "negotiations" in 1995) in order to overcome the "difference(s)" between them ("described in Resolution 817 (1993)" as a "difference"), when to the majority of UN members became aware that "difference" was actually not a "security dispute", Greece place additional pressure to the FYROM for concluding a treaty on mutual relations. As a result of increasing Western pressure in 1995 both states have signed an "Interim accord"[14] on mutual relations, by which Macedonia (here: the FYROM) has committed to continue "negotiations" about its name, and that this ID issue (related to the name of the state mentioned in Resolution 817 (1993)) would/may not be presented before the International Court of Justice for any Court's action or decision.(Janev, Petrovic, 2010) In this sense, due to the ignorance of the Macedonian authorities, this document-agreement was created in 1995, which, in the absence of Security Council resolutions, continued to force the illegitimate negotiation process on an internal *sovereign issue* (in fact avoiding ICJ), and Greece only waited so long for an opportune moment in time (future) when the most flexible government would emerge in Skopje and most suitable identity solution could be reached in accordance with their interests, and be framed as the "final agreement" (i.e. a treaty on an identity of neighbouring country).

II. Prespa Agreement (2018) as a Restriction and Redefinition of National Identity, by Introducing a Mandatory Denominator (Prefix: "North") before the Original Identity (Macedonia), and with the use of an Id-Modifiers Imposing or Establishing an Artificial "North Macedonian Nation" as a Substitute for the Original Macedonian Identity

After growing pressure from the Western countries, especially from EU, USA and NATO to solve the so-called „name issue", the most „cooperative" government headed by the new Prime Minister Z. Zaev in the interest of "Euro-Atlantic integration" accepted the signing/conclusion of the Prespa agreement (or shortly "PA" or "Prespa Treaty") in the village Nivici in 2018, which ended the so-called "difference over the name" with Greece. This agreement (PA) replaced the previous "Interim accord" on mutual relations (from 1995), as an act-agreement on permanent relations between the two states based on the re-definition of the *state name* and identity (Macedonians). With this treaty, the Western countries covered up and devalued the UN *delict of omission* (which was an *ultra vires* act(s) of the UN) and at the same time secured strategically important membership for Macedonia in NATO, with the vague and dubious EU promise(s) for speedy membership of this "redefined nation" in the European Union (EU). The Prespa Agreement was already dubious from the point of view of several clearly illegal aspects and elements with respect to it, which cast doubts on its validity and legality. Namely, contrary to the Macedonian Constitution, nowhere in that treaty (PA) is mentioned the constitutional name of the country, i.e. a name of the *subject* concluding the treaty, or even a clear reference to "FYROM", and instead of ID only the UN "reference" is mentioned only implicitly "as defined in resolution 817" of the UN Security Council from 1993 (which, according to facts discovered meanwhile was dubious with respects to *additional conditions* and UN omission of the proper ID. From aspects of Macedonian Constitutional law such ID for a treaty was illegal and unconstitutional, since treaties can only be concluded with "Republic of Macedonia" (that is Constitutional name of the state). In addition, reference "as defined in resolution 817" was apparently dubious from the point of International law, since according to the provisions of resolution 817 itself, the FYROM is not a "legal identity" for enacting or concluding acts outside the UN, particularly those that could have an effects outside the UN, i.e. the PA should not produce any legal effects on third countries (plus the Prespa Agreement is in fact classified as "bilateral treaty"). Another aspect, which has been observed by the domestic professional lawyers, was that such a treaty as an act of "strategic political treaty" (i.e., this is the case with any act that implies changes to the

[13] See Prespa Agreement (claimed to be „bilateral agreement" (contract), i.e. not binding on other parties)

[14] *Interim Accord (with related letters and translations of the Interim Accord in the languages of the Contracting Parties). Signed at New York on 13 September 1995.*

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Macedonian Constitution) can only be concluded or signed in "accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia" by the President of the State, and not by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as was done in the case with the Prespa Agreement (PA). Namely, the Prespa Agreement was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikola Dimitrov instead of the President of the Republic. With respect to this, President of the Republic of Macedonia G. Ivanov claimed in a separate statement that "he was not informed" about the course and content of the negotiations on the PA. The President strongly rejected Prespa Agreement, claiming Constitutional breach and later he had refused to sign the act of ratification of the PA, since according to him "a treaty is unconstitutional", and particularly "an international treaty cannot prevail over the Constitutional norms". President Ivanov argued that by the PA provisions illegally "the Constitution adapts to the treaty", and not the other way around, as should be. Therefore, President have refused to sign an act of ratification of PA (*executive act* by the President, so that treaty may become the law of the land), because in his words "a treaty needs to be in accordance with the Constitution" of the state. After the resolute refusal of the President Ivanov to sign an *executive act* of ratification, that *executive act* has been unconstitutionally signed by the President of the Macedonian Assembly Talat Xhaferi (a Speaker of the parliament), hence creating top illegality in a series of previous illegalities (that preceded this brutal violation of the Constitutional order). Needless to say, that was done forcibly and illegally (so that Constitution was changed) under endorsement EU and NATO and visible Western pressure.

The Prespa Treaty (PA) in its provisions provided holding a referendum or alternatively another form of decision(s) in the National Assembly. However, in accordance with PA, if the referendum option was chosen as form of decision on the matter, such a referendum becomes an inevitable obligatory part of the procedure for the starting of the implementation of the provisions of the agreement and accordingly beginning of the changes or amendment's procedures of the Constitution of Republic. In 2018, however, the referendum decision making have failed due to insufficient response of the population (below the 40%) and thus the process of enactment of treaty and pending Constitutional revisions, according to the PA, needed to be ended. Surprisingly, completely against any legal logic, in blatantly illegal and unconstitutional way, the Prime Minister Z. Zaev and his government continued with the process of changing the Constitution (in violation of the basic norms of law) in the Macedonian parliament. In order to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority of 80 votes in the Macedonian Assembly, former Member of the Assembly Krsto Mukoski was released from the prison in Skopje (again illegally, since Krsto Mukoski was convicted for the crime of "terrorism" and send to serve sentence), and voted as MP, thus he secured the last (80th) vote by which the Constitution of Macedonia and the name of the country (Macedonia) were changed, in violation of all legal norms and standards known to civilized people. An octroyed constitution was born, which by using imposed ID-modifiers provided in PA forcibly changed the national identity of ethnic Macedonians, in brutally illegal manner. A small number of protesting demonstrators against an illegal constitutional changes that gathered in front of the National Assembly were mostly arrested or imprisoned. The people were frightened and most of them stayed at their homes. President G. Ivanov himself received a series of threats from the Albanian radical elements close to the Albanian party DUI, that were in government coalition with PM Z. Zaev (i.e. Albanian party DUI, was in coalition with the SDSM headed by Zaev) such as that Ivanov, as a head of state, should "refrain from further interference". The illegal change of the Constitution was in fact supported by an entire Albanian block of parties (that includes all parties in the Albanian opposition, in addition to those in government), as well as all Bulgarian "elements" in Macedonia who were openly in favour of "constitutional changes" and the PA. Regarding the failed referendum, it should be noted that the referendum question was ambiguous and contained three (instead of one) questions in its content. The question that was put before the citizens on referendum was whether they are in favour of changes in the Constitution (without stating that it was a decision on the change of the state name and identity), along with an admission to the European Union and the NATO. Even such a confusing question didn't improved the referendum turnout and result have finally been the low and insufficient turnout (due in the first place of boycott of ethnic Macedonians). A failed referendum, should have marked the end of the PA adventure with the change of the Constitution. Namely, Macedonian people have rejected the Prespa Treaty, which in content and form was in fact an act of imposed and forceful identity change of ethnic Macedonians.

By applying ID-modifiers enshrined in the PA and the principle of *erga omnes*, which was the basic general and universal principle contained in the Prespa Treaty (applicable even to Third parties)[15], all national terms containing the designations "Macedonia", "Macedonian", "Macedonian", "Macedonian" received the obligatory "ID-modifier" (modifier(s)), i.e. the mandatory prefix denomination "Northern" (before the nationality), whereby the *national identity* (previously of clearly "Macedonians" with no additives) was universally (globally) redefined, not only for international, but also

[15] *Final Agreement for the settlement of the differences as described in the United Nations Security Council resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993), the termination of the Interim Accord of 1995, and the establishment of a strategic partnership between the Parties*. (2018).

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for internal use, as well. In a special diplomatic Memorandum, before the ratification of the Prespa Treaty took place in the Greek Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia submitted to this Greek body, as well as to the UN, an additional explanatory interpretation that the term "Macedonian citizenship" refers only to the citizenship and not to the nationality, confirming that nationality (previously "Macedonians") had been redefined. The terms that referred to the categories "Macedonia", "Macedonian(s)" including all derivations from them, thus became exclusively terms that can be used only by Greece without restrictions, that is, all these Macedonian designations after the PA became "Greek" exclusively. All these general limitation for "Macedonian terms", provided by PA and confirmed by the mentioned explanatory Memorandum, were accepted in the United Nations as a standards, as well as in all specialized organizations in the UN system. Therefore, effectively with the PA a set of limitation and restrictions for these (Macedonian) categories were universally introduced for one member state only, i.e. UN have introduced an administrative ban for Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) for use of these terms in UN bodies and agencies, where the mandatory prefix as reference addition was also accepted (in purpose of "distinction"). In other words, provisional reference the FYROM (as an illegal denomination) have only be replaced with a permanent reference/denomination ("North", as ID-modifier before the main category: "Macedonia(ns)"). What appears to be dubious, at least in the eyes of international legal experts is that from the entry into force of the PA, treaty produced an actual elimination of an identity (ID) for the Macedonian national minority in Greece that accordingly new provisions no longer exist, i.e. it does not have its own collective (national) *identity*. According to the interpretation given by the Macedonian Ministry of Justice (Minister B. Marichic) for the "eventual identity" of "those people" only Greece is/was "competent", since from the entry into force of the PA this is an "internal matter of Greece". In other words, after the entry into force of the Prespa Agreement, the Macedonian *national minority* does not exist for the Greek government, nor even for the rest of the world, due to application the general PA rule of *erga omnes* (which, actually, corresponds with the main well-known Greek political doctrine according to which "the only Macedonians are/were Greeks"). In this context, it should be emphasize that the Macedonian government headed by PM Z. Zaev (SDSM party) has in fact renounced the right and its obligation to care for its national minority in Greece (and elsewhere, in more general sense), which is a precedent in International Law and international relations, bearing in mind existence of an international obligation to care for its national minorities (in neighbouring states at least). According to the principle of *erga omnes*, we can derive that with an application of the PA, the RNM has in fact renounced to care for all national minorities of Macedonians worldwide, no matter where they live. At this point a dilemma arises as to whether a state that does not have a *national identity* of (its) minorities in diaspora has a national identity at all, including in the domestic territorial frames. In several statements provided by government officials in Skopje (including Zaev's statements), where it was claimed that "the identity has been improved", it was basically officially confirmed that an *identity* has been changed and that it is no longer the same as was the previous one before the PA-treaty. To clarify that issue, we need to underline that it was explicitly provided in the Prespa Treaty (PA) that *all national institutions* must be renamed if they use(d) old name "Macedonia" (that is over 400 national and state institutions and bodies), and that all cities, villages and areas with a name "Macedonia" must also be redefined (or renamed) with the mandatory prefix (before the name "Macedonia"), as well as that all cultural and historical categories and interpretations must be consistent with the interpretations and instructions outlined in the PA provisions. Even previous historical events needed to be revised in manner to be consistent with the PA (norms and even a "spirit of the treaty"). So, for example, history textbooks needed be redefined, and even official documents created before the enactment of the PA needed to maintain a designation "North Macedonian" to reflect "non-Macedonian" character or interpretation. For example, recent history textbooks, in accordance with such instructions, must accept that even after the Second World War there were a "North Macedonian people" (not "Macedonians") or that after the dissolution of the SFRY, only "FYROM" existed, and never the "Republic of Macedonia" despite the well-known fact that it existed from 1991-1993 before joining the UN. At this point, we again observe an existence of a delict of obliteration (*damnatio memoriae*), as systemic eradication or revision of the collective memory. In addition to numerous revisions of the national identity in the sphere of history, including official documentation, as well as the broader sphere of cultural redefinitions, the Prespa Treaty also determined that politics in the media should be strictly governed by the principles of PA, especially all media that are partially or fully funded by the state must "control" contents that are/is/were "incompatible" with the interpretations provided in the Prespa Agreement. Furthermore, all personal documents of the citizens must be changed by the February 12, 2024 (identity cards, passports, driver's and other personal licenses and traffic permits). In addition, even stickers (and markings) on traffic licences plates for vehicles must be changed. For example, the marking MK on

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plates must be replaced with a NMK on all licences plates.[16]

In other words, everything that is "Macedonian" should be replaced with new labels, terms, even trademarks or categories that erase from the previous national identity trade-marks (these are reserved from now only to Greece, which includes all commercial brands and trademarks), and the previous "Macedonians " are redefined with a mandatory prefix (or *denomination*) into the new national category, that is *not legally defined* and according to the PA it does not have to have (its) own identity definition. Hence, by derivation of the first usable "free term"(excluding "Macedonian", *per se*), bearing in mind the prohibition of using the previous identity, and applying the mandatory denominator (prefix or *identity modifier*), the new identity of Macedonians, which emerges from the new national name of the state ("North Macedonia") is therefore formally: "Northern Macedonians" i.e. "Northern Macedonian". From here, as we may derive the final conclusion, the culture and history are/were by virtue of PA "North Macedonian", that is, in fact an *artificial nation*. Namely, by adopting the dubious PA, ethnic Macedonians unknowingly admitted that they were a *fake nation*, wrongfully representing itself in international community and UN as "Macedonians"! That an *artificial nation* that needed (under request of UN) to be renounced and denied by the contract (PA), in essence never truly existed in the actual chronology of the historical course. As such *artificial* state (or a *fake state*)[17], apparently this construction is a possible subject of further political contestation and denial.

Beginning from the basic right to *cultural sovereignty* of every people and nation or a state, especially having in mind the right to collective national identity, which is inviolable, we can only make the conclusion that the Prespa Agreement was an act of cultural genocide, because the elementary cultural right to independent cultural existence, development and self-expression was deprived, including cultural and national identity and the inviolable right to independent self-identification. With a wide range of administrative measures that carry out censorship in all areas, even outside the sphere of culture *per se*, such as numerous administrative measures, bans and restrictions, as well as the self-negation and denial of national minorities in neighbouring countries, the Prespa Agreement (and the policies of national annulation) have classified that act not only as a cultural genocide instrument, but as an act of ethnocide. The policy of systemic annihilation of the right to national and cultural identity, culture and cultural development is a type of genocide that enables an illegal process of the *cultural assimilation* of the ethnic Macedonian population (to arise all cultural foundations). PA provided grounds for such a *assimilation* process that, by nullifying identity, is using an ID agreement (*erga omnes*) that provided Greek authorities to deprive the Macedonian minority in Greece from elementary individual and collective rights. It appears, that now as non-existent entity (not a subject of International Law) they became group subjected to forceful cultural assimilation into Greeks. That illegal process consists of arbitrary capacity for erasing the national identity and merging this identity of the undefined minority, depending on Greek discretion solely and on free will of Greek government.

As we can see, the basic premise of signing and concluding the Prespa Agreement is actually the lack of knowledge of the Macedonian state leadership, as well as the political opposition, with respect to elementary forms of human rights violations in the sphere of ethnocide and cultural genocide. It seems that Macedonian governments and the opposition didn't ever understood the two illegal phenomena under the International Law for many years. The first is *assimilation* (national or cultural), which has not been noticed from the Macedonian academic elite, profession, or diplomacy. Another illegal phenomenon that is closely related to the legality of assimilation is national (or cultural) *annihilation* or *annulment*. This phenomenon, by its nature, precedes or goes simultaneously with an assimilation. Both occurrences represent the violation of *jus cogens* norms in the International Law. As a consequence, such a violation of the imperative norms of International Law constitute a legal grounds for terminating an ethnocide treaty (such as the PA), based on the Article 53 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of International Treaties (1969). The obvious inapplicability of an agreement that flagrantly limits basic human rights, i.e. erasing or cancelling one's national identity can lead to a challenges and unilateral termination to the illegal act. From the point of view of the international politics on Balkans, the very fact that the Greater Albanian supporters and the Greater Bulgarian elements in Macedonia by providing strongest support for the Prespa Agreement and by including the SDSM-headed government in coalition with the Albanian party DUI, sparked an increasing suspicion among ethnic Macedonians that the agreement reached with Greece (PA) represent, in fact, a deal between Bulgaria and Albania (and even "Kosovo") for their territorial expansion against the territory of Macedonia. That mutual deal became almost self-evident after the supporters of the Prespa Act are now increasingly demanding new Constitutional changes to satisfy Bulgaria and new requests from Albanians in Macedonia for the federalization of the state. The decline in the rating of party of the SDSM (and Zaev's successor PM D.

[16] *Op. cit.*

[17] In our view, original Republic of Macedonia was not a *fake state* (since identity was derived by the original will of the people that had right to self-determination), but it appears the other way around that new contractual (foreign) creation fulfils requirements for such categorization.

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Kovacevski), and the increasing turning of the people to national ideas, speaks of the slow but certain growth of national awareness of the ethnic Macedonians. Instead of the quick entry into the European Union promised by EU officials to Macedonians when the "problem with Greece is resolved", i.e. after the entry into force of the PA as the last condition for the EU, the newly named state (RNM) was subjected to new conditions for obtaining only a "Date for starting negotiations with EU", now placed by the Bulgarian government. These Bulgarian political conditions have become even more complex to fulfil than the Greek ultimate conditions and demands set forth in the PA. Compared to the terms of the Prespa Agreement, which for many Macedonians were abstract in nature and/or logic, Bulgaria's political and national EU conditions clearly indicated Bulgaria's longer-term ambitions towards the complete assimilation of Macedonians into Bulgarians.

III. Bulgarian Assimilationist Conditions, as Conditions Related to the Annulment of Identity on the basis of the Treaty of Prespa (PA) and the Request for "Further Specification" of Identity as "Bulgarian" (as an EU New Condition)

Even before Zoran Zaev (from the SDSM party) have entered to power as the Macedonian Prime Minister (2017), the Bulgarian diplomacy noticed that the new flexible future government led(ed) by Zaev would eventually solve the name and identity issue with Greece, so that a permanent agreement-compromise would be reached with Hellenic Republic to the final designation (detriment) of the Macedonian identity. Therefore, Bulgarian diplomacy, immediately after Prime Minister Zaev came to power, requested the new Macedonian government to "resolve an issue" (alleged "identity problem") with Bulgaria, in such a way that the two Prime ministers (Bulgarian PM B. Borisov and Macedonian PM Z. Zaev) should sign a treaty on permanent friendship between two countries. This initiative was accepted (naively) by Macedonia, and symbolically on the Macedonian holiday "Ilinden" on August 1, 2017, such diplomatic agreement on "mutual friendship" was signed. That instrument in some essential elements have reminded international experts of an "Interim Accord" (1995) with Greece, at least when it comes to non-symmetrical "identity provisions" that were supposed to (allegedly) "bring the two cultures closer". Namely, in this Bulgarian-Macedonian treaty, it is determined that both "peoples" have a "common history" and consequently a "common" culture and even joint "common important historical individuals" (from apparently joint or "common history", as was explicitly spelled-out in the treaty). In addition treaty provided for the "joint celebration" of holidays and all important historical events or celebrities, so that "common historical" and cultural events/people needed to be jointly marked.[18] The instrument regulates that the parties of the treaty will "not confront" each other on cultural-historical aspects, that in this matter(s) a "joint historical commission" will be created that will reconcile the "differences", and the results of the work of this commission should be reflected in the "educational content", so that agreements reached by commission should have direct consequences on Macedonian textbooks and curricula. In its blatant ignorance SDSM government headed by PM Zoran Zaev didn't notice and grasp that basically this kind of legal treaty implicitly assumes common identity of both nations, and that (such) main point as element was enshrined in it, i.e. an incorporation of Bulgarian declaration that both people represent the "same nation", not even two separate peoples, but in fact one people (and one nation). In addition, Macedonians didn't grasp that this kind of legal instrument can serve in future for blackmailing the Macedonian state for admission to EU (in similar way as UNSC resolutions (1993) and an "Interim Accord" (1995)). Unfortunately, this scenario of conditioning happened to Macedonia after the entry into force of the Prespa Agreement in 2019, when Bulgaria's blackmailed R. N. Macedonia with illegal conditions for EU membership and the new Constitutional revisions.

After the signing of the Bulgarian-Macedonian Treaty in 2017, the Bulgarian diplomacy patiently waited for the Prespa Agreement to be registered at the UN Secretariat and for Macedonia to change its state name in UN, so that they may officially challenge its new *national identity* (as an "artificial" one). Starting from September 2019, the Bulgarian government have delivered (to EU and RNM) their special requests for admission of the "new nation-state" (of the Republic of North Macedonia) to the EU. Although Macedonia has been a candidate for EU membership since 2005, after the latest Prespa process of "de-Macedonization" (especially, after de-legitimization with respect to name of the state in the UN), Bulgaria referred to the Bulgarian-Macedonian Treaty (2017) as legal grounds and accordingly requested RNM to resolve the "identity" issues with Bulgaria before the RNM receives an "EU Membership Date". The Macedonian government, as well as opposition, was extremely surprised by the conditionality initiative started by "friendly Bulgaria", and especially by the disinterest and restraint on the part of the EU, that had previously publicly promised to the Macedonian state and the people that after the PA and constitutional amendments there would be no new conditions for obtaining a "Membership Date" for EU. What was especially surprising for the RNM authorities and its diplomacy was that the EU almost immediately openly sided with the Bulgarian government and showed that EU "understood" all concerns and positions

[18] *Treaty of friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and cooperation between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia* (2017)

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of Bulgaria! On their side Bulgarians started campaign invoking the "Friendship treaty" of 2017 as for EU understandable legal grounds for their EU pre-conditions (in fact an extortion against RNM). In a similar way as before Greece, Bulgaria presented its political positions, as such that the new country-candidate had "already agreed to resolve a difference" and that it was only necessary for the EU to provide firm and strong support to the "undergoing negotiation process". The Bulgarian position amounted to a public rejection of the alleged "false Macedonian history" (according to which "Macedonians do not have Bulgarian roots") that was spread, as propaganda. The Macedonian public was bombarded on daily basis with a flood of accusations from the Bulgarian state about falsely portraying the history of the people as an independent or different "special people" (that is, "non-Bulgarians"). So Bulgaria's thesis claimed that "Tito invented the non-existent Macedonians" so that "before the Second World War Macedonians did not existed", since they were always (only) "Bulgarians". At that time (2019-2022), the Macedonian diplomacy and the ignorant government in the RNM couldn't manage unprecedented situation, so they simply allowed further uncritical and unsovereign blatant interference from the EU diplomacy in this artificial so-called "dispute", that eventually resulted (in 2022) in the "French plan" (as actually an unified "EU plan") for the solution of the increasingly strong conflict between Bulgaria and Macedonia. Particularly, the "Joint Historical Commission" of both countries could not finish its work because Bulgarian historians stubbornly and ultimately claimed that Macedonian revolutionary Goce Delchev (creator of the Macedonian national movement) was Bulgarian, not Macedonian, and that in fact all important revolutionaries were ethnic Bulgarians. A diplomatic crisis followed, where Bulgarian government, following the example of Greece, presented historical disagreement as a "dispute" with possible serious (even "security") consequences. At the end of that crisis, the "French Plan" presented by President Macron (in 2022) was ultimately delivered to both sides for purpose of acceptance. The content of this document included all Bulgarian conditions, formulated now as European conditions for RNM. Despite the strong opposition to presented "French Plan" by the Macedonian President Stevo Pendarovski, who initially rejected this ultimatum (that was, in fact, the Bulgarian ultimatum wrapped in European clothing), at the end (one week later) the SDSM government (headed by Zaev's successor Prime Minister D. Kovacevski) decided to agree with it and that the formal Protocol on acceptance of the "French Plan" conditions should be signed with the Bulgarian government. Thus, on July 16, 2022, the Protocol (agreement) has been signed by Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodora Genchovska and by the Minister of Foreign Affairs RNM Bujar Osmani. All the Bulgarian conditions were incorporated in that shameful act, as EU pre-conditions for obtaining a Date for starting EU negotiations. The Macedonian diplomacy was ones again defeated, since all Bulgarian blackmails were transformed into the EU membership conditions and even RNM Date for starting EU negotiations were linked with revision of the Constitution, as a pre-condition. The Macedonian authorities' failure to understand that the conditions imposed by Bulgaria were in fact illegal *assimilatory conditions* resulted to the situation that the diplomatic defence of Macedonian interests was ineffective, passive and inferiorly descriptive (namely, reduced to simple historical facts) in relation to well-managed and more professional Bulgarian diplomacy. Namely, Macedonian social science referred only to "basic historical facts" known to Macedonians which were not always so transparent and persuasive to European diplomats, so EU trusted more Bulgarian arguments and historiography (whose science was generally more internationally affirmed) and Macedonian diplomacy was already with bad reputation after the PA (for alleged historical falsifications) and globally (UN) banned from using "false" or "disputed" ID (so they had to "revised identity" with the PA). Therefore, in eyes of EU diplomats, creation of the *identity agreement*, as a needed or necessary treaty, only discredited Macedonian as a party. Instead of focusing on explanations that Bulgaria's demands were assimilationist (and therefore illegal, violating *jus cogens* norms), Macedonian diplomacy often ignorantly stated simply that the Macedonian side is "ready" for a "compromise" and that "there were only some less important (historical)) questions".[19] The Macedonian academic elite, diplomats, leaders in power and leaders in the opposition didn't clearly understood a more general principle known in juridical science that "identity agreements" cannot be valid international legal contracts or treaties. Such contracts or treaties, that unilaterally define someone's identity are always illegal and as result of compromise always represent an imposition of someone else's will on issues that are in the sovereign (cultural) sphere and an essential inviolable domestic jurisdiction.(Janev, 2020) Such acts are always acts of extortion and blatantly in violation of principles of cultural sovereignty.

Finally, if the Macedonian elite, political or academic, had known that the Treaty of Prespa (PA) was the act of annihilation or annulment of the national identity (or at least an illegal act), a different policy would have been pursued *vis-a-vis* illogical and impermissible Bulgarian demands. Bulgarian government have realized that Macedonians were giving up on issues of *national identity* (as EU admission have had highest priority), so they took a chance to impose Bulgarian identity on them, clamming (to Macedonians) as it was theirs. In this strategic way, the Bulgarian policy

[19] Op. cit. Art. 8. See also the Interim Accord (1995).

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of planed *assimilation* and operations involving transformation in collective consciousness, is nowadays focused, as recently discovered, to a demand for the final identity agreement between the two states at the end of the EU negotiating process (repeating in fact the experience of the PA). This Bulgarian strategy clearly confirms the known theoretical thesis that any cultural annihilation precedes cultural assimilation, as a cultural genocide or ethnocide act of cancelling or nullification of the previous-original culture of a people or a nation.

As an initial condition, in a similar way as was in the case of the Prespa Agreement, the Bulgarians (as approved by the French/European proposal) demanded as a precondition of even obtaining the "EU Date" the revision of the new Constitution of the RNM in order to enshrine provision on the "Bulgarian people" as a "constitutive" and "statehood" nationals, which *de facto* suggests that Bulgarian were original founders of the Macedonian statehood. The government leaded by PM Dimitar Kovachevski (Radio Televizija Srbije [RTS], 2017) (successor of Zaev) immediately and uncritically accepted this Bulgarian precondition and the President of the Assembly T. Xhaferi (from the DUI party) was already ready to open the Constitution of RNM and fulfil Bulgaria's conditions for the EU. However, the opposition leaded by the party VMRO-DPMNE and the minor party "The Left" blocked the achievement of the qualified majority in the Assembly, so that requested constitutional changes could not start. Both mentioned opposition parties announced that the "Bulgarian conditions" regarding the change of the Constitution "will never pass" and that the "Bulgarization " will never be achieved. On the other hand, all Albanian parties took side against preservation of the Macedonian identity, in accordance with famous "Tirana Platform" created in January 2017 in Tirana (with the "chairmanship" of Albanian Prime Minister E. Rama, who at the meeting in Tirana coordinated all Albanian parties in Macedonia for the purpose of creating joint Platform-strategy). As was the case with the PA when all Albanian parties where in favour of that treaty, they are nowadays as "pro-European" supporting Bulgarian attempts to change the Constitution (ones again against Macedonian identity). It appears that Albanian political factor in fact supports any initiative that may lead to disintegration/dissolution of the Macedonian territory or federalization of RNM. Realizing the obvious intentions of the Bulgarians for forced (imposed) *assimilation* and possible federalization, as well as the Bulgarian intentions to redefine the "Macedonian language" as a "dialect of the Bulgarian language", the opposition parties in Macedonia rejected the new constitutional changes (calling changes a "Bulgarization").

II. Conclusion

As we have shown in this article, the illegal supplementary additional conditions for Macedonia's admission to the UN (where Macedonia was forced to carry a temporary *denomination* and negotiate its identity with another state) turned into a long-term systematic challenge to the *national identity* of Macedonians, a form of unseen political pressure (in fact extortion) to one sovereign country with no precedent in the previous history of international relations. In the end, the alleged "dispute over identity" (actually related to a „nameless nation-states" in the UN, where the reference (FYROM) was not a *legal identity*) was finally resolved by the conclusion of the Prespa Agreement (PA), which represents a textbook example of violations of the basic norms of sovereignty and the principle of independence and non-interference in an essential internal jurisdiction of a states (especially UN members, which according to the UN Charter are *sovereignly equal*). Furthermore, the Prespa Treaty (PA) is an example of an *ethnocide act* that obviously denies collective people's right to national identity, and even redefines it in accordance with the current political balance of power between the involved negotiating parties (including their key allies of Greece, particularly). Our analysis in this article of this unconstitutional illegal international treaty-agreement (the PA) showed the comprehensive cancellation and denial of the (previous) Macedonian identity (original one) and, in addition, an attribution of everything that was labelled "Macedonian" to Greek culture exclusively and a Greek national identity. With the Treaty of Prespa, Macedonia have been denied the rights of its own national minority in Greece, and consequently (in application of *erga omnes*) also deprived such rights to its minority in Bulgaria, thereby exposing minority to the forcible (by the state measures) *assimilation* in neighbouring countries (by very moment of an entry into force of the PA (on an *erga omnes* basis)). By nullification of its own national identity, through the provisions of the Prespa Agreement, even within the territorial borders of its own state (RNM), a clear signal was sent to Bulgaria that such a "sufficiently flexible government" would be able, for the sake of admission to the EU, to carry out further national redefinitions of its own identity. After the registration of the Prespa Agreement in the UN (as a valid treaty), by using this illegal precedent, Bulgaria essentially conditioned the "new nation-state" (as an "artificial nation") with its own special identity conditions for purpose of the "refinement" of the new national identity, which was according to them "not fully defined" by the Prespa Agreement. In the case of Bulgarian conditions, this refine identity would ultimately be the "true Bulgarian identity" (of the previous "vague Macedonians"). That is, according to the Bulgarians, the "real" identity of the "North Macedonians" (with "Bulgarian roots and origin"). In a generalized form, Bulgarian blackmail for the EU membership could be reduced to a simple ultimatum to RNM in the form: "Admit that you are Bulgarians, so you can join the EU", and until then

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you simply cannot. Since the Macedonians didn't understood, neither now (in the ongoing ID negotiations with the Bulgarians), nor previously in case with the Treaty of Prespa, that there are *no identity disputes* and particularly that there are no valid *identity agreements* (or legal "identity treaties") under International Law, they naively continued to negotiate on a subject (national identity) that cannot be to negotiate. In this way and manner, the Macedonians themselves, under the delusion that everything is legal, by ratifying *illegal identity* contracts (treaties), contributed to the self-annihilation of their own national identity, completely ignoring the imperative norms (*jus cogens*) with respect to the illegality of forced or any imposed administrative (and therefore coerced or extorted) *assimilation*.

In this context, bearing in mind illegality of identity treaties, we can only underline that by applying Article 53 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of International Treaties from 1969, it is possible to terminate the Prespa Agreement unilaterally (by diplomatic note/letter sent to other contracting party), since this agreement violates *jus cogens* norms of International Law. After the termination of the Prespa Agreement, the Treaty with Bulgaria (2017) can also be cancelled by a simple diplomatic *letter of cancellation* of that act, which pursuant to the last article 20 of the Treaty with Bulgaria (related to *cancellation*), enters into force one year after the notification of the cancellation of the act is sent to other contracting party (i.e. Bulgaria). Of course, if the Prespa Treaty is terminated, Macedonia would have to start a "diplomatic battle" in the UN (especially in the UN General Assembly) for votes of UN majority for an obtaining the name under which it applied to UN: "Republic of Macedonia". The UN General Assembly decides on these issues by a simple majority of members present and voting. If the country gets this simple majority in UNGA, it will obtain the right to use its original constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia" in United Nations.

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About the Gender Issue in Italy between History, Politics and Research

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Far from Parity- According to the latest Global Gender Gap report, which analyzes the breadth and scope of the gender gap around the world, Italy has fallen sixteen places by 2023 compared to 2022, slipping from 63rd to 79th place out of 146 countries; thus proceeding, gender parity will not be achieved until 2154 (the same year projected in 2022)[1].

This paper aims to explain, on the basis of analyses made during a long research on the history of women in Italy[2], the reasons why the seventh power in the world is still in many respects a macho and patriarchal country.

If equality is not yet a reality and feminism is not yet a legacy of the past, it is due, first of all, to three factors, work, political participation and motherhood.

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About the Gender Issue in Italy between History, Politics and Research

Marco Severini

I. Far from Parity

According to the latest Global Gender Gap report, which analyzes the breadth and scope of the gender gap around the world, Italy has fallen sixteen places by 2023 compared to 2022, slipping from 63rd to 79th place out of 146 countries; thus proceeding, gender parity will not be achieved until 2154 (the same year projected in 2022)[1].

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If equality is not yet a reality and feminism is not yet a legacy of the past, it is due, first of all, to three factors, work, political participation and motherhood.

There are nearly 31 million women living in Italy, accounting for 51.3 perecent of the population. The area in which inequality appears perhaps most evident is in employment: Italians contribute almost 40, 15 percent of job creation and occupy about half of new fixed-term jobs but only one-third of permanent jobs; they tend to be better educated and boast better educational attainment than men, but earn less than men; female employment has returned to rise in early 2023 compared to the pre-pandemic two-year period (2018-19), but the gap with the leading European economies remains substantial: the female employment rate in Italy is 55 percent, more than 14 percentage points lower than the European average and more than 18 points lower than the most advanced economies in Europe; the educational qualification only partially protects against job loss so much so that the most educated Italians remain in the labor market (65 percent of female graduates), but more than 16 percent stop working compared to 21 percent of mothers with a secondary school diploma; the prevailing Italian family model limits the female component in the role of primary caregiver, with obvious employment and wage repercussions in both the short and long term[3]. In addition, rigid gender stereotypes, "an asymmetrical division of family labor, a macho corporate culture and poor or absent reconciliation policies" persist in the workplace, explained sociologist Chiara Saraceno[4].

As far as political participation is concerned, Italy recorded from the 1st to the 19th legislature - the current one - 66 governments and 28 premiers, of which only one was a woman; as for the positions of minister, deputy minister (the position of deputy minister was introduced by Law No. 81 of 2001) or undersecretary conferred in each government. Out of more than 1,600 ministerial positions awarded in the 66 governments of the Republic, Italians obtained 137 (plus 2 interim), just 8.56 percent, mainly in the social, health and education sectors. Within the EU-27, the average number of women in government is 32.3 percent, with very different results among the states: the presence of women in the governmental team goes beyond parity in Spain (60.9 percent), Finland (57.9 percent), Belgium (53.3 percent), France (51.2 percent) and Sweden (50 percent); followed by Austria, Lithuania and Estonia (46.7 percent) and, again, Germany (40 percent). With regard to the presence of women in the European Parliament, in the first five legislatures, Italian women elected always resulted in percentages below 15 percent: since 2014, first the double gender preference was introduced and applied and, since 2019, the so-called “triple gender preference”, according to which, in case the voter decides to express three preferences, these must concern candidates of different sexes, otherwise the second and third preferences will be cancelled.

The European Parliament, representing about 450 million people, is currently composed of 705 members of parliament of which 76 are Italian: of these 30 are women (39.47 percent). Finally, with regard to the organs of the regions, the female presence in Italian regional assemblies averaged (until before the

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[1] A. Libonati, *Raggiungeremo la parità di genere nel 2154*, «CNC media», 21 giugno 2023; *Global Gender Gap Report 2023 – l'Italia scende di quota*, «SheTech», giugno 2023.

[2] M. Severini, *Le fratture della memoria Storia delle donne in Italia dal 1848 ai nostri giorni*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2023.

[3] *L'occupazione femminile in Italia*, 18 maggio 2023, https://injob.com/news/occupazione-femminile-in-italia/(data are taken from the latest report signed by Bankitalia, Ministero del Lavoro e Anpasul); sul tema rinvio a A. Pescarolo, *Il lavoro delle donne nell'Italia contemporanea*, Roma, Viella, 2019.

[4] F. Piccinni, *Chiara Saraceno: “La cultura maschilista prevale, l'Italia è impreparata a dare riconoscimenti alle donne qualificate”*, «HuffPost», 23 gennaio 2018.

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pandemic) around 22.4 percent compared to the average recorded at the EU level of 34.2 percent [5].

In terms of entry to the parliamentary career, the twenty-first century opened for Italian female parliamentarians with a continually upward trend until 2022: the declining figure in 1996 (10.6 percent, of women elected to Parliament) increased by almost a percentage point (11.5 percent) in 2001 and touched a record that was considered historic in 2006 (XV legislature) when 108 female deputies (17.1 percent) and 42 female senators (14 percent) were registered, the highest ever in Italian history[6].

The 2006 figure was surpassed in the following three legislatures: in the 16th legislature (2008-13), there were 21 percent women among deputies and 18 percent among senators; in the 17th legislature (2013-18), 31 percent in the House and nearly 29 percent in the Senate; and in the 18th legislature (2018-22), with the enactment of Law no. 165, which introduced specific provisions for gender rebalancing, the percentage of women parliamentarians reached 35 percent, exceeding the number of 300 women in Parliament for the first time[7]. Finally, in the nineteenth legislature, after twenty-six years of growth, the value instead declines and settles at 34.47 percent for those elected in Palazzo Madama and 32.25 percent for those in Montecitorio[8]. Between 2013 and 2022, for the first time in national history, for two consecutive legislatures, one branch of Parliament was headed by a woman (first Laura Boldrini and then Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati), but there are still too few female parliamentarians.

Italian politics-despite a few recent successes, such as the law passed in 2019 against *revenge porn*, a crime consisting of sharing pornographic material, in images or videos, through the network, with instant messaging systems, social networks, without the consent of the person portrayed and with the purpose of harming him or her humiliate or blackmail her - still struggles to take the side of women both because men do not see a benefit in it and because there is a tendency to view equality as strictly a women's issue, ignoring the fact that it would benefit the whole of society, regardless of gender[9].

Motherhood, often lacking government support and aid, is an obstacle (and not an asset) in women's working lives; Italy has a low birth rate due to several factors, including the reduction in the number of women of childbearing age, lack of family-supporting policies, economic uncertainty and difficulty in reconciling family and work life; in 2022 it reached a new record low in births (392. 598 girls and boys, -1.9 percent compared to 2021); despite the contribution of migration, the Italian population remains in steady decline[10].

However, in 2022, a new political conjuncture has emerged, in many ways unprecedented.

II. New Political Conjuncture

In Italy, the general elections of September 25, 2022-a date unknown until then to national political consultations-confirmed the structural electoral abstentionism, progressive since 1979, and decreed victory Fratelli d'Italia (FdI), a political formation led by Giorgia Meloni (and founded by her in 2012 together with Guido Crosetto, an entrepreneur and former member of Christian Democracy and Forza Italia, and Ignazio La Russa, a former Missino) who, on Oct. 22, 2022, became the new premier of the center-right government, the first woman in the history of Italy to hold this position: 45 years old, Roman, professional journalist since 2006, vice-president of the Camera (2006-08), minister for Youth in the fourth Berlusconi government (2008-11), was co-founder in 2014 of Fratelli d'Italia, a right-wing, far-right party about which adjectives are wasted but which is undoubtedly nationalist, conservative and populist, an ideal continuation of the political tradition of Alleanza Nazionale (1995-2009), a post-fascist right-wing party, itself an evolution of Movimento Sociale Italiano (1946-1995), a neo-fascist-inspired party founded by former members of the dissolved National Fascist Party (1921-43) and the Republican Fascist Party (1943-45)[11].

FdI won as part of a center-right alliance comprising Forza Italia (FI), a party founded in 1994 by businessman Silvio Berlusconi, who died at the age of 86 on June 12, 2023, and the League, led by Matteo Salvini.

Included in PM Meloni's resume is the fact that, in the spring of 2021, in a country where 237 books a day were being edited (a country increasingly composed of writers than readers), she signed a book,

[5] Camera dei Deputati, *La partecipazione delle donne alla vita politica e istituzionale*, 7 marzo 2022, data updated with those of the current legislature obtained from *I ministri del governo Meloni*, «Openpolis», 25 ottobre 2022.

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[9] E. Moro, *L'Italia è (ancora) un Paese maschilista?*, «Elle», 22 novembre 2019.

[10] Alleanza Italiana Sviluppo Sostenibile, *Donne e maternità in Italia: una vita in equilibrio fatta di ostacoli e criticità*, 24 maggio 2023, https://asvis.it/notizie-sull-alleanza/2631-16965/donne-e-maternita-in-italia-una-vita-in-equilibrio-fatta-di-ostacoli-e-criticita-.

[11] P. Ignazi, *L'estrema destra in Europa*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2000, p. 255.

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with a reassuringly trendy title, of 336 pages to tell about herself[12].

An analysis of electoral flows from the latest political consultations shows that the success of FdI-which had won just 4 percent of the vote in the 2018 general election-is fueled by substantial inflows from the Five Star Movement (M5S), a populist formation founded in 2009 by comedian Beppe Grillo and digital entrepreneur Gianroberto Casaleggio, and compared to 2018 by the League-whose official and full name is Lega Nord per l'Indipendenza della Padania, currently Italy's oldest party, founded in 1991- , while the recovery from abstention is all in all limited. Even more noticeable is the flow of voters who since the 2019 European elections have shifted from the League to FdI (nearly 4 out of 10 League voters opted this time for Giorgia Meloni's party)[13].

As soon as Giorgia Meloni was nominated for the post of premier, after 67 republican governments headed by 30 men (because "doubling up has almost been the rule", until the two Conte governments), Barbara Stefanelli, deputy editor of the "Corriere della sera", Italy's best-selling and most influential daily newspaper, asked herself three questions to which she put three answers side by side; first, she wondered, answering in the affirmative, whether having a woman premier could entail "opening up spaces of recognition for women", helping to shake up the dominant culture of an Italy where not even one in two women has a paid job and "where unconscious prejudices - the most insidious because they are often elusive - hold girls' destinies hostage?"; second, she wondered why it was a center-right side that achieved this "change of pace" instead of the left "which fills programs with sincere aspirations for equity", answering, in the wake of an interview with Hillary Clinton given to the same newspaper some time earlier, that looking at female leaders around the world, none has "headlined" any revolution or carried out reforms in favor of women such as to shake up the patriarchal system so that, while in the progressive house the best candidates have been made to wave "like flags at half-mast until they tore themselves apart", on the other side, a rising political formation (which in the 2022 politics has sixfold increased its support) did not think twice about running its co-founder -"prepared, ready"- and winning the last round of elections; finally, more open and possibilistic was the answer to the third question, "perhaps the most important one",regarding the question of whether or not the season opened with Meloni represents" a threat to rights, including women's rights", stressing that identity does not automatically guarantee "policies, investments, feminine sensitivity" and hoping that the call for "responsibilities" made by the newly appointed prime minister would constitute a guarantee for women's achievements "which in Italy have been arduous and still need to be strengthened"[14].

On March 12, 2023, Elly Schlein, 37, born in Switzerland in 1985 and the daughter of two university professors, holding three citizenships (Swiss, U.S., and Italian), became the new secretary of the Democratic Party (PD), after coming out on top in the primaries with 53 percent of the vote, the first woman, as well as the youngest, to lead the party founded in 2007: The newly appointed secretary's resume includes membership in various center-left and left-wing formations, involvement as a member of the European Parliament for Italy in the 8th continental legislature (2014-19), election as a regional councilor in the Emilia-Romagna Legislative Assembly, and the post, in this same region and until Oct. 24, 2022, of vice president of the regional council led by Stefano Bonaccini, the challenger defeated in the primaries[15].

For the first time, Italian political history thus revolves around two middle-aged women, the older one at the presidency of the Council of Ministers and the younger one at the head of the main opposition party.

The battles of feminists have not only served to bring more women into politics but also to question the complex reasons for their historical remoteness, amid objective difficulties in getting their way, the perception of an insurmountable goal, "or indifference, self-exclusion or disinterest of women themselves"[16], not to mention the fact that not a few policies have emulated and traveled male (and macho) paths and attitudes instead of identifying and addressing one of their own.

A first consideration: Fratelli d'Italia, which has the League and Forza Italia, two other conservative political formations, as allies, won by getting 23 percent of the vote out of 63.91 percent of voters, the lowest figure ever recorded for a general election, more than 9 points lower than in 2018, when 73 percent of voters went to the polls at the same time. Political turnout figures mark a new decline, a phenomenon that is widespread in all regions, but particularly strong in southern Italy, where nearly half of eligible voters deserted the polls[17].

[12] Istat, *Produzione e lettura in Italia*, 11 gennaio 2021, in <www.istat.it>; *Quanti sono i lettori di libri in Italia? Le risposte e i dati dell'ultimo rapporto Istat*, in «Il Libraio», 12 gennaio 2021.

[13] Ipsos, *Elezioni politiche 25 settembre 2022: i risultati elettorali e le analisi post-voto*, https://www.ipsos.com/it-it/elezioni-politiche-risultati-elettorali-analisi-post-voto-ipsos.

[14] B. Stefanelli, *Un'altra storia*, «Corriere della Sera», 22 ottobre 2022, pp. 1, 36.

[15] M.T. Meli, *Pd, prima da leader per Schlein*, *ibid*., 12 marzo 2023, p. 10.

[16] C. Mazzuca Poggiolini, *Donne e politica*, in *Cinquant'anni non sono bastati Le carriere delle donne a partire dalla sentenza n. 33/1960 della Corte costituzionale*, a cura A.M. Isastia, R. Oliva, Trieste, Scienza Express edizioni, 2016, p. 155.

[17] *L'astensionismo e il partito del non voto*, «Openpolis», 11 ottobre 2022.

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III. The Balance of the First Year of Government

The presence of two women in the top two forces in Italian politics could have made a significant contribution to the gender issue. According to researcher Ilaria Masinara, campaigns manager at Amnesty International, the rights of women and Lgbt+ people have regressed in a year of the Meloni government:

> There is a boulder that weighs even in this legislature: the failure to pass legislation to combat violence and discrimination based on sex, gender, and sexual orientation. We are also behind in improving mechanisms to collect data on hate speech and hate crimes that stigmatize the Lgbtqi+ community. On the rights of same-sex couples, we saw when the Ministry of the Interior instructed prefectures to align with the Supreme Court ruling of 2022, which refused to register the birth certificate of a child born in Canada through gestation for others, and some municipalities refused to accede to the request not to register children. This is a violation of children's rights because it discriminates against them if they are born to homogenous couples. Policies, on the other hand, must protect all people, with a view to substantive equality.

Particularly on women, there are two discouraging aspects that go against women's self-determination:

> There is a first package that starts with Law 194, which has been progressively emptied on the ground because of the very high percentage of conscientious objector personnel. That, for example, in the Marche region reaches almost 70 percent. In the same direction goes, for example, the "Fondo vita nascente" and the "anti-abortion room" at the Sant'Anna hospital, in Turin, or the popular initiative bill "Un cuore che batte," again signed by Fd'I, in Ancona, which precisely suggests that in so-called "listening rooms" the fetus' heart be heard by mothers who decide to have an abortion.

The judgment of the head of AI on the measures taken to combat gender-based violence is a "Ni," since while on the one hand the government has shown interest and commitment with a view to protection and prevention (reinstatement of the Anti-Femicide Commission in which, among other things, the implementation of the Istanbul Convention ratified in 2013 will be discussed), on the other hand there is a lack of a strong emphasis on training, since "creating a real culture of violence prevention means putting the woman at the center. And it cannot be done if the woman is not seen as the person who can handle consent and who has to give it"[18].

In its first year, the Meloni government cut funding for the prevention of violence against women by 70 percent, so that the 17 million euros allocated by the Draghi government for 2022 was reduced to 5 million for 2023. In short, the executive led by the first premier fueled the public debate, deluding about an action that was then not implemented and treating the issue often as badly as when chemical castration was invoked for perpetrators of rape[19].

The governmental absence on a very sensitive issue occurred amid the general increase in the phenomenon of feminicide[20], which provoked outrage and popular demonstrations, especially after the November 11, 2023 murder of university student Giulia Cecchettin by her ex-partner Filippo Turetta; the letter sent to the o the Veneto edition of "Corriere della Sera" by Elena Cecchettin, the victim's sister, on Nov. 20, 2023, three days after Giulia's body was found, constituted yet another indictment of a patriarchal society dominated in large part by a rape culture that expresses itself through anti-feminine behaviors such as "control, possessiveness and catcalling" or the justification of those who use violence against women; "every man is privileged by this culture"[21]; Elena Cecchettin was designated at the end of 2023 as person of the year by the newspaper "L'Espresso" for transforming "private pain into collective assumption of responsibility, forcing us to name the evil we suffer from: patriarchy"[22].

In 2023, 107 cases of femicide were recorded[23]. However, different data have been circulating since there is neither an institutional database dedicated to feminicides, since "legally" feminicide does not exist in our Penal Code, nor an institutional definition of feminicide shared by the 27 countries of the European Union; our Code does not identify feminicide as a specific crime, since it is a homicide (Article 575) but not as a "case of crime". In the absence of the legal one, statistics comes to the rescue, with ISTAT proposing this definition in its annual report on Equitable and Sustainable Welfare (Bes): "gender-based homicides, commonly called feminicides, are defined as those involving the killing of a woman as a woman". The variables needed to identify a feminicide are many and relate to the victim, the perpetrator and the context of the violence[24].

[18] E. Martini, *Un anno di governo Meloni e sono regrediti i diritti di donne e persone Lgbtq+*, «il manifesto», 21 ottobre 2023.

[19] E. Nicolosi, *Action Aid: "Dal Governo Meloni molte chiacchiere e pochi fatti contro la violenza sulle donne"*, «la Repubblica», 13 novembre 2023.

[20] Severini, *Le fratture della memoria*, cit., pp. 411-416 e *passim*.

[21] E. Cecchettin, *«I "mostri" non sono malati, sono figli sani del patriarcato»*, «Corriere del Veneto», 20 novembre 2023.

[22] E. Bellavia, *Ecco perché Elena Cecchettin è la persona dell'anno per L'Espresso*, «L'Espresso», 29 dicembre 2023.

[23] G. Romagnoli, *107 nomi di donne, tutte diverse ma unite dall'unica linea rossa della violenza*, "la Repubblica", 24 novembre 2023.

[24] E. Messina, *Numero femminicidi 2023: perché circolano dati così diversi?*, «Corriere della Sera»-La 27esimaOra, 5 dicembre 2023. This article reports the main different data reported on the phenomenon, including the 88 recorded in the 27thOra database; the 106 read and written in the many official celebrations against violence; the data from the Viminale, which counts among the 109 women killed from January

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Also on a definitional level, in 2022, the United Nations Statistical Commission specified that there are three types of "gender-related killing": murders of women by a partner; murders of women by another relative; and murders of women by another person, whether known or unknown, "but occurring through a modus operandi or in a context related to gender motivation[25]. Still, according to L'Eige (European Agency for Gender Equality) along the lines of the UN Statistical Commission, comparing data collections and indicators used in the various EU countries and the UK, concluded that in addition to cases of crimes committed by partners or ex-partners, the following should be considered feminicides.

The killing of women and girls for so-called honor motives and other killings resulting from harmful practices, the targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict, as well as cases of femicide linked to gangs, organized crime, drug trafficking, and trafficking in women and girls. And also crimes committed against women because of their sexual orientation or gender identity[26].

Finally, the first Italian Parliamentary Commission on Femicides attempted to give a political definition, which, basing itself on the declarations of the Istambul Convention (the Council of Europe treaty "on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence" also ratified by Italy in 2013) proposed this definition: "Killing of women by a man determined by gender reasons"[27].

Gender-based violence, that is, violence against women as women, should be considered a structural phenomenon of Italian society, strongly linked to the context of discrimination and social prejudice in which it matures.

IV. In the Absence of a Cultural Revolution

Italian life and culture are still conditioned by strong prejudices against women. On the latter, Norberto Bobbio, one of the most profound philosophers of the twentieth century, observed how racism is a prejudice, that is, a false belief held to be true on the basis not of reasoning or fact, but by appealing to tradition, adapting to established customs or uncritically accepting constituted authority. Any prejudice is combated with adequate knowledge, that is, based "on arguments that derive from our ability to learn from experience," with democracy, freedom and an education oriented toward universal values. Bobbio has written how the women's emancipation movement is "the greatest (I would be tempted to say the only) revolution of our time"; the most odious prejudice is the myth of the superiority of men over women, not least because anti-feminine prejudice, unlike racial and social prejudice that is an expression of a majority toward a minority, is directed toward a majority, precisely women[28].

Usually the same, small number of names are mentioned: from Olympe de Gouges to Mary Wollstonecraft to Tina Anselmi and Nilde Iotti, considered Mothers of the Italian Republic. But why not recount the stories of Marianna De Crescenzo and Maria Alinda Bonacci who, in the fall of 1860, a year before united Italy was born and without the electoral law allowing it, were, in two contexts as different as Naples and Recanati, the first two Italians to lay a ballot in the ballot box for the plebiscites of annexation to the Savoy dominions and thus the first voters in contemporary Italy?

Either the story of the Italian and European proto-electricians (ten precarious schoolteachers from the province of Ancona who gained the right to vote politically in 1906)[29] or that of pioneers in the professions, from the first female engineer Emma Strada to the first female lawyer Elisa Comani who became such in two cities as different as Turin and Ancona?[30]

The truth is that males have had their own biographies since ancient Greece: Plutarch put together, with Parallel Lives, between the late 1st and 2nd centuries CE, pairs of biographies, each narrating the lives of a Greek and a Roman, but still men, with the intention not already of making history, but of describing the character of the character and his moral considerations and actions; the Greek writer possessed to a remarkable degree the ability to attract the interest of readers, elaborating on the earlier authors he had drawn on and quoting "very often, honestly, his sources"[31].

In twentieth-century Italy it was, for the most part, journalists and writers who wrote biographies, a genre of undoubted appeal, increasingly less practiced by historians, even viewed with snobbishness by

1 to December 4, 2023, crimes committed in the affective family environment (90) and among these, those committed by partners or ex-partners (58); up to the figure of the Observatory of the feminist movement Non una di meno which, updated as of Nov. 8, counts 110 victims divided, however, into "94 feminicides, 1 trans*cide, 9 suicides and 6 deaths under investigation induced or suspected to be induced by violence and hatred of a patriarchal nature".

[25] Istat, *Commissione Parlamentare d'inchiesta sul femminicidio, nonché su ogni forma di violenza di genere* - Audizione dell'Istituto Nazionale di Statistica Dott. Saverio Gazzelloni Direttore della Direzione centrale delle statistiche demografiche e del censimento della popolazione, 23 gennaio 2024, p. 12.

[26] Messina, *Numero femminicidi 2023*, cit.

[27] *Ibidem*.

[28] P. Polito, *Un'altra Italia*, Fano, Aras, 2021, pp. 174-177 (177, for the citation).

[29] M. Severini, *There is no story without its heroes. Ten women and the right to vote in Italy in 1906*, in «HECL», XIV/1, 2019, pp. 625-640.

[30] On these cases I refer to the various essays in the collected volume, *Pioniere. Storia di italiane che hanno aperto nuove frontiere*, L. Pupilli (ed.), Fano, Aras, 2021.

[31] C. Carena, *Introduzione* a Plutarco, *Vite parallele*, Milano, Mondadori, 1974, pp. 16-18 (p. 18 per la citazione).

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academic circles: biographies mainly of men, with women relegated to the usual corner. Recently there has been a boom in autobiographies[32]: magistrates and entertainers, writers and footballers, journalists, politicians - who are never lacking - statesmen and others, in short, an audience of characters, with several women, who significantly affect the number of the 282 books that were published every day in 2022, while at the same time the number of readers has decreased[33]. This is a production that alienates the common reader even more from history books written by historians.

In the 1950s, a group of Italian journalists planned at the table how to take over the large audience of history readers. The Storia d'Italia (1965-97), written by Indro Montanelli, Roberto Gervaso and Mario Cervi, without their respective contributions being specified, is quite well known, a story that was certainly "very readable and captivating," but with several errors and inaccuracies, intended for the middle-class reader of average culture eager for background, minute details, perspective glimpses, caustic judgments, gossip and prudery. This type of narrative has had great fortune because it has been conveyed mainly by Montanelli, one of the most famous newspapermen of the last century, both protagonist and witness of events that occupy roughly half of that work: a journalist indeed, but not a historian[34].

The relationship between historians and journalists is as full of clichés as it is of undeniable data, starting with that of the latter being the former's first competitors. Professional historians work from first-hand sources, follow rigorous methods - such as the *Chabodian canon* (high language, extensive critical apparatus, complex reconstruction)[35] or that reiterated by the Polish intellectual Krzysztof, Pomian (about especially the marks of historicity)[36] - as well as codified preliminary procedures (perusal of bibliography; verification of the state of studies; examination of known sources), which are essential to carry out research that is full of pitfalls and generally long in duration: historians are often (unfairly) accused of not knowing how to write clearly and of not being able to reach the general public. Journalists, on the other hand, mostly work on secondary sources and are distinguished by more or less nimble writing, remarkable readability, and more copies sold.

In essence, biography is one of those literary genres that has always enjoyed considerable success in Italy, although it has mostly focused on men.

This is confirmed by the creation of the largest national biographical repertory, the Biographical Dictionary of Italians, a 60-year undertaking (1960-2020) that highlights extremely eloquent data: the modest percentage of women biographed in the Dictionary - 1,600 female profiles out of a total of 40,000 made in sixty years by more than 28. 000 different authors - corresponds to 4 percent, which is in line with values known in Italy, such as women elected to the Constituent Assembly (3.7 percent) or those to whom a street, square or public place is dedicated (6.6 percent): however, this 4 percent is lower than similar European repertories, since in Great Britain the Oxford Dictionary of national biography came to 8 percent of women biographed and in Germany the Neue Deutsche Biographie touched 5 percent [37].

V. A Distorted Historiographical Citizenship

Certainly, basic female biographical research as well as historiographical citizenship of Italians continues to be lacking.

It is true that scholarly journals and women's associations have made a significant and growing contribution in recent times: however, at present, only three regions out of 20 - Lombardy, Marche and Sicily - have women's biographical repertories, circumscribed in the second case to the contemporary age only[38]. So why not have similar tools for all other regions? At first glance, one would be inclined to point out that these are regions ruled by men. In reality, it is the widespread machismo throughout public opinion that determines this incredible disconnect: of men, famous or not, from every age of human civilization we know and can have tools to know everything or almost everything, of women much, but really much less.

It must be remembered, however, that research on women's history has proposed to give visibility to a "marginalized subject" in traditional historical

[32] M. Masneri, *Un diluvio di biografie e autobiografie. Vite di santi e santoni*, «Il Foglio», 11 ottobre 2021; I. Zaffino, *Biografie e nuove rivelazioni: è boom dei libri dedicati alla regina Elisabetta*, «la Repubblica», 21 settembre 2022.

[33] *In Italia si pubblicano più libri ma cala la percentuale di lettori*, «il Sole 24 Ore», 31 dicembre 2023.

[34] Montanelli worked on *Storia d'Italia* with Roberto Gervaso from 1965 to 1970, but then interrupted the collaboration, which resumed, proving to be much more lasting with Cervi: the latter and Montanelli had different characters but were able to complement each other so that, having met in Via Solferino in 1946 (at the institutional referendum Cervi voted for the republic and Montanelli for the monarchy), they became friends and collaborated until the end of the century; when the Tuscan left "il Giornale" to found "la Voce," Cervi followed him, except when he returned to "il Giornale" and became its editor. L. Offeddu, *Montanelli e l'intesa con Mario Cervi. Sinfonia di estro e ordine*, «Corriere della Sera», 15 aprile 2018.

[35] V. Vidotto, *Guida allo studio della storia contemporanea*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2004, pp. 35-36 e ss.

[36] K. Pomian, *Che cos'è la storia?*, Milano, Mondadori, 2001 (ed. or., 1999), pp. 277-278.

[37] M. Severini, *Il completamento della biografia della nazione*, «Il materiale contemporaneo», 2, 2022 pp. 59-72.

[38] *Dizionario biografico delle donne lombarde*, R. Farina (ed.), Milano, Baldini&Castoldi, 1995; *Siciliane. Dizionario biografico illustrato*, M. Fiume (ed.), Siracusa, Ed. Romeo, 2006; *Dizionario biografico delle donne marchigiane 1815-2022*, L. Pupilli e M. Severini (ed.), Ancona, il lavoro editoriale, 2022 (1ª edizione, 2018).

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investigations without, moreover, being a "minority" in numerical terms: women have been placed side by side with subaltern groups in past societies - such as peasants, workers, criminals, deviants and those previously mentioned as bankrupt, banned etc. - ignored by nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography, groups that recent studies, in convergence with the social sciences, instead intend to "recover to memory as subjects of action in history" by making them the object of study. Therefore, women's history was born with an "additional" and "supplementary" intent to current history and even this "additional operation" was pursued with the belief that even the mere placement of women in historical scenarios constituted in itself an alteration of dominant reconstructions and led with it the questioning of traditional acquisitions, the identification of new paradigms and the reorientation of findings[39].

The *Dictionary* concerning women in the Marche, the result of a scientific project spanning two years and involving more than 40 authors (only two scholars participated), initially proposed 300 profiles of women who, belonging to the most disparate social classes, touched with the fifth edition of the work 366, after the work's editors and curators had listened to the territory and had tried to incorporate suggestions and proposals for new entries. Of the latter, only those that met the work's scientific criteria, which remained unchanged, were accepted. Women who "made their incisive contribution in the events" included along a little more than 200 years, from the Congress of Vienna, the first international treaty in which "the word Marche" first appeared, to the years of the five editions (2018-2022) were biographed[40].

In particular, an attempt was made to promote a bottom-up view, thus biographing not only famous women, but also, precisely, "representatives of trades and professions who have written a story different from that told in school and academic textbooks, but no less important and fascinating"[41].

Let us now ask how much the knowledge of women's history could have benefited if every Italian region-and not just two-had repertoires similar to those mentioned above. We hypothesized that individual regional councils could set up working groups gathering historians and scholars to fill this gap. The recent experience in the Marche region shows that by relying on a rigorous methodology and a working group divided into autonomous sub-groups coordinated by a contact person and asked to comply with the methodological criteria previously discussed and approved by the meeting of the contact persons, such a project can be accomplished in a time that is anything but long.

Looking at the Italian academic world, one finds a number of no less interesting elements.

The survey presented, in 2013, by the Department of Political Science of the University of Roma Tre identified only 56 gender teaching in Italy, including bachelor's and master's degree programs, 12 postgraduate courses, 6 master's degrees and 4 doctorates: the U.S. University of Berkeley alone offered at the time more than 60 courses in Gender studies, while more than a thousand were counted in the United States. Still, out of a total of 57 public Italian universities, there are only 16 in which there is at least one undergraduate course in gender studies: 74 percent of the courses are in universities in northern Italy (64 percent are concentrated in the University of Bologna), 10 percent in the Center, 16 percent in the South and Islands[42]. Gender studies itself in the peninsula revealed critical issues: the significant lag in institutional legitimacy, the ambivalence of feminist academics, the fragile structure of university teaching practices, and the coexistence of excellent specialized programs with the scarcity of introductory courses in major Italian universities[43].

VI. First Changes

Things are slowly changing and, in the last decade, Gender studies have grown significantly in our country as well as internationally: not only have specific teachings on gender issues increased, but realities such as the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) - that is, the set of actions, in line with the European Commission's definition, integrated into a single strategic vision, aimed at eliminating gender inequalities with a view to occupational well-being - witness how the changes do not only concern the academic sphere, but society itself. International conventions (Istanbul, 2011), international feminist movements weaving their engagement with that of anti-racist and Lgbt+ movements, and the increased space that inclusive language occupies in public space are all signs of concrete change: nevertheless, resistance to the affirmation of gender studies has not disappeared, in academia as well as in the public sphere, while there are numerous groups and individuals "who, both online and offline, act out strong anti-feminist resistances and offensives to the change advocated by feminisms and gender-related disciplines"[44].

Still, as of September 2022, the first Master's Degree Course in Gender Studies, Media and

[39] S. Feci, *Storia di genere*, in *Dizionario di Storia*, 2010, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/storia-di-genere_(Dizionario-di-Storia)/.

[40] I curatori, *Introduzione*, in *Dizionario biografico delle donne marchigiane*, cit. (2022), p. 5.

[41] I curatori, *Alle lettrici e ai lettori*, in *Dizionario biografico delle donne marchigiane*, cit. (2018), p. 6.

[42] Severini, *Le fratture della memoria*, cit., p. 378

[43] P. Di Cori, *Sotto mentite spoglie. Gender studies in Italia*, in «Cahiers d'etudes italiennes», 16, 2013, pp. 15-37.

[44] M. Poggio, *Gli studi di genere in Italia: passato, presente e futuro di una sfida ancora aperta*, «AG AboutGender» 11(21), 2, 2022, p. 296.

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Communication Cultures and Policies was activated at "La Sapienza" University of Rome, the result of the collaboration between the Departments of Communication and Social Research, Humanities and Modern Cultures, and Psychology[45].

However, within academic institutions, the female component appeared to be underrepresented in 2021: compared with 12,303 full professors, there are 2,952 women full professors; there are 19,676 associate professors and 7,575 female colleagues. One of the biggest problems lies in the fact that the concepts of scientific excellence and meritocracy in academia are not neutral in nature: “they are defined on performance parameters that are strongly male-stereotyped but to which women are expected to adhere in order to demonstrate the validity of their work”.

Moreover, according to data from the European University Association (2020), among 28 EU member states there were only 15 percent female university rectors (varying from 9.5 percent in 2010 to 13 percent in 2013 and 14.3 percent in 2019) and in Italy only six[46]. In 2022, after the election of Donatella Sciuto at the top of the Milan Polytechnic, Italy's female rectors will become ten: still few if we compare them to the more than 80 male colleagues, but if we think that the first woman at the top of a university came only in 1992, when Biancamaria Tedeschini Lalli, who recently passed away, was chosen for Roma Tre, the landing in double digits is nevertheless encouraging[47].

Coming out impoverished, because not adequately supported by institutions, is basic research, that which is (or should be) taught in universities and which is substantiated by indispensable elements: the methodology of work, the passion for knowledge, the importance of writing and communicating research, the attendance of those fundamental archives that are often bypassed or forgotten, such as municipal and state archives, parish, family, private and public archives, emphasizing for the municipal ones the importance of offices such as the Anagrafe and the Stato Civile, indispensable to carry out research of this kind[48].

The dimensions of knowledge and narrative are indispensable to historical knowledge no less than the historian's own writing skills: “A poorly written history book is a bad history book”, pointed out one of the most brilliant contemporaryists of recent times, Tony Judt[49]; models and theories are important, but they should not be given absolute meaning; in analyzing the events of the historical process, due consideration should be given to national cultures, but without erecting them as a single or indisputable parameter of one's research itinerary; updating is another vital component of the historia''s craft, of his or her effective abilities to reconstruct the past through archival and documentary research and to communicate it to a broad audience that, in addition to scholars and the scholarly community, includes first and foremost readers.

Someone has pointed the finger, on the one hand, at the fact that the inability on the part of some Italian historians to write books “as readable in form as they are solid in content”, without therefore reaching the general reader, has contributed to the fortunes of “amateur historians” and journalists; and, on the other hand, on the fact that the very preservation of polysemous language still allows historiography, and thus historians, to remain "still very close" to the common language, due to the far from minor fact that the recipients of research are “not only” the historians themselves, but "still" ordinary citizens.

Putting the thirst for knowledge and the capacity for storytelling (and interpretation) back at the center of historical work can thus lead to reclaiming the foundational elements of a profoundly human discipline that sits “at a delicate junction” between the past, the present, and the future[50].

[45] See R. Scalise’s interview with P. Panarese, course president, «Roba da Donne», 5 giugno 2023 (https://www.robadadonne.it/240170/studi-di-genere-gender-studies-italia/).

[46] G. Ubbiali, *La faticosa carriera accademica delle donne in Italia*, «il Sole 24 Ore», 8 marzo 2021.

[47] E. Bruno, *Gender gap negli atenei, la spinta delle dieci rettrici*, *ibidem*, 21 novembre 2022.

[48] I curatori, *Introduzione*, in *Dizionario biografico delle donne marchigiane*, cit. (2022), p. 6.

[49] T. Judt [con T. Snyder], *Novecento. Il Secolo degli intellettuali e della politica*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2012, translated by P. Marangon (original edition: *Thinking the Twentieth Century*, London , Penguin, 2012), p. 257. On the originality and historical method of the Anglo-Saxon scholar I refer to M. Severini, *Tony Judt, le eredità del Novecento e la lezione di metodo storico*, in «Ricerche Storiche», LI, 1, gennaio-aprile 2021, pp. 93-112.

[50] M. Severini, *Public History. Undici anni sul campo*, Dueville (Vi), Ronzani, 2022, p. 66.

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Understanding Ambiguity in Knowledge, Value and Institutional Structure: A Case Study of Chinese Open Network Community

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Abstract- Being a space for organizations to realize their value, it is necessary to minimize the structural Uncertainty of the virtual world. The analysis shows structural problems are the internal logical starting point of ambiguity in the network community and the underlying cause of gradual accumulation and precipitation in social tension. Analyzing the structural stain from the dimension of knowledge, value, and institutional structure in the network community, multifarious ambiguity is found in Chinese network governance. A representative survey object is selected to understand Chinese network governance after COVID 2019. The paper choose The Changtze River Cloud community on TikTok as the survey unit to analyze the public space management satisfaction ratio. Through theoretical discussion and case study, specific countermeasures are proposed, such as broadening the channels of expression, constructing cultural diversity in virtual space, and establishing clear specification standardization.

Keywords: ambiguity, knowledge, value, institution, structure, network community.

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Keywords: ambiguity, knowledge, value, institution, structure, network community.

I. Introduction

The dynamics of today's discontinuous, open, and complex virtual space order have challenged the tenets of existing internet governance. In Habermasthe's structural transformation of the public sphere, the public sphere is defined as a field between the state and civil society whose fundamental principles are participatory and equal conversations with reason. Characterized by free expression and collision of an idea, network communities are recognized as a critical factor in enhancing knowledge diffusion, declaration of political or cultural rights, and practical resource transfer to overcome the limitations of traditional one-to-one communication mode. While the epidemic introduced by the epidemic is unprecedented, for it challenges the government's responsibility and ability in multiple dimensions, social media makes the net citizens' voices heard through various channels.

"Network communities are dense, overlapping structural groups within a network" (Jingbei Wang et al., 2019). In this paper, the term "network community" refers to a virtual public space that engages governors and users (knowledge contributor, knowledge interpreter, and knowledge communicator) in social interactions, in which the building of publicity is a crucial outcome of such interactions. When there is an imbalance between expectations in the social domain and the institutionalized reality, uncertainties in structure will occur. "It is noted that where frustration derives from the inaccessibility of effective institutional means for attaining economic or any other type of highly valued 'success,' for adaption (innovation, ritualism, and rebellion) are possible." (Robert Merton, 1938)

Currently, the network community are filled with a sense of confusion around the technological agility and institutional rigidification, such as irregular interaction rules, unclear boundaries between public and private, which made it necessary to construct enthusiastic network action rules based on publicity. To promote the virtual space for multiple actors to realize their value, the main consideration of this study is to illustrate the underlying mechanisms involved in structure of the open network community and to descend the structural uncertainty, to fill a critical research gap between preference and order within institutional design and sustainable practice. The research study use a case study approach to explore the open network community selected in TikTo through data analysis and try to explain how certain functionalities can explain the structural tension from the dimension of knowledge, value, and institutional structure.

II. Literature Review

Network governance is essential in digital management, which has already aroused broad concern in theoretical and practical circles. Researchers on network communities mostly focus on utility and influence (Sytch et al., 2014), the specific characteristics (Guan-Lin Chen, 2013), nontraditional security problems (Yefeng Ruan et al., 2016), development mode of its regulatory governance (Jae et al., 2014), management of boundaries (Barrett et al., 2016), building stakeholder association (Yuqing Ren et al., 2012; Carla L et al., 2018), knowledge dissemination, adaption, and collaboration(Huang et al., 2019; Chidiebere Ofoegbu et al., 2020), users' contribution behavior and intention

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(Stefania Castello et al., 2022), network governance roles.

Integrate the possibility of qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure specific aspects or indexes of an online community in this topic is urgent. One representative of communities is an interdisciplinary knowledge network that integrates universities, government departments, core enterprises, and other innovation bodies as a whole, pursuing knowledge transfer and transformation. Based on citation data, it reveals the hidden network structure of interdisciplinary knowledge flows in China and demonstrates its homogeneous link structure and heterogeneous weight distribution (Liu C et al., 2011). For the public networks, formalized mechanisms with a pool of network administrators are responsible for their governance to construct a kind of shared-governance network which has already formed a set of discourse norms based on the public's opinions and expressions (Daniela Cristofoli et al., 2014). A survey led by Tsinghua University found that social networks with a high degree of heterogeneity are not conducive to resource integration and not beneficial to entrepreneurship (Jing Song et al., 2019). These approach has yielded important insights, but offers limited understanding of the community regarding its institutional or value structure.

Prior researches about open knowledge network communities center on knowledge dissemination, adaption, and collaboration (Huang et al., 2019; Chidiebere Ofoegbu et al, 2020), users' contribution behavior and intention (Stefania Castello et al., 2022), network governance roles (Peter Raeymaeckers et al., 2020), etc. Highlighting the motivations behind sharing networking, coordinative, cooperative and collaborative knowledge network have enhanced the relationship between governance and follow-up practice (Umor Sarimah et al., 2020).

According to a survey to the social media circles, organizational relationships formed based on technological innovation, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube can be cited as examples of non-reciprocal, which creates a sense of unpredictability around the long-term sustainability of such communities (Vindaya Senadheera et al., 2017).

With the increasing centrality of social platforms in citizens' cognitive ability, researchers are keen to unveil the relationship between governance and the performance of network communities from the perspective of users or mechanisms. The procedural or content legitimacy of the social platform system is analyzed for it shapes net citizens' social demands and psychological preferences (Claire Connolly Knox, 2013). The rise of static, dynamic, and increasingly multimedia and related infrastructure has been one of the leading forces behind the phenomenal growth of the Internet (Volker Stocker et al., 2017). Similar studies investigate how Twitter and Facebook use affect citizens' knowledge acquisition and whether the effect depends on people's political interests (Mark Boukes, 2019). literature also reveal the patterns of structural evolution about of knowledge community, showing how loosely connected set of Twitter users can increase their connection and enrich diversify of values through their participation(Luping Wang et al., 2019). And Network organizers who are emphasized to address the complex problems of establishing goal consensus in lead organization-governed networks. Compared with the role of facilitator, the commissioner and co-producer are much better equipped to reach an agreement on a set of goals in service networks (Peter Raeymaeckers et al., 2017). Moreover, to explore the decision-making mechanism of the network community, Chinese scholar proposed a method of repairing incomplete fuzzy preference relations based on the divided social societies to balance the different centrality of the community (Junfeng Chu et al., 2020).

Despite the growing number of literature in the open community, it still needs to magnify the citizen's experience or public value to cope with structural stain from the dimension of knowledge, value, and institution unsolved present. Now there is significant consensus that: (1) Governance in network communities involves integrated management out of existing order, which is distributed across borders; (2) open innovation of these public communities mostly stays at its early stage (Ham Juyeon et al., 2015) and empowerment of the network community is built on open, order and collaboration instead of misinformation, disorder and manipulation; (3) it still intertwined with the traditional managerial process or spirits such as emphasis on highly polarized power or embedded authority. Building on this consensus, we present that structural problems are the internal reason of wicked problem in the network community and the underlying cause of gradual accumulation and precipitation in social tension. For these factors, the network community embodies a series of problems that made constructing a true spiritual home for urban citizens unnecessary. To provide valuable suggestions for these problems, we aim to analyze the reasons for ambiguity hidden in its structure and put forward insights to reduce ambiguity to fill a critical research gap between the existing order and institution design.

III. Research Framework and Methods

As a presentation of a contradiction between the demand side and supply sides of virtual space, the tension stands mainly on fragmentation and diversity and requires further theoretical development. Structures are needed for stakeholders to address social responsibility issues to clarify responsibilities and often inconsistent and random probabilistic events rooted in

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the institutional framework through which the society culture is conditioned. In drawing on the work of Stéphanie Dameron on discourse and subjectivity, we view structural problems as inconsistent and random probabilistic events rooted in an institutional framework through which the society's culture is conditioned.

Technical rationality, entrepreneurialism, and citizen participation are compatible with public administration practice (Thomas A. Bryer, 2020). Due to its diversity and complexity, the dynamics of network community governance based on technology fusion and citizen participation in China are still facing multiple strains. When we address problems with incomplete fuzzy preference relations, the feasibility and advantages of the method should be considered (Junfeng Chu et al., 2020). To understand the functions and characteristics of network governance after COVID-19, a representative object is selected, the community formed by the official governmental Release on TikTok, which represents the new media mode dominant by the government to conduct the survey.

a) Research Object

Understanding the internal relationship and operating mechanism of virtual space, which is often directly associated with the level of governance, is pressing. The form of expression of social members in the new era is carried out in the process of technological and scene exchange. Transitivity is found to be one of users' most common behavior related to sharing and commenting behaviors in online community manifested as the convergence behavior of users' motivation, aim and will. Therefore, we assume that respondents with the same cultural background and psychological cognition may make the same or similar choice when facing the same question, and classify the Indicator from the supply side, namely the knowledge, value and institutional dimension.

The object network community formed by official governmental Release on TikTok is a typical example of network governance mode. In this paper, we choose the representative case of the network community led by Changtze River Cloud on the TikTok platform. In implementing the modernization of national governance, new media modes gradually developed various management tools with more interactive social localization, like content promotion more fashionable, user-centered, and increased penetration into the aspects of people's lives in content dissemination. While plates may promote resilience, formal and informal social interaction may influence the decisions of individuals to participate.

As an open and innovative community, short video accounts on TikTok have caught the public's eyeballs. It always focuses on recording users' preferences and updating its contents and procedures following customer feedback. The development of the community has the motive from spontaneous to conscious and provides knowledge popularization with broader interaction. For an official account of official governmental Release on the platform, the content is presented chiefly to keep up tightly with current affairs and politics, and its function in deep exploration is limited.

Table1: Survey Design of Structural Uncertainty in Network Community

Level Indicators	Secondary Indicators	Thirdly Indicators
Knowledge Structure (A)	Content (A1)	(A11) diversity of knowledge
		(A12) timeliness of knowledge publishing
		(A13) existence of tacit knowledge
	Form (A2)	(A21) visibility of form, such as articles, pictures, music, short videos and its combination
		(A22) released selectively
		(A23) adhere to certain political, cultural or utilitarian orientation
Value Structure (B)	Aim (B1)	(B11) value heterogeneity
		(B12) freedom of expression
		(B13) rights to defend opinions if has conflict with other members
		(B14) cultural identity
	Objective (B2)	(B21) clear purpose to serve the public
		(B22) open, inclusive and innovative atmosphere
		(B23) user's demand for knowledge, pleasure and interest can fully met
		(B24) theme and related activities of the community are in line with its positioning
	Reciprocity (B3)	(B31) awareness of user's' demand and related action
		(B32) cooperative consciousness among users
		(B34) sense of gain among users

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Institutional Structure (C)	Accountability (C1)	(C11) clear rights and responsibilities
		(C12) equal distribution of power among the communities members
		(C13) master consciousness in the network community
	Norms (C2)	(C21) clear definition of norms
		(C22) norms can ensuring the rights of users
		(C23) existence of unspoken rules
	Organization (C3)	(C31) information release mechanism, decision-making process and consultation mechanisms is transparent and clear
		(C32) regulation of the network community run in an orderly manner
		(C33) adoption of suggestions is open and transparent
		(C34) users' participation can influence the development of policy and policy implementation

The survey design is meant to identify the source of structural problems that are potentially applicable for the construction of an innovative and responsive community. In the survey, the evaluation of virtual communities' knowledge structure, institutional structure, and value structure is supposed to be analyzed based on subdivided indicators. Factors like contents, objectives, accountability, norms, and organizations that can affect online communities' operation and their internal relationship should be highlighted.

b) Survey Process

The survey is divided into four steps. The first step is conducting a literature survey and collecting relevant information (Situation). The second step is to carry out the interview outline and establish objectives and tasks (Task). The third step is to select the targeted group and implement the interview plan (Action). The fourth step is to analyze the survey result (Result). All efforts are carried out by an overall train of thought and order.

Firstly, to fully grasp the character of objects and subjects, with the details that can be tracked more keenly and timely, researchers conducted a literature survey to learn about the "Changtze River Cloud" community and experience it through various channels before the interview. "Changtze River Cloud" is an official news administration client attached to Hubei Radio and Television station. Its radio, television station, and the Wetchat public account have shared the same name with the TikTok platform since 2017. Until October 2020, almost ten works have been viewed more than 100 million times according to total visits. Significantly, the national new office press conference and Hubei epidemic prevention press conference series have been clicked 1.2 billion, and the whole network has hit 200 million. Beyond doubt, its influence is significant in the local area. The data shows some differences when conducting separate investigations with the official governmental Release on TikTok. Generally speaking, except for a few hot topics like advanced deeds in fighting the COVID-19 can reach more than 100,000 clicks and thumb-ups, the average number of views for each work is 40 to 80, and usually, no user would like to give any comments.

Secondly, the task is fixed. For an in-depth analysis of this topic, the method of purposive or judgmental sample is adopted in the survey, and a total of 28 representatives are obtained, including students, cadres of public institutions, employees of enterprises, and other occupational groups. The object interviewees are mostly college students, white collars, couriers, and small vendors. Male and female interviewees accounted for 55.55% and 44.44%, respectively. Most interviewees are 18-35 years old, and most have a bachelor's degree. Overall, the scope and level of the research samples reflect the basic structure of the Chinese community citizenry.

Thirdly, the interview outline is based on the technical points of semi-structured in-depth interviews, comprehensively considering the subject and dynamic dimensions and continuously improving the depth during the interview process. The content involves three significant issues: expression of knowledge needs, value coupling degree with the platform, and problems of the institution design. To ensure that all interviewees can answer the significant questions on the outline and have something to say, the researcher surveys in the form of a free chat but ensures that the discourse initiative is in our hands. Each interview takes about 20-30 minutes, and the location is randomly determined.

Lastly, summarize the interview from two sides. In the demand side, according to the characteristics of each subject, focus on the issues that interviewees care about most. Through discussions, researchers can learn that males care much about news and politics and usefully have deep knowledge accumulation and unique insights into network governance; females care about news timeliness, extensive content, and related value conflict. Due to the different knowledge backgrounds of occupations, the focus is also different. For College Students, their biggest concern is whether the Changtze

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communities can bring a better audio-visual experience, build a smooth platform for communicating with peers, and solve practical problems such as making friends and gaining identity. Their second most significant concern is whether each participant has a clear role orientation to avoid nontraditional security issues, such as information safety, adverse selection, direct knowledge transmission about COVID-19, etc. This group has a strong sense of participation in the virtual community, and their discourse is only sometimes in line with official discourse. White collars care about the value coupling degree with the platform most; the logical starting point is that governmental TikTok short videos should spread more in-depth knowledge in addition to news reporting. Most white collars do not care if they participate in the space but care about policy configuration and power distribution behind. For couriers and small vendors, only a little demand expression but care about the reliability and utility of knowledge. At the same time, different age groups have little difference in their focus on online virtual communities.

On the supply-side, the lens thus seems unable to capture the law, standard, or focus of official knowledge. Generally speaking, community governors and knowledge users formed two polarities: knowledge creators and receivers. Although this point of view has specific characteristics of simplexes, it lifts the discussion from the level of the event to the underlying structure. The relationship between creators and receivers is smooth as a means to upgrade knowledge and cultural services but needs reciprocal, two-way communication. Only a few users would like to act as interpreters of official governmental releases on TikTok for various reasons, such as having no sense of participation, not enough time, limited by political sensitivity, etc.

c) Satisfaction Effect Analysis

After the survey's data collection, the transcribed texts should be analyzed. The satisfaction with the community created by the official governmental Release of TikTok mainly comes from its timeliness, reliability, and comprehensiveness: (1) As the primary source of local authoritative news, the new media community led by Changtze River Cloud provides equality of information access and authentic and reliable information. The underlying is that knowledge sharing between the government and the public is smooth for common cooperation goals or solving problems encountered in the process. 90% of interviewees reflected that the atmosphere of governmental Official Release on TikTok is objective and fair; (2) The intuitive expression method and lifestyle expression of short videos changed the length, capacity, and segment of the traditional Official Release to output works more refined and conducive to net citizen participation; River Cloud platform in TikTok or other network (3) Officials promote short videos that report more comfort and personal benefits.

Although decentralized and fragmented knowledge transmission has its value orientation, shared interests already drive discourse platforms at a certain level. Dissatisfaction mainly lies in knowledge, value, and institutional structures. From the dimension of knowledge structure, the imperfect down-top expression mechanism is an outstanding problem. 50% participation revealed that the community's news is not tightly with their daily lives, with a certain degree of utilitarianism. As is commonly known, the network community tends to focus on typical and personalized hot spots. The dissemination, reinterpretation, and consumption of clustering knowledge made the hot topic of individual events quickly evolve into public concerns.

Furthermore, the focus of the public's long-term problems can ascend through accidental exposure or the revelation of Changtze River Cloud, Huber lease, and other hot new media. Further, due to the low threshold of users' participation and the varying knowledge level and knowledge-sharing ability of users, the knowledge presented in virtual communities dominated by authority needs to be more cohesive in content, exacerbating the difficulty for community members to gather depth value. For these reasons, the manifestation of content and form has the characteristic of goal-fixed and lends support to the predominance of the will of leading officials.

From the perspective of the degree of value heterogeneity, the level is low. 77.78% of interviewees expressed their agreement with the mainstream promoted by the government. Further, they deem it is responsible for government to launch the sharing project of information dissemination related to authority news. The paradoxical relation is also studied in the impact of the community on users' perception or experience. Almost 66.67% reveal that when their value orientation is not in line with the platform, they usually keep silent, and expressing diverse opinions is unnecessary. It shows an incomplete participation scheme and mismatching between preferences and decision-making of the community governors.

For institutional structure, the public participation of the community created by the official governmental Release of TikTok shows the characteristics of weak involvement in the present stage. Some interviewees revealed their experience of passive and symbolic participation in this field, such as being forced to forward or thumb up. Even for the net citizens interested in the content, their participation rate is separate from the launch activities. The symbolic participation based on spreading patriotism, interest, or favor focuses on one point. For interaction activity, most interviewees said that their experience of comments was not broadcast or did not receive responses from the

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official platform. For example, a public leader board was measured by thumb-ups and forwarding, showing the most interesting news and dedicated fans. Only 33.33% of interviewees indicated that the official release encouraged users to share their ideas by interacting and reflecting their support in forwarding, commenting, thumbing up, etc. Some interviewees expressed their experience of isolation during the feedback process. Sometimes, they need to defend their opinions in front of other stakeholders.

To sum up, the satisfaction ratio is closely correlated with the welfare of citizens during active expression and participation as effective indicators of public space management. The active degree of participants in the network community is affected by the quality of knowledge products (services) supplied and the motivation intensity of the individual. As a result, the nurture of collective consciousness depends on its specific situation. The analysis should not be limited to the field of communication or culture. Still, it should be connected with the more far-reaching national structure, even political operation mode, and the power relationship behind media publicity. Reflected by the public's selective preferences, ambiguity arises from a structural problem with complex norms. To understand its mechanism, we need to analyze the underlying reasons lying behind in-depth.

IV. Analysis of Reason for Ambiguity Lying in the Network Community

The uniqueness of network governance in China can be highlighted as event-centered, path-locking, and order-oriented, respectively means giving special attention to sustaining standard rules and categorization. In this paper, structural Uncertainty is deemed an inconsistent and random probabilistic event rooted in a framework through which the institutional path is locked, and practitioners can experience it. Specifically, structural problems are the internal logical starting point of ambiguity in network community and the underlying cause of gradual accumulation and precipitation in social tension.

a) The Inadequate Expression of Hidden Demand

Both the New Public Service theory and the Co-production theory emphasize demand orientation, which requires the government to optimize the decision-making process based on the collective demand of the public. As a result of rational communication and two-way understanding between humans and the outside world, tacit knowledge is the carrier of a hidden order. For an official account of official governmental Release on TikTok, it stays at an event-centered level with not much in-depth analysis. Furthermore, this epitomizes the mainstream governance model dominated by top-down transmission. Bloggers conducting in-depth research on current affairs and politics are usually not official but business hobbyists or paid knowledge operators. This different propensity to exploration incorporates a hierarchical spread of knowledge, which may lead to the problem of identification differentiation between the folk discourse and official discourse to a certain degree.

Only recently has the field of knowledge management always addressed the question of what it means to be knowledge structural equilibrium. Dominant trends of official knowledge sharing have mutually shaped changes in organizational culture's pattern, pace, and style, enhancing internet communities' knowledge content and transmissible intensity while neglecting the dialectic relationship behind the tension of explicit and implicit knowledge. In most cases, citizens are unwilling to express their values, ideas, or demands, so silence cannot be considered a unanimous but inadequate expression of hidden requests. Accordingly, the crisis of structural equilibrium of knowledge structure in the web community comes from such phenomena as identification differentiation in public online participation and the game between folk discourse and official discourse.

Ambiguities remain in institutional settings. Compared with art and entertainment accounts of TikTok, the reason is an inadequate expression of tacit demand in the official version of official governmental Release can be concluded for many reasons. Firstly, as the number of interactions on the web has increased, it is becoming difficult to keep track of the actual demand contained in its discourse (Punam Bedi et al., 2016). Tacit knowledge includes many metaphors because some first-hand experience cannot be obtained and transformed in the network, which brings difficulty in knowledge absorption and presentation fraught with Uncertainty. As it is presented, top-down knowledge informing is intricate for the potential consequences, benefits and risks, agenda making, and identifying stakeholders' problems. Secondly, knowledge structure is complicated and obscure because the knowledge transmission does not follow a balanced spread pattern but aims to reach any gathering point in the network. Researchers also found that higher levels of web community interactivity lead to a more intense experience of knowledge cohesion, resulting in more favorable behavioral responses, such as positive feedback and exemplary behavior (Guda van Noort et al., 2012). Thirdly, due to the turbulent flow of information on the diverse platforms, the information glut to citizens' use makes the valuable information complicated to judge and further elicits a quick response to resonate with the official spirit. One representative case is that the public health crisis pervades through complex networks, representing a non-linear spectrum of cognition among the public. For example, Doctor Wenliang Li issued an alert to remind his family and friends of the dangers in the early stages

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of the epidemic, which triggered massive concern among the public but no positive response from the government. One underlying reason is that tacit knowledge is an accumulation of experience often acquired through personal practice with the characteristics of significant individual attributes and lastly, limited by Chinese society's cultural tradition and stake over a long-lasting time, path dependence in the city's governance locks deeply in the existing order.

Being a space for organizers to realize its value, it is necessary to focus on public engagement and their inner world. Only expression with symbolic value and meaning represents modern society and open spirit. Analyzing the external environment, there is no regular and clear channel for the presentation of explicating hidden demands and endowing special care. Thus, the strain between the inadequate expression of implicit knowledge and explicit request will long exist.

b) The Structural value stain between Univariate Authoritarian and Pluralism

The network community represents a mixture of rationality and sensibility; promoting civic awareness and diversified expressions is what it is meant to do. Then, balancing diversified expression with common-identified psychological construction according to situation changes has always been a nontraditional safety problem that the Official still needs to realize. When examining the value structure tension of a government-dominant network community, opposed themes stand out: Univariate authoritarian vs pluralism. In the open network community, the representation of web order turns to democratic discourse, harmonious discourse production is needed to lay the foundation of public space, for value structural equilibrium is better justified in some "rational-expectations" situations than others.

Assessing the effects on network structure, the organization with substantial heterogeneity and inclusiveness tends to gain critical information and control advantages. Can the index of heterogeneity and inclusiveness measure the degree of difference in social relations, market share, and innovation index be used to test the relationship of social recognition and pluralism of ideas among stakeholders within the virtual field? Pluralist notion sees networks as flexible and fluid, consisting of complex interdependencies through which innovative subjects steer policy development and its implementation.

Network communities space presents the prototype of the multiple public spheres, but there is a gap between authoritarian and public rationality. For example, due to the dual advantages of information and interaction in political or cultural participation, higher social strata may give them leading power on public issues. Controversy remains at a high theoretical level but lacks practical meaning, for it only affects personal action and has no concrete consequent institutional implications (Hajer et al., 2003). To balance the scale, traditional measures of information release as a univariate phenomenon may need to be more dynamic to adequately describe the complex nature of social interaction. In the 5G age, open information disclosure and online service, extensive public participation are regarded as the relaxed attitude and the main functions of e-government promoting the formation of joint action. Though the network communities' openness lowers the participation threshold and enhances the power of the public, it cannot automatically bring open minds and harmonious movement. Its complex and uncontrollable Internet features make cleaning up insufficient resources and malicious users in the open community difficult.

In this research, the creation of public value not only refers to the services provided by the government but also include the value of trust or fairness generated in public interaction. However, shared values are rarely mentioned in co-governance in the Chinese virtual community. The 'public value' is a fuzzy concept consistently used to measure government service effectiveness (Moore, 2000; Kelly, 2002; Alford & O'Flynn, 2005). Beyond the diverse value underlying, it has already been confirmed that introducing innovative participatory tools will create new divides when it comes into play (Alessio et al., 2017). For these unbridgeable gaps between individual and collective vision, strain from confusion or conflict of values forms. Inconsistent values may lead net citizens to vote with their feet, and the phenomena of a "silent majority" rise. As a typical case represented in the Suzhouwenzhong BBS, the influence of public opinions in government-led virtual communities needs to be increased and further affected by the diversification of modern value orientation of official orientation and social interests (Lwi Song, 2017). Either the control or the empowering aspect can be experienced as shaped community action according to the wishes of a leading dominant, depending on the relations of power and trust that surround the implementation of the web system. For differences rooted in socioeconomic, cognitive, and cultural resources, the social reality of network empowerment in political discourse, the divide will not quickly disappear. From a management perspective, to successfully achieve the value goal of public governance, an ideological consensus must be formed on the priority of public interests (Lin Zhang, 2017). Further analysis shows that new media transmissions, such as Twitter and Facebook, are closely related to the citizens' willingness to participate in political activities and communication ability (Mark Boukes, 2019). The coefficient of interaction effect reveals that value identification in structural space is strengthened or weakened by the sense of participation.

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c) *Blurred Process and Disequilibrium of Transmission in Institutional Ambiguity*

From public production, consumption, and entertainment to political participant activity, public and private policies, and management standards, policy preferences and orientation have increasingly blurred borders, especially presented as infiltration of a boundary with each other and off shoring or contraction problems. In these boundary-ambiguity situations, organizations may be inclined to carry out governance actions to maximize self-interest driven by rationality-expectation. This can easily lead to path lock and accountability avoidance, using ravine among internal and external stakeholders, and damage to the welfare of the citizens. Exploring more profoundly, though the orientation of network governance advocates mutual benefit where all parties in the field can actively take self-discipline in competition and cooperation, what prevails is its opposite on the practical level. At the same time, unanswered questions raise many topics worth discussing for policy settings about virtual space construction. For example, Norris put forward that digital technologies could create new inequalities and reinforce the dominance of elites (Norris, 2001). Based on the empirical study of Japanese online gaming communities, researchers found that online communities provide access to bridging social capital through heterogeneous populations in shared contexts (Kobayashi, 2010).

Research treats social media as an information system try to construct a new model to provide dynamism to social media strategy in support of greater social agility and smooth communication. A context of analytical thinking to guide the public users into a context-sensitive enough to the situation. Conducted social network analyses on two online communities concerning refugees and COVID-19 in different time period, scholars found that networked social influence and strategic information manipulation fueled the dissemination of misinformation in online communities, and examined how social network dynamics and strategic actions shape misinformation transmission in open online communities (Lichen Zhena et al., 2023). For now, it faces various skill barriers in operation, such as information manipulation and distortion, the dilemma of collective action, the lack of unifying operation rules, and the difficulty of acquiring public response, which creates a sense of unpredictability around the long-term sustainability of such communities.

Establishing robust connections between net citizens and institutions and leveraging its existing institutions with competence requires mapping web users' demand with reaction rather than strategically choosing. In the traditional model, due to hierarchical empowerment, the transmission effectiveness was limited by numerous regulations and laws. To be specific, tangled with its size and complexity, China's long administrative history has entrenched a strong government culture resistant to power-sharing with external actors unfavorable to the collaborative relationship between government and social organizations (Yijia Jing et al., 2017). In the specific management of today's web order, although there is a typed thinking of categorization and standard, the macro policies and management standards present a certain degree of vagueness. On the one hand, most policy texts cannot form operable rules and tend to present the technical governance of 'one case, one law' in the network community.

A prominent example is that one Official ordered the demolition of the bird's nest in the community because of bird droppings and reordered to build the bird's nest due to media disclosure. On the first day's reporting, the official Release rendered the pollution caused by bird droppings while the other day advocating the importance of protecting birds. There are other cases, such as policy formulation both online and offline, is often guided by political interests rather than being underpinned by robust evidence, which aims at "policy-based evidence-making" rather than employing "evidence-based policymaking" (Arshed N et al., 2014). Conversely, policy preferences for formalism often hinder the decision-making system's rapid and proper response in its self-organizing system, for rigid superstructure form cannot match a flexible and broad mass-based governance system.

Internal stakeholder's struggle to reach authority may lead to structural disequilibrium in the community. Among internal stakeholders, different roles played by different groups form an asymmetric network containing a variety of relationship ties, the authority on a small scale, as concerns and being concerned, opinion leaders and followers. A widespread notion that specific interactions with opinion leaders can drive the diffusion process implies the disequilibrium of information transmission in the network structure (Rogers, 2003). The snowball-like chain of the standard network structure grants the specific initiator, the information publisher, a kind of dissemination power and requires the receivers to respond accordingly. The general strategic arrangement promotes a core leading force to effectively integrate the demand information of all parties and coordinate the interest relations. This requires meta-governance to be invoked as a response to the more specific changes of non-hierarchical modes of governance as alternatives to hierarchical top-down steering by national governance (Luc Fransen, 2015). Practices prove that an integrated centralized decision-making mode in network governance can easily lead to problems such as the 'silent majority' among internal stakeholders in an administratively dominant network community, which cannot be overcome or changed. This may make it an insurmountable obstacle to

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fragmented authority phenomena. Moreover, the established policy preferences may lead to a certain degree of neglecting the individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. Further, users subjected to extensive transparency regimes develop mixed habits of resistance and emancipation that could allow themselves to be invisible for professional or ethical purposes (Stohl C et al., 2016).

Exogenous tensions foster the dilemma of nontraditional security issues for boundary ambiguity. As a mixture of various organizations and individuals, the distinction between inside and outside organization issues in strategic thinking remains a means of structuring for strategists; discourses on strategy highlight a tension between an exogenous-based view (Stéphanie Dameron et al., 2014). Another decision-making mode of networks is replacing the integrated centralized decision-making mode with the relatively decentralized decision-making mode to realize the transformation from the traditional single-center to the multi-center, which can form a strategic path for reforming the macro-management structure. If a division has autonomy, a lack of coordination between the divisions and central management systems will occur, for organizers might engage in actions that benefit their stakeholders. At the same time, it hurts the maximum well-being of the inter-organizational relationship (Julio et al. et al., 2019). The increase of the coefficient of cross-border level brings institutional ambiguity in this situation. Around how to actively cope with the public crisis, open access, and platform-based information mechanisms come into play. For one case, the invisible spread of knowledge about Covid-19 involved an unbalanced multi-centered discourse authority that draws together different and even opposing ideas from i-space, including WeChat, blogs, BBS, and discussion forums. Different trends of thoughts can quickly spread rumors and distorted information. Under these circumstances, the government leads the internet community as a centered field play to meet the challenges of collaborating with stratified potential classes to promote open communication. The access gap of political, industrial, and cultural information has narrowed uncertainty, such as the crisis of confidence using ravine among internal and external stakeholders still exists. Key factors should be considered to cope with Uncertainty, both of historical and structural importance. What attitude and methodology should the competent authority adopt to avoid vagueness in institutional construction?

V. Countermeasure

In looking for solutions within an open framework, it is possible to appreciate innovative management involvement throughout all initiative stages. Under the guarantee of scientific design, the premise of co-governance in an open, innovative community needs the equal participation of multiple subjects to realize the stated goals:(1)Users' willingness to fully express their own needs is the pillar of virtual space governance; (2)Cultural identity based on diverseness can be bare value footing; (3) Consolidating collaborative accountability, standardization but flexible process, and long-term goal orientation in a multiple-subjects participation system is needed to lay out solutions.

Broadening the channels of expression to address the demand transparency of users is needed. The fuzzy front end's openness and interaction make decision-makers evenhandedly integrate changes in the external environment with explicit knowledge, allowing previously made creative associations to be reconsidered (Katrin Eling et al., 2014). Aron verified that group reflection as a neurocognitive function tends to make resilience-related knowledge explicit (Aron et al. et al., 2014). Furthermore, attention paid to the semi-structured knowledge contains helpful information, such as self-created work and practical discourse transmitted by the media, promoting existing order among governments, communities, and citizens. Deep mining of knowledge can be developed not only from the internal path and discovery of the community but also has its distinctive external source and professional data collectors, such as extracting knowledge from the diverse data types used in web communities and transforming it for application (Christian Severin Sauer et al., 2014). Big data processing, at the heart of the transfer process, makes almost no time difference between production and consumption by analyzing user information and browsing, accessing the user's interests, etc. With the help of modern technology, readability, and automatic matching, it can transform the demand of daily lives into valid data to realize transparent governance. The explicitness process is also facilitated by sharing knowledge among knowledge contributors, knowledge interpreters, knowledge communicators, and organizers while extending uniform standardization to the network society.

Cultural identity based on diversity has been introduced into this context to provide reasonable legitimacy for consensus-based partnerships in the virtual world. Within an innovative social environment, it is essential to understand what is necessary for the managerial mode to change and the multiple values hidden in the structure through which citizenship is cultivated as it can successfully be translated into creativity and vitality. Cultural identity provides a relatively goal-oriented context for multiple subjects and offers insights for multi-interest organizations while diversity advocating pluralism in specific scenario applications, as presented in the Changtze River Cloud community. To relate organizational value with pluralism, coordinating internal stakeholders with

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external stakeholders, trust is highlighted to achieve diversified governance objectives and the goal of functional linkage. Analysis shows that contracting among government and NGOs over time may lead to the generation of mutual trust, acquisition of governing resources, and consolidation of collaborative accountability (Yijia Jing et al., 2017). As performance is characterized by information flow or interactivity, the core value of co-governance in the network community is to use the wisdom of the masses to enhance governance performance. Shared value is promoted, and associated with accessing, transferring, and assimilating knowledge outside to optimize various demands. Under this circumstance, internal and external stakeholders can seek a balance between multiple, potentially competing demands depending on multivariate analysis.

Empowerment according to the specific need based on organizational support is the foundation of the modernization transformation of the network community. Following the consolidation of collaborative accountability in a multiple-subjects participation system is the key to addressing structural problems related to unclear responsibilities in this field. In supporting the policy configuration of the network community, the premise is to straighten the relationship between various parties and to give community organizers and knowledge users a shared chance to participate in governance. Measures such as transparent procedures, explicit accountability specifications, and a commitment to share should be taken to ensure the balance of power distribution (Xue Lin, 2017). Regarding the application scenario, replacing the short-term governance orientation to reduce conflict values systematically can reduce structural Uncertainty related to unclear responsibilities in this field. More specifically, values such as accountability and reciprocity have been shaped systematically within a governance field by embeddedness of alternative knowledge, value or institutional combinations. Research also evidenced that networking approaches based on coordinative, cooperative, and collaborative networks have enhanced the effectiveness of follow-up in governance arrangements (Umor et al., 2020).

VI. Future Research and Conclusion

Understanding ambiguity in structure means the beginning of solving problems and awareness of constructing a higher level of welfare for net citizens in the digital age. Handling structural ambiguity brought by Uncertainty and tradition emphasizes several concerns: awareness of existing problems, a locus on social psychology, consensus and coalition building, and a transparent reconstruction mode. Network communities are no technical barriers to participation but a lack of channel between demand and supply sides, vagueness in the institutional setting, and tensions in measurable practice.

At the organizational level, all the underlying contradictions focus on ambiguity. Depending on social, technological, and cultural co-governance processes, the open community's reconstructive arrangements provide the framework and foundation of mutual influence between actors and institutionalized context. Through the discussion, it can be reached that explicitness instead of ambiguity transmitted by the authority promotes existing order to more open, creative, and satisfying welfare for net citizens.

In the post-epidemic era, enhancing people's sense of participation and gaining means fulfilling public value from various aspects. Further motives to push the knowledge, value, and institutional barriers come from the pluralistic dialogue mechanism advocated by multiple governance movements and more from the recessive development force. To cope with challenges and risks, an open network community should be fully exploited to transform the hidden demand of net citizens into valuable data for governance, to replace the complex orientation with cultural diversity, and to make clear the border of the institution by consolidating the collaborative accountability in its system. Open network communities can sustain ecological equilibrium in a given context by continuously seeking transparent digital governance.

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One Story, Many Lives: A Reflection on Dysfunctional Families and their Consequences

By Msc. Armenia Cristina Dias Leonardi

Summary- When someone is born, the individual is welcomed by their parents, grandparents and other family members, which means the first social contact. It is through the relationship with family members that the child learns to deal socially, to live in society following the established rules. The present study analyzes the exceptions, that is, the dysfunctional family, the emotional and behavioral problems of its members and the consequences for everyone. Fundamentally the intention of this study is to emphasize the importance of the element "love" and the search for "happiness" in family relationships for the formation of individuals. The research methodologies applied are qualitative and theoretical, based on the philosophical Kant and Ricoeur's foundations. The object of reflection will be a particular case that is significant and representative of the events that involve the psychological problems of dysfunctional families.

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ONESTORYMANYLIVESAREFLECTIONONDYSFUNCTIONALFAMILIESANDTHEIRCONSEQUENCES

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One Story, Many Lives: A Reflection on Dysfunctional Families and their Consequences

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Summary- When someone is born, the individual is welcomed by their parents, grandparents and other family members, which means the first social contact. It is through the relationship with family members that the child learns to deal socially, to live in society following the established rules. The present study analyzes the exceptions, that is, the dysfunctional family, the emotional and behavioral problems of its members and the consequences for everyone. Fundamentally the intention of this study is to emphasize the importance of the element "love" and the search for "happiness" in family relationships for the formation of individuals. The research methodologies applied are qualitative and theoretical, based on the philosophical Kant and Ricoeur's foundations. The object of reflection will be a particular case that is significant and representative of the events that involve the psychological problems of dysfunctional families.

I. A Story. Many Lives

When listening to stories as intense as the case narrated here, reflection arises on how many lives are affected by family disruption.

Visiting the city of Petrópolis, in Rio de Janeiro, on a pleasant autumn afternoon, in a small house, which dates from the beginning of the 19th century, embraced by a beautiful colonial balcony decorated with ivy and hibiscus, we spoke with Mr. Pedro, who narrated the story of his family. The faint sun and the gentle wind of the season lulled the prose flavored by coffee and cake with the taste of childhood.

The intention of the conversation was to collect information to write a reflection on the emotional consequences in dysfunctional families, but it had been beyond that, the conversation also functioned as a kind of catharsis between the interlocutors.

Pedro started talking about his mother, Maria. He described her as a woman with beautiful green eyes, shy, very kind and loving, who liked reading, apart from not being encouraged to study, neither by her father nor by her husband, like most women at the beginning of the 20th century.

The conversation was interrupted by Pedro's tears, by his voice choked by crying, and until this advanced age he is unable to talk about his mother without becoming emotional. At this point, it appears that the emotional damage caused by a dysfunctional family during childhood and adolescence causes wounds to the soul and, no matter the age of the individual, will always cause pain.

After the pause, Pedro continued his story. Opposite to Maria's personality, her father, honest and hard-working, had a free and reckless spirit, prioritized the fulfillment of his desires, regardless of who he could reach. He had a bad habit of running away from situations that displeased his family, being described by Pedro as a "cowardly guy".

Maria met José, Mr. Pedro's father, as a child. The families were neighbors and the two grew up together, in the company of many other children in the neighborhood.

Maria's childhood was happy until the premature death of her mother, when she was forced to live with the apathy of her father, who was more interested in looking for women and drinking than giving love to his two daughters. Maria had a sister, Olga. Maria's father did not devote the necessary attention to his daughters and the objective was to marry them as soon as possible, however, he died before fulfilling his wish.

José, the son of European immigrants, grew up under the austerity of his parents, who demanded exemplary conduct from their three children. It was the typical model of a traditional European family at the time, however, José lived his childhood with the freedom allowed to children born in the first decades of the 20th century.

José asked Maria to be his girlfriend, when they were both seventeen and twenty years old respectively. José, at that time, was already pursuing a military career. With his sweet words and promises of eternal love, even if only to deceive and conquer Mary's chastity, José managed to capture the girl's passion.

After the death of her father, Maria felt alone, finding José her only support. It is worth remembering that, in the first half of the 20th century, it was still customary for girls to be destined for marriage and not to seek personal and financial independence. Thus, Mary became pregnant with Joseph.

José's parents, conservative, did not tolerate the reckless attitudes of their son, the second of three brothers, and the only one to cause dissatisfaction. José was reprimanded whenever he took any action contrary to the education and ethics taught by his parents and, with Maria's pregnancy, this was no different. After being

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harshly reprimanded by his parents and brothers, José requested a transfer of work and moved with Maria to a small town in the countyside, where they got married away from their families.

In the middle of the Second World War, José was called to the front, being transferred to the Brazilian coast to embark to Europe. However, due to Maria's advanced pregnancy, José was able to remain in Brazil, where the first of the couple's three children, Pedro, was born.

Maria, always loved José, dedicated herself to housework, like most women of her time. José fulfilled his role as provider, but without dedicating the affection that a family deserves to receive from its father. It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 20th century it was normal for parents not to show affection and love for their children, just as families, in most cases, were not formed based on love, but for several other reasons.

José, despite of being an honest man, family father and provider, was unfaithful to Maria, who had no other choice but to accept, pretend that she didn't see, that she didn't know, because, like many women of the time, her job was to care. home, but privately I felt a lot of sadness.

Maria dedicated all her love and care to her children. Pedro says that he remembered his mother's affection, how she combed her hair, all the attention to them, respect and affection she gave to her three children and her husband. The life of Pedro and his brothers was structured between his mother's love and his father's apathy for the family.

When Pedro was fifteen, Maria faced a difficult situation with Olga, her sister, married to Luiz. Olga and Luiz discovered that their daughter, Ana, their sixteen years old, started sexual relation with a boyfriend. “She lost her honor”, according to the customs of the time, and they kicked her out of the house.

Maria, shaken by the situation and out of compassion, took her niece into her home and looked after her with the same love with which she looked after her three children. Maria and her family's adversities began the moment she welcomed Ana, so that a sixteen-year-old girl would not be left destitute.

During her stay at her aunt's house, Ana began to have a secret relationship with Pedro. They were two teenagers, then sixteen and fifteen years old, cousins, living in the same house and according to the morality of the time, this relationship was not allowed. Ana's stance was not accepted by society nor by her families, that’s is why her parents kicked her out of the house.

While secretly having a relationship with Pedro, Ana also began to have a relationship with her uncle, José, her aunt's husband. The relationship was discovered, causing indignation, disappointment, sadness and many negative emotions, going beyond what Maria and her children could bear.

The relationship between the uncle and niece, within their own home, also caused outrage among other family members, grandparents, uncles and cousins, who condemned José and Ana's attitude.

Maria endured Jose's indifference and infidelity for many years, but her niece's betrayal of her husband was more than she could tolerate and accept. Disappointment took over Maria, who felt into a deep depression, locked in her room for several days, until she became ill and bedridden. Her children only saw doctors and family members coming and going from their mother's room, with their aunts taking turns at her bedside. Pedro felt anger, fear and sadness for his beloved mother.

Out of so much sadness, Maria passed away in her room. She was defeated by depression, by witnessing the man she loved since she was a teenager, with whom she formed a family, cheat on her with her own niece, whom she took in out of compassion.

In the midst of this scenario, José got Ana pregnant. Or was it Pedro? Maria died from giving in to the pain of her broken heart.

Currently, science proves the existence of Broken Heart Syndrome or Takotsubo Heart Disease, a psychological disease that directly affects the heart muscle. It presents symptoms similar to those of acute myocardial infarction, with chest pain, shortness of breath, tiredness. It is caused by episodes of great emotional stress caused by pain, loss and suffering. Although rare, deaths due to broken heart syndrome are possible, with individuals suffering from asthma, depression and anxiety forming part of the risk group (BVS, Brazil, 2006).

In Maria's case, the severe depression caused by family betrayal caused other illnesses, such as pain in the heart, head and pneumonia resulting from a long period of not getting out of bed, determined to be the cause of death.

With the death of Maria, the pregnancy and marriage with Ana, the reprimand of his family, with his brothers claiming custody of his children, José did what he always did when he was criticized: he requested another transfer of workplace to escape the problems. caused by your unreflective choices.

José did not think about his children when, immediately after his wife's death, he married the woman who directly motivated this death, taking his children away from family members who wanted to support them.

Pedro's feeling regarding his new and sudden family formation was, and still is, one of great revolt, with a hurt so deep that it is impossible to abandon when he talks about his father. In the new residence, Pedro and Ana were constantly fighting and José, with the intention of resolving the family problem, kikcked his son of the house.

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At seventeen, Pedro was on the street, alone, helpless, far from his grandparents and uncles, in the same situation that Ana was in when she was welcomed into her home by her mother.

The situation had reversed. At that moment, it was Pedro who was going through na abandonment situation, without any demonstration of affection and understanding for his father, in the same circumstances that awakened his mother's compassion for Ana and that led to the breakdown of their family.

Pedro says that he was a tall, very thin boy, who did not, and still does not, let his sadness show to other people, beyond his family circle. And he teaches: "don't hold back your feelings. This is very harmful."

When he was expelled by his father, he was welcomed by the family of some friends from his school, whom he loved like his real family. To whom we are grateful from the bottom of our hearts. This family gave Pedro the love and affection of his mother, who he lost so early, and his father, who he never had. It was the in-law family that Pedro loved more than his blood family. Pedro loved his paternal grandmother, from whom his father took him away. He did not know his maternal grandmother.

Pedro interrupted his studies and got a job in a store that sold furniture and mattresses. His slight physique did not prevent him from carrying heavy objects on his shoulders, driven by his enormous willpower to succeed without depending on his father.

Little by little, his brothers also left their paternal home and went to live with Pedro, in his welcoming family's home. Pedro then rented a house to live with his brothers, taking care of everyone's support.

José did not help his children from his first marriage, only worrying about his new wife, who already had two daughters. José dedicated unconditional love to his children from his second marriage, while his children from his first marriage, still teenagers, struggled to survive.

Despite his captivating and extroverted personality, Pedro did not open his heart, he did not open up to anyone about his fears, hurts and sadness that he carries to this day.

> Episodes of enormous emotional stress over a long period, assuming closed behavior, led to severe, chronic depression, with serious heart problems and two heart surgeries. Pedro has coronary disease, recent studies of which prove that "the relationship between psychological factors and physiological phenomena, with neurochemical, neuroendocrine and neuroanatomical changes that increase vulnerability to cardiovascular disease" (Soares, Costa and Mesquita, 2006).

Pedro got married and is happy with his wife and five children, but he cannot get rid of the feeling of anger towards his father and longing for his mother. Furthermore, to this day Pedro does not know whether he is the brother or father of his father's eldest daughter, but prefers to remain in doubt.

II. Dysfunctional Families: Provisions

For many years, only families formed through marriage, with legitimate children, that is, those born in marriage, based on religious dictates, were legally and socially recognized.

Over time, this model changed and the modern family is no longer based on previously established patriarchal rules, with other forms of family constitution being recognized, such as stable, same-sex and single-parent unions. Family groups made up of other members, such as grandparents and uncles, are also recognized as family.

These different types of families derive from the most important elements in family relationships: love and affection. In this sense, the modern family is based on respect, care, cooperation, attention, love, between its members (Simões, IBDFAM, 2007). The family is no longer a fixed group, but rather a gathering of people linked by ties of consanguinity or affinity, with common objectives and aimed at developing "good living". Every individual seeks to live well and be happy, regardless of the means used to achieve these ends.

According to Ricoeur, good living is the "ethical aim (...) the aim of a good life with and for others in fair institutions" (Ricoeur, 2014). From this perspective, the "good life" aims to seek happiness, which, within a family, must involve all members, so that it is a fair institution for everyone, including reason, in accordance with the Hypothetical Imperative of Kant:

> The advice of prudence, on the contrary, concerns an end that, in general, we all have as a matter of natural necessity: happiness. A person is prudent to the extent that they know how to rationally pursue their own happiness (Kant. Galvão. 2011).

It should be noted that the element "love" is the most important for the formation of a family, regardless of whether it is made up of blood or affinity members. Consaguinity is not an essential component for the formation of a family group, since the union of individuals united by affinity can contain more love than between those who have blood ties.

A dysfunctional family is one in which its members do not collaborate so that the family environment is beneficial to all members. The result is the fragility of relationships, shaken by conflicts, which impact the youngest members, children and adolescents, causing lifelong physical and psychological illnesses. Conflicts arise from ethical violations, impacted in everyday life, that is, from the confrontation between ethical principles and the facts of life.

The case chosen for this reflection contains all the significant elements to support the analysis of

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the emotional and physical consequences caused by dysfunctional families. This case demonstrates that irrational attitudes in dysfunctional families cause physical and emotional consequences that can last a lifetime.

The report is about the family history of an elderly man, aged 82, who still suffers from the emotional problems generated by his parents during his childhood and adolescence.

The names used in this article are fictitious.

In search of good for himself, for his individual happiness, this father renounced his already established family in favor of another to be established. At the time under study, the first half of the 20th century, there was no divorce institute in Brazil, which currently does not prevent the formation of another family.

A very relevant factor in family environments is the responsibility towards children, it requires a lot of dedication, even if it is not expressed through kisses and hugs, but it exists in a constant and decisive way, especially when there are children from pre existing relationships.

However, the issue debated here is the pursuit of happiness with respect and mutual love between members of a family group. With or without divorce, parental attitudes must follow ethical standards, as whoever is responsible for the group must take care of all its components.

According to Oltramari and Razera (2013), in patriarchal families the act of loving and caring for children was seen as an unnecessary burden and not as an emotional relationship:

> In patriarchal families, with paternal and maternal functions extremely divided, living under the veil of prejudice and lack of love, addressing the issue of care, requesting that it be taken as a fundamental element for the family's well-being was something unthinkable. Years later, with the improvement of laws, care begins a slow but effective process of insertion into the family sphere. From then on, combined with affection, the act of caring becomes important for its members, as a guarantee of healthy development, helping to decorate this new home, this new being. (Oltramari and Razera, p. 63, 2013)

Family relationships directly interfere with the mental and physical health of its members, especially children and adolescents, which is why the element of "love" is fundamental to emotional development from childhood. Emotional imbalance must be studied as a risk factor for the development of chronic, physical and mental illnesses, such as asthma, depression and chemical dependency, which will last for life.

In the case presented, the children still live with psychological problems, anxiety and depression, and physical ones, such as heart disease presented in adolescence, despite being already advanced in age.

The story of this family glimpses an emotional pattern, in which a woman Maria, who was raised in a family with a dysfunctional father, married a dysfunctional husband, who created a dysfunctional family, with infinite consequences.

It is unquestionable that love generates love. If parents receive love as children, they will transmit love to their children, who will transmit it to their grandchildren and, thus, love multiplies. But if there is no love, there is nothing to multiply.

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Formal Institutions Along the Timber Value Chain in Liwale and Ruangwa Districts, Tanzania

By Mary C. Magiri & Jumanne M. Abdallah

Abstract- In developing an inclusive and sustainable timber value chain, institutions are important for structuring and governing the interactions of the actors to effect value creation and addition to timber products. Therefore, this study aims at assessing the rules and regulations awareness, enforcement, compliance and costs associated with the timber value chain in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, Tanzania. Data collection methods for this study includes key informant interviews, observation and focus group discussions. Secondary Data were also gathered from various sources from within and outside the districts. Findings reveal that most people were aware of the rules and regulations involved in value chain but their level of awareness differed depending on factors like education level that an individual timber dealer had, time of exposure in the timber business and the goals that each one had on their business. Enforcement of the rules and regulations was found to be strong in Liwale compared to Ruangwa district. In addition, the compliance of the rules and regulations was high in Liwale than in Ruangwa.

Keywords: institutions. timber value chains. rules and regulations. awareness. enforcement. costs. compliance.

GJHSS-C Classification: LCC: HD9767.T35

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Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Formal Institutions Along the Timber Value Chain in Liwale and Ruangwa Districts, Tanzania

Mary C. Magiri [α] & Jumanne M. Abdallah [σ]

Abstract- In developing an inclusive and sustainable timber value chain, institutions are important for structuring and governing the interactions of the actors to effect value creation and addition to timber products. Therefore, this study aims at assessing the rules and regulations awareness, enforcement, compliance and costs associated with the timber value chain in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, Tanzania. Data collection methods for this study includes key informant interviews, observation and focus group discussions. Secondary Data were also gathered from various sources from within and outside the districts. Findings reveal that most people were aware of the rules and regulations involved in value chain but their level of awareness differed depending on factors like education level that an individual timber dealer had, time of exposure in the timber business and the goals that each one had on their business. Enforcement of the rules and regulations was found to be strong in Liwale compared to Ruangwa district. In addition, the compliance of the rules and regulations was high in Liwale than in Ruangwa. However, most of the actors who are timber dealers complained about high costs which is associated with compliance to the rules and regulations governing the business. Therefore, increasing awareness so that actors could comply with the laws and regulation could help to solve these challenges in Ruangwa district. Reducing costs and bureaucracy associated with the implementation of the rules and regulation governing timber value chain in both districts will increase benefits and efficiency in timber value chain Tanzania. Findings of this study may be beneficial to policy makers, developmental partners, other stakeholders and the people working along the timber value chain.

Keywords: institutions. timber value chains. rules and regulations. awareness. enforcement. costs. compliance.

I. Introduction

Institutions have been recognized to play a greater role in economic development, management and utilization of natural resources (North, 2002). Institutions, which can be categorized into formal and informal, can have long-standing impacts on the activities which they are commissioned to guide (Mohan, 2016), both negatively and positively. The formal institutions which is the focus of this study, are rules and regulations which are designed to govern the interaction of the people in social settings (Richter, 2005). In the forest sector for instance, there are forest regulations which guide all activities that are connected to forest resources. Including the activities that are associated with value addition in timber forest products. These rules and regulations are there to ensure not only that the forest resources are not depleted but also the produced products are of high quality and the revenue collected goes to right place. Formal institutions however, cannot hold water without a laid foundation of the informal institutions of that particular society (Clever, 2012).

In recent years, the global forests have been facing a lot of challenges including climate change, illegal logging and forests being considered as open accessed resource (Adams, 2020). In addition to that, wood is considered a cheap form of energy (Held *et al.,* 2017). As a result, the natural forest cover is decreasing whereby, the global forest cover is estimated to have decreased by 87.1 million hectares over the past 60 years (Estoque *et al.,* 2022). Furthermore, the forest sectors in developing countries Tanzania included, is said to be contributing less to the National GDP (FAO, 2020) despite having good rules and regulations that are in place. But with effective implementations of the rules, regulations as well as viable and continual support from the government, the forest sector could contribute much to the country's economy.

In the timber sub-sector, recent trends show that the value of timber product is rapidly increasing in the global market (Mhando *et al.*, 2022). In Tanzania, the product has not been fully utilized as a result of low technology (Banikoi *et al.,* 2018). This has led to a mismatch between the amount of the trees harvested per annum and the income that the timber sub-sector is contributing to the national GDP (URT, 2021). On the other hand, there was not enough information on how formal institutions influence the timber value chain (Hulusjo, 2013) as a result they are seen as aliens in the development of timber value chain.

This paper provides evidence on how institutions can play important roles in the timber value chain in a micro level. The study focused on village forests in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, Lindi Tanzania. The districts provide a good setup for this study due to the fact that, they are among the timber producers from natural forests in Tanzania.

II. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework for this paper article was built upon the institutional and the legal and regulatory frameworks. The actors in the value chain are

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engaging themselves in the activities for the purpose of earning money. In the process, their behaviours and actions along the chain are dependent on the institutional environment. In this case the regulatory framework plays a vital role under the ground on which the actors operate. Regarding the institutions, human capital and investment in human are factors checked in this study.

In this study, there are some background variables which are actors' interest in their involvement in timber value chain, goals and appetency of actors in the value chain on their businesses. The background variables set ground for the existence of indictors mentioned on the factors that are considered on the independent variable, institutions. It should be noted that, there should be a balance in rules and regulations intervention so as to maximize profit along the chain.

III. Methodology

a) The Study Areas

The study was conducted in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, Tanzania *(Figure 3.1).* The districts are endowed with natural forests which are characterized by dry miombo tree species, dense forests and wet miombo with some highly valuable timber species of *Brachystegia sp., Julbernadia sp.,* and *pterocarpus angolensis.*

The districts are characterized by two rainy seasons per year, over 2 and 3 months respectively in November to January and March to May. Annual precipitation is in the range 600-1000 mm.

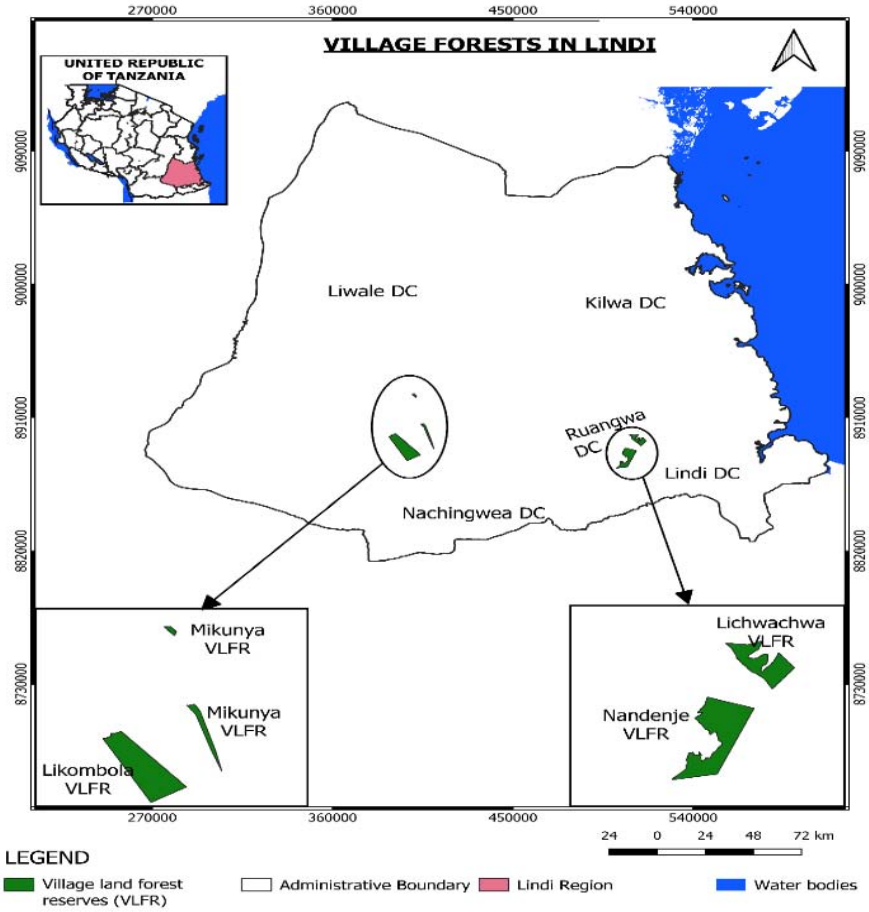

Figure 3.1: A map showing the study areas

b) Data collection

Data were collected from four villages in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, which were Mikunya and Likombola in Liwale district and Nandenje and Lichwachwa in Ruangwa district. Data were collected using interviews, secondary data, focus group discussion and observations. Whereby, A checklist of questions of open-ended questions was used to guide collection of primary data from timber dealers, forest officers and villagers. Data collected were timber dealing experiences, socio-economic data, preferred tree species for timber and the rules and regulations that are guiding timber value chain. The sample of timber dealers was obtained from a list of names provided by the district forest officer in Liwale and Tanzania Forest Service agency in Ruangwa district. For the villagers, a sample frame of names was obtained from the village chairmen offices.

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Prior the beginning of each interview, each person was given a thorough explanation of the study, including how their identity would be secured and how the data they provided would be used and verbal free and informed consent from each participant was required. Participants were also informed that they could opt out of the study at any moment and have their personal information erased. The participants were also aware that they are free to not answer a question that they were not comfortable answering during the interview process.

The majority of the participants for this study were men, as is usual in rural African communities (99%). A current weakness for this study is the lack of women narratives on the timber dealing activities involvement and hence the lack of women insights on the rules and regulations that guide timber value chain, which should be addressed in future research designs (Goldman *et al.,* 2021). The study also involved forest officers and Tanzania Forest Service TFS agents. Whereby, the data collected from them were on how they do the enforcement of the rules and regulations and how abiding are the timber dealers to the rules and regulations. The study also involved village chairmen from the four villages and the village natural resource committees from the four districts. Data collected from the preceding groups were on the contribution of the timber business on the socio-economic aspect of the communities. Data collected from the villagers were how they benefit from the timber business industry and issues on management of the forest resources. Secondary data were collected from the 2004, 2019 and 2022 forest regulations and the National Forest Policy (1998). Data collected from the document were the fees for various requirements to make timber business successful.

All interviews were conducted and recorded in Swahili language by the researcher, then the researcher had to go through the recorded interviews and discussions and transcribe then then translate the replies into English language. The researcher was accompanied by one village resident who assisted in locating the villagers' residences. It should be noted that, each interview was conducted in a conservational fashion, which was more culturally relevant and helpful to put participants at ease.

c) Data analysis

This qualitative study aims to assess the formal institutions that guide activities along the timber value chain in Liwale and Ruangwa districts, Tanzania. Therefore, thematic analysis was done on the transcribed data. Institutional framework which is one among the important frameworks in analysing value chains, was used to come up with the themes for this study which are awareness, enforcement, compliance and costs of the rules and regulations that are guiding activities along the value chain.

Analysis started by transcribing all the recorded narratives, then the researcher had to review the transcriptions to ensure accuracy and remove any information that would not maintain the confidentiality. After that the researcher had to get familiar with the data by reading and re reading the data so as to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content and what really happens in the Liwale and Ruangwa districts in relation to timber value chain.

After that, the researcher had to start creating initial codes by identifying and labelling initial concepts that emerge from the data in relation to the institutional framework. Then the researcher had to connect those concepts into broader themes. Then related codes were grouped together and patterns on the data were identified. The data were then condensed to focus on the meaningful findings.

On the first theme on the awareness on the rules and regulations, there were different factors that were noted to be in association with the level of awareness that the timber dealers had on the rules and regulations that guide them in their activities. Level of education was one of the themes that were identified. To analyze data for the particular section R-studio was applied to plot an association between the level of awareness on the rules and regulation and the level of education that timber dealers had. A gg-plot was employed in to come up with the association.

d) Results

The data collected for this study, came up with four themes which were noted to resonate throughout the data collection process in order to answer the research questions. The themes that emerged inductively from the interviews and focus group discussions include, rules and regulations awareness, enforcement, compliance, and costs.

e) Rules and regulations awareness

Under this theme, data were collected using interviews. Regarding this theme a binary scale of YES OR NO was made and the interviews revealed that, all the timber dealers were aware that there are rules and regulations that are guiding them in their activities. But their awareness seemed to differ and the difference lay on how they were explaining the rules and regulations that are guiding them on their activities. Education, time of exposure in the timber business and appetency that individual timber dealers had concerning their business were factors that were noted to cause the variations in their awareness.

Regarding the education factor it was noted that, those with high education were more aware of the rules and regulations than those with low education. Most of the timber dealers who had tertiary level of

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education, gave explanations of the rules and regulations that are guiding them on the licences acquisition, production, transportation and trading nodes as provided under the Forest Act, No. 14 of 2002, unlike those with primary and secondary education (Figure 3.2).

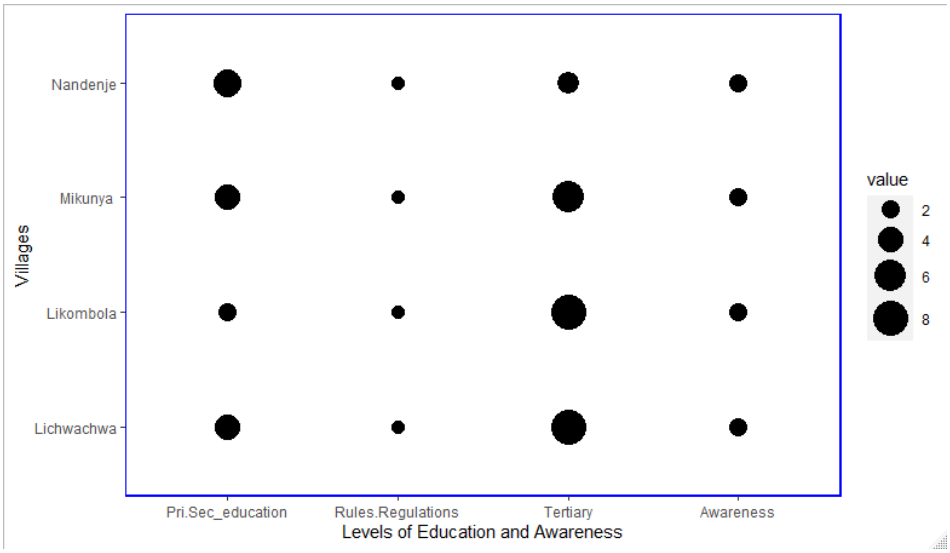

Figure 1: Frequency and levels of education and awareness of rules and regulations among Timber dealers

Rules and regulations awareness also varied with time of exposure that the timber dealer has been involved in the timber business, where those involved for the longest time starting from two years and more seemed to be more aware of the rules and regulations than those new in the business. It should also be noted that, some of the new comers in the timber business seemed to have a lot of information concerning the rules and regulations based on the researches they conducted prior starting involving themselves in the timber business. Which didn't reflect the real situations that are faced timber business industry.

Lastly, the appetency that individual timber dealers had concerning their business was another factor that seemed to cause the difference on the awareness of the rules and regulations that are guiding timber dealers in their activities. Timber dealers who had high appetency concerning their businesses seemed to be more aware of the rules and regulations that are guiding their activities than those with low appetency.

> *"I expect to be involved in a timber exportation in two years to come, so to me understanding the rules and regulations is very important for the prosperity of my business and achieving my goals in the business"*

One of the timber dealers with high appetency in the timber business in Liwale district.

f) Rules and regulations enforcement

Regarding the enforcement of rules and regulations along the timber value chain, the interviews which were conducted among the four forest officers, Tanzania Forest Service agents and representatives from the village governments revealed that there are different initiatives that are taken to enforce the rules and regulations that are guiding actors of the value chain in the two districts. In both districts, it was found that they have a five years forest management plan which direct them towards sustainable utilization of the forest including timber harvesting.

This was common in all the four villages that I visited and a common thing that was quoted from the village natural resource committee was

> *"A five years management plan is prepared, considering the contexts and promotes sustainable use of the forest resources."*

It should be noted that, in order to facilitate easy rules and regulations enforcement these village natural resource committees had to be made to reduce a burden on the forest officers which had been there for years. The forest officers in Liwale and Ruangwa were quoted saying

> *"As a result of the decentralization, managing the forest resources has become easy compared to the past years where we were acting like polices, doing patrols around the forest areas. It was very hard for us considering the quantity of human resources that we had. Currently, it is the village government with its natural resource management committee who are responsible for the overall management of the forests."*

The natural resource committee in these villages are imparted with knowledge concerning sustainable use of forest resources and how they can be used to improve social service facilities in the villages. In Liwale, three forest officers were interviewed on how they equip the village natural resource committee in their jurisdiction and this is what they said

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"Members in the committee are provided with the necessary knowledge concerning the forest resources and how they can sustainably use the forest resources especially the timber-based products to improve social services in the villages."

While, the district forest officer in Ruangwa who was interviewed on the same issue said

"In each village, we have imparted knowledge into a group of people who are members of the village natural resource committee concerning the management of the forest resources and how sustainably these resources can be used to improve livelihood of the people in the villages."

For the Tanzania Forest Service agents who were interviewed had this to say on the issue:

"We are responsible for providing business licenses to the timber dealers. And also, we have these checkpoints in which timber dealers have to pass through to be checked whether the amount of timber that they are transporting, matches with the amount of timber that is written on the transit pass and if it is found that the transported logs or timber exceeds the amount written then the exceeding amount is held behind, so it's only the amount written on the transit pass that gets to pass."

In spite of the diligent efforts to enforce rules and regulations throughout the timber value chain, timber dealers voiced their concerns regarding certain stringiest regulations that they find burdensome and the impact of their enforcement on their businesses. One of the areas where the timber dealers seemed to encounter stringiest enforcement of the rules and regulations pertains to the TFS agents and forest officers stationed at the checkpoints. They are reputed for unwaveringly adhering to the rules and regulations, particularly when transporting logs to other regions. In case where the load exceeds the specified amount mentioned on the transit pass, penalties are imposed without hesitation.

g) Rules and regulation compliance

This is another theme that was created from the key informant interviews and focus group discussions that were conducted among timber dealers. There are a lot of rules and regulations that are governing timber value chain and expected to affect the behaviours of the actors along the value chain timber dealers specifically. Not only that but also, the key informant interviews that were conducted among the district forest officers and the village government officials were also used to confirm to what extent the timber dealers operating in their jurisdiction act according to the rules and regulations.

In complying with the rules and regulations, the timber dealers from both districts were said to be trying to abide with the rules and regulations that are guiding them in their activities. The timber dealers involved in this study were registered and during the time of data collection in Liwale district for instance, the timber dealers were seeking permits for removing logs from the village forests to industries where logs are processed into timbers. Also, some of the timber dealers were seeking transit passes for transporting their timbers to Pwani a place called Ikwiriri (Rufiji) and Dar es Salaam where they said they have customers and some said they own saw mills for furniture making.

The District Forest Officer (DFO) of Liwale acknowledged an improvement in compliance with rules and regulations compared to previous years. However, he also highlighted the challenges faced. There are instances where some timber dealers transport non degraded timbers which is considered an offense under the timber regulations guideline, leading to penalties. In contrast, in Ruangwa district, the DFO confirmed that timber dealers are making sincere efforts to adhere to the rules and regulations but there're cases where still some timbers are caught transporting timber to other regions, these timbers are usually exceeding the amount written on the transit pass.

On the processing node however, it was noted that the compliance level on both sides is sometimes low as a result of the use of chainsaws in producing sawn timber which is not allowed since it results to production of low-quality timber.

h) Rules and regulations costs

These are the costs that are incurred by timber dealers at the identified nodes in the areas of study which are: harvesting, processing, distribution and consumption. The costs are brought about by either adhering to the rules and regulations or failure in adhering to the rules and regulations. The costs that are related to adherence of the rules and regulations include the registration of the business, attainment of the business license, permits and transits passes, these costs have increase as portrayed in *(Table 3.1)* below. On the other hand, penalties and fines are costs connected to lack of compliance to the rules and regulations.

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Table 1: Fees Charged for Various Requirements per Forest Regulations Regarding Timber

	2004 (TSHS)	2019 (TSHS)	2022 (TSHS)
Permit for felling trees per m^3	70,000 for class I	70,000 for class I	350,000 for class IA 290,000 for class IB
Registration fee for harvesting	100,000	100,000	200,000
Registration license for large wood industries/ sawmill	200,000	200,000	800,000
Registration license of small wood industries/furniture making/wood works	30,000	30,000	400,000
Grading fee for commercial consignments such as timber	2,500 per tonne	2,500 per tonne	100,000 per less or equal to 20 m^3
Transit pass for a 7-ton vehicle or less		Same as provided in the 2004 forest regulations document	15,000
Above 7-ton vehicle			20,000

Source: 2004, 2019 and 2022 Timber regulations

Following the key informant interviews that were conducted among timber dealers, some complained about the regulation which instruct them to pay for a 100% of the tree of which its only 70% of the tree that they obtain, the 30% of the tree, is composed of withies. So, to them it's a loss and they occasionally have to incur other costs on their way to other regions. This regulation seemed to be an open for corruption. The village government officials were also interviewed on the matter and they had a say which is summarized and presented in *Table 3.2.* Tanzania Forest Service agents were also interviewed on the issue for some of the complaints pointed to them directly in the timber value chain and they too had something to say:

> *"As Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) we have formulas that help us to calculate the volume of the timbers that are passed through our checkpoints. So, if it happens that the volume of timber exceeds the written amount then the timber dealer will have to leave the exceeding amount of the timbers at the checkpoint".*

Table 2: Complains on the costs that they incur following the regulation on the 100% payment of the tree

Sn	Village	Description on the Complain
1	Mikunya (1 person)	*"Yes, it is true that this issue is contradicting, for the timber dealer always pay for 100% of the tree but to them, the branches and roots are of no value. So, the recovery percent is always 70%, and we get complaints from the timber dealers that we sometimes have to give them the 30% from another stand tree. In some years back, when we didn't know well about the issue of value addition, the withies were left to decay in forest areas, but now we can use them for furniture making in our timber value addition community industry to make chairs for offices and our health facility."*
2	Likombola (1 person)	*"We offer our clients, the amount of timber that is written on their harvesting permits, but also, they always do not take the branches and roots of the tree that they are buying from us since it's a burden to them so, they only take 70% of the tree."*
3	Lichwachwa (1 person)	*"We are selling our clients' the amount that their permits require them to take and most of the time they leave the withies behind that we use them for other activities like making chairs for offices like these ones we are seating on."*
4	Nandenje (1 person)	*"The trees are sold in cubic meters as it is written on the client's harvesting permit and we give them the same amount that their permit show."*

IV. Discussion

The findings indicate that the level of awareness regarding the rules and regulations is higher in Liwale district compared to Ruangwa district, this difference can be attributed to variations in education levels among timber dealers, with timber dealers with higher education being more aware of the guiding rules and regulations.

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Additionally, the length of exposure to the timber business and goals that individual timber dealers had toward their businesses also played a role, as individuals involved in the business for a longer period displayed higher awareness of the regulations. The study by Jasinta Msamula *et al.* (2017) supports these findings by highlighting that awareness of rules and regulations can be influenced by factors such as the education level of actors in the value chain. This suggests that education plays a crucial role in enhancing awareness and understanding of the regulations governing the timber value chain.

Efforts to enforce the rules and regulations in both districts involve capacity building activities conducted by forest officers in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations like MJUMITA and TFCG and partner development programs. However, despite these enforcement efforts, challenges persist due to the emphasis kept on following the regulations for instance, the issue that most of the timber dealers complained on strictness that the forest officers and TFS agents on checkpoints are when they transit the logs. As a result, some costs are increased along the value chain and the timber dealers obtain a merge profit. A study conducted by Respikius Martin (2021) along the timber value chain in the Southern highland region of Tanzania, also found the same results. Whereby, he found out that there was scarcity of forest officers that hampers effective enforcement of the rules and regulations along the timber value chain. This highlights the need for the increased resources and personnel to ensure proper enforcement regulations.

Compliance among timber dealers in the value chain was found to be balanced, due to the fact that, following every rule and regulation set to guide them jeopardize their ability to get profit and also not following some rules would make them penalized and sometimes make a room for corruption loopholes. Timber dealers also recognized the costs incurred due to bureaucratic systems associated with following the rules and regulations. This finding aligns with the results of Martin's (2021) study, which revealed that timber dealers face challenges in their activities at different nodes along the value chain and may feel compelled to engage in corruption due to the bureaucratic hurdles they encounter.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

Understanding the formal institutions that guide timber value chain is one among the essential efforts in ensuring sustainable utilization of the timber forest product. However, educational and awareness programs should be considered to be conducted more in Ruangwa district so as to increase the efficiency of the Village Natural Resources Committee in doing their activities. Not only that but also, the government should make sure that there is conducive environment for the rules and regulations on timber value chain to operate. This will help in closing the loopholes of corruption. Hence, help the timber dealers get the profit they deserve. Formal institutions which are established rules and regulations have a great influence in the activities that are taking place along the timber value chain. Importantly, the government should ensure that intervention of these rules and regulations are done in such a way that it does not negatively affect the activities taking place along the timber value chain.

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Community Contribution to the Implementation of the Village Funds Allocation Programme in Bandung Regency

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Abstract- Poverty is one of the country's concerns, particularly in rural areas. To address this issue, a variety of initiatives aimed at enhancing the community's economy must be carried out. A budget is required to build the program, and this budget can be received through the Village Fund Allocation budget post, which is one of the driving instruments. Furthermore, transparent efforts and community participation are required, which are critical aspects for the successful implementation of village budget distributions. The following question is: how and what type of community participation procedure should be designed? This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with primary data sources consisting of interviews and secondary data derived from documents and documentation. According to the results of the analysis, Community involvement in the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation Program (ADD) was ideal and efficient.

Keywords: *participation, village funds allocation, community.*

GJHSS-C Classification: *FOR Code: 140207*

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Community Contribution to the Implementation of the Village Funds Allocation Programme in Bandung Regency

Dewi Kurniasih [α], Udaya Madjid [σ], Cecep Suhendar [ρ] & Yusuf Adam Hilman [ω]

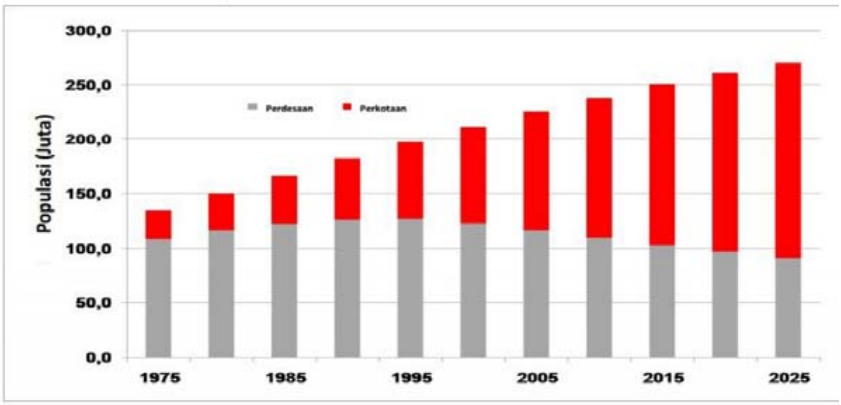
Abstract- Poverty is one of the country's concerns, particularly in rural areas. To address this issue, a variety of initiatives aimed at enhancing the community's economy must be carried out. A budget is required to build the program, and this budget can be received through the Village Fund Allocation budget post, which is one of the driving instruments. Furthermore, transparent efforts and community participation are required, which are critical aspects for the successful implementation of village budget distributions. The following question is: how and what type of community participation procedure should be designed? This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with primary data sources consisting of interviews and secondary data derived from documents and documentation. According to the results of the analysis, Community involvement in the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation Program (ADD) was ideal and efficient.

Keywords: participation, village funds allocation, community.

I. Introduction

In Indonesia, between 1976 and 1996, the number of impoverished people declined from 54.2 million, or approximately 40% of the population, to 22.5 million. As a result of the 1997 financial crisis, which led to a decline in the Indonesian economy, the percentage of people living in poverty was approximately 11%. The continuous economic crisis has resulted in negative economic growth, specifically -13.13 percent in 1998 and -1.29 percent in 1999. In 2009, around 14.2 percent, or 32.5 million people, of Indonesia's population were classified as poor. People living in poverty suffer from malnutrition, poor health, high illiteracy, a terrible environment, and limited access to basic infrastructure and public services (Jonaidi & Arius, 2012). In September 2016, the BPS reported that the percentage of individuals living in poverty in urban areas decreased from 7.79% to 7.73%, while in rural regions the number decreased from 14.11% to 13.96% (Zuhdiyaty & Kaluge, 2017).

The community's high poverty rate is a clear sign that the Indonesian people are still not prosperous. The low level of social welfare and increasing level of poverty in Indonesia, with the majority of the people living in rural regions, implicitly add to the load and responsibility of the government. Since the government, through its policies, must be able to assign values or produce and distribute them as a method of addressing the demands of society without exception, this includes individuals in rural areas.



Source: (Hermawan & Rico, 2015)

Figure 1: Composition of urban and rural populations

The village is the smallest area in the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia. The implementation of village autonomy has logical consequences in the form of village administration and development based on sound financial management. Bastian revealed that the goal of development with sound financial management is to facilitate the achievement of village development goals, reduce the burden on the central government and interference with the regions, and provide opportunities for local

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level coordination (Yulihantini, Tri, Sukarno, & Wardayati, 2018).

The village needs a budget to fulfill its obligations. The Village Fund (DD) and Village Fund Allocation (ADD) are where the village receives its funding for operations. Village Fund Allocations are balancing funds received by Regencies and Cities in the Regency and City regional revenue and expenditure budgets after deducting Special Allocation Funds, The provision of Village Fund Allocations is a manifestation of the fulfillment of the village's rights to carry out its autonomy so that it grows and develops in accordance with the development of the Village itself, based on diversity, participation, genuine autonomy, democratization, community empowerment, and expanding the role of the Village Government in providing services, enhancing community welfare, and advancing acceleration. growth and expansion of vital areas (Yulianah & Yuyun, 2015) (Dethan & Anaci, 2019) (Kartika & Septianis, 2012).

Village Fund Allocation (ADD) in Bandung Regency is governed by Bandung Regency Local Regulation Number 24 of 2009 Concerning Changes to Bandung Regency Regional Regulation Number 2 of 2006 Regarding Allocation of Village Balancing Funds in Bandung Regency. The entire village's source of money is concentrated and utilized to finance the administration of village authority, which encompasses governance, development, community empowerment, and social issues.

A number of development policies aimed at overcoming poverty and the underdevelopment of rural communities have been implemented, including: (1) the policy of distributing development resources from the center to the regions in the form of presidential instructions that encourage economic activity in the regions; (2) increasing the access of poor population groups to various social services, such as education, health, family planning, sanitation, and clean water; (3) expanding the reach of credit institutions for low-income people; (4) the development of rural economic infrastructure, especially the agricultural sector; and (5) institutional and organizational development related to poverty alleviation, such as regional development programs, small farmer income increase programs, and integrated area development programs (Murdiyana, Murdiyana, & Mulyana, 2017).

Based on statistics regarding the development of villages in Bandung Regency from 2018 to 2019, Rancaekek Kulon Village, Rancaekek District, is a village that is still stagnant and has not undergone any changes, since it occupies the lowest place in the developing category (number 301). In 2018, the village with the highest evaluation score was Margamukti Village, Pangalengan District, with a score of 496. In 2019, though, the ranking changed, and Pulosari Village in Pangalengan District took first place with a score of 496 (Source: Village Development Statistics 2018-2019, Bandung Regency; full data attached).

There is interesting data in the Rancaekek sub-district area where there is a transition from an agricultural area to an industrial/service area, so that there are still villages that have slow and low development. Many factors have caused this condition to occur. This can be due to the condition of community participation in village development which has not yet shown the expected condition. Based on village typology data in Bandung Regency, there are 5 village typologies in Bandung Regency, namely: Industry/ Services Village, Agriculture Village, Mining Village, Livestock Farm Village and Rice Field Village (Source: Bandung Regency Prodeskel Data 2019, BPMPD Bandung Regency/Data Attached). Based on these data, there is an index that shows the level of village development. Of the 270 villages, there are villages with high or low indexes. As in the following table:

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Table 1 Village Typology Index in Bandung Regency

Regency	Status	Village	Index	Classification	Category	Typology
MARGAHAYU	VILLAGE	MARGAHAYU TENGAH	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Industry/Service
RANCAEKEK	VILLAGE	BOJONGLOA	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Industry/Service
MARGAHAYU	VILLAGE	MAGAHAYU SELATAN	0,86	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Industry/Service
MARGAHAYU	VILLAGE	SAYATI	0,86	SWASEMBADA	ADVANCED	Industry/Service
RANCABALI	VILLAGE	CIPELAH	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Farming
RANCABALI	VILLAGE	PATENGAN	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Farming
PASIRJAMBU	VILLAGE	SUGIHMUKTI	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Farming
PANGALENGAN	VILLAGE	PANGALENGAN	0,83	SWASEMBADA	ADVANCED	Farming
RANCABALI	VILLAGE	INDRAGIRI	0,84	SWASEMBADA	ADVANCED	Farming
PANGALENGAN	VILLAGE	MARGAMEKAR	0,84	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Farming
SOLOKANJERUK	VILLAGE	PADAMUKTI	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
CIPARAY	VILLAGE	MEKARSARI	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
SOREANG	VILLAGE	SEKARWANGI	0	SWADAYA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
RANCAEKEK	VILLAGE	BOJONGSALAM	0,87	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
BANJARAN	VILLAGE	KIANGROKE	0,91	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
CILENGKRANG	VILLAGE	GIRIMEKAR	0,93	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Rice Fields
CILEUNYI	VILLAGE	CINUNUK	0,75	SWAKARYA	INITIAL	Mining
NAGREG	VILLAGE	GANJAR SABAR	0,12	SWADAYA	INTERMEDIATE	Livestocks
CILENGKRANG	VILLAGE	CIPOREAT	0,79	SWAKARYA	INITIAL	Livestocks
KERTASARI	VILLAGE	RESMI TINGAL	0,82	SWASEMBADA	ADVANCED	Livestocks
PASIRJAMBU	VILLAGE	MEKARSARI	0,82	SWASEMBADA	INITIAL	Livestocks

Source: Processed Data Document Data For Prodeskel Bandung Regency In 2022, BPMPD Bandung Regency
Note:

- SWADAYA: Self-Reliance
- SWASEMBADA: Self-Sufficiency
- SWAKARYA: Self-Developing

Several villages in certain sub-districts have the highest and lowest indexes in the 5 village typologies. Based on the information above, this study took samples from a number of villages in each of the three types. This is because one can see how village funds are managed in each of these different types of villages. Several studies done in the past have shown, among other things, that community participation or involvement in development projects and use of Village Fund Allocations (ADD) is varied in terms of several aspects, for example: 1). Community participation in terms of providing opportunities in musrenbang has gone relatively well (Wirawan, Mardiyono, & Nurpratiwi, 2015), 2). Community participation in budget management is still low in terms of time, attention, skills, and knowledge. This occurs because of poor judgment, non-interactive communication, a lack of public awareness, and inadequate education (Syamsi & Syahrul, 2014), 3). There is a lack of awareness that community participation is a vital aspect of the development process, which contributes to the low level of community participation in the development process (Hardianti, Muhammad, & Lutfi, 2017).

In the framework of empowering local communities, the participation or initiative of the village government is especially crucial because the primary authority of the village government rests in planning. Bangujiwo Village residents are always involved in the development planning process, particularly in musrenbang activities, so that community empowerment can function smoothly. This is demonstrated by the participation of 95% of the community in village-level development planning meetings in 2014 and 96% of the community in 2015 (Atmojo, Fridayani, Kasiwi, & Pratama, 2017).

Based on preliminary research, there is a tendency for the level of community participation in Bandung Regency to be below optimal, especially in the implementation of programmes for allocating village funds. The Government of Bandung Regency, Rancaekek District, in carrying out its duties and functions, among other things, also implements the Assistance Programme to implement village development costs, which is called the Village Funds Allowance (ADD). Based on the empirical facts compiled above, it appears that community participation in the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation Program in Bandung Regency is still lacking, even though the government's aid for development budget continues to increase. Based on the phenomenon described in the reasons for selecting the research title, the problem statement in this study is that community participation has not been achieved, namely community involvement in planning, implementing, and utilizing the results, as well as monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation Program in Bandung Regency.

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II. Research Method

This study uses a descriptive analysis method, where this method provides an overview of the conditions that occur in the field in accordance with the facts. Burhan Bungin explained that this type of research seeks to explore, does not attempt to test hypotheses, or generalize (Mulyati & Sri, 2017) (Puspantari & Aris, 2022).

Researchers assume that this approach is used to describe and interpret existing conditions or relationships, developing opinions, ongoing processes, ongoing effects, or about ongoing trends regarding community participation in implementing the Village Fund Allocation (ADD) program in Bandung district. According to Denzim and Lincoln, the qualitative descriptive research chosen by the author can be defined as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world (Kurniasih & Dewi, 2013).

The selection of informants was based on research subjects who mastered the problem, had data, and were willing to provide it. Therefore, informants for the purposes of this research focused on stakeholders, especially in the Village Fund Allocation (ADD) program, as well as village communities that participated in the implementation of the program. Considering the high-intensity experience and participation in observing and even taking part in ADD management institutions in Bandung Regency, namely: 1) the Regent of Bandung Regency, 2) members of DPRD Bandung Regency, 3) the village head, 4) the village apparatus, and 5) the people of each village,

Researchers took data or materials from several official sources, including laws, government regulations, regional regulations, operational guidelines and technical guidelines, implementation reports, Musrenbang results from the RW, village, sub-district, and district levels, besides those documents and other important texts. The source of the data is used as reference material to analyze and describe events that have passed.

III. Results and Discussion

a) *Community involvement in decision-making in the planning of the village funds allocation programme in Bandung Regency*

The two keys to successful development are community awareness and active participation. The achievement of these development targets needs to be demonstrated by government policies. In this regard, it can be said that the development that is in progress is determined by the size of the community's participation, namely at the stages of planning, decision making, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. The first thing that needs to be done to successfully put the Village Fund Allocation program into action is to integrate the process of putting the program into action. Socialization activities are done by the coaching staff and offices or organizations that are part of this Village Fund Allocation program. It is hoped that this Village Fund Allocation program will help people get to know each other better, which will encourage them to take part in village development activities. It is also hoped that they will do this by contributing their own money, time, and ideas.

The Musrenbang was held in Margahayu District based on a letter from the regent, Number 050/201/Bappeda, dated January 28, 2020. The activity was held in the hall of the Margahayu District Office, Bandung Regency, which was attended by: 1). Chairman of BPD, 2). Village Head, 3). the Village Secretary, 4). the Planning Officer, 5). the Chairman of LPMD, 6). the Head of T.P. PKK, 7). the Chairman of the MUI, 8). the Chairman of Karang Taruna, 9). the Hamlet Heads, 10). the three representatives of Community Leaders, 11). the three delegates, 12). Midwife; 13). Babim Kamtibnas (Community Police Officers), and 14). Babinsa (village supervisory non-commissioned officer) from every village in Margahayu District, Bandung Regency, including Central Margahayu Village and Sayati Village. The following is a picture of part of the musrenbang process in Margahayu District.

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The Musrenbangdes process is initiated by the village head as the initial speaker, as well as the opening of the meeting, which is held and attended by the head of the BPD. In the forum, the discussion was about the Village Fund Program funds, and continued with planning developments to be built in each hamlet by exchanging opinions with each other. In the development planning meeting that was held, it was attended by the village head, the village secretary, along with his staff, and the chairman of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) with its members, representatives of RT and RW, and the community.

Indicators that can be used to determine whether the community is involved in planning the utilization of the Village Fund program to ensure its success are as follows: First, it can be seen through the community's involvement in the program's implementation. Community participation in the utilization of the Village Fund (DD) program in Bandung Regency, in which the community is involved in development planning by raising awareness through small meetings in the form of Musrenbang socialization held at the local RT/RW hall, so that the community knows what development will be carried out and to ensure that development will be carried out by following with the needs of the community in the environment. The purpose of the head of RW's meeting is to inform the community of recent developments in the region. Second, community participation can be seen in the community's need for the program. Is it always adjusted to meet societal needs? When researchers conduct research, the use of this program is always adjusted to the needs of the community, so that development can be right on target and the community can feel the benefits directly. As a result, the negotiation process is very calculated with the needs of the community in mind.

b) Community participation in implementing the village funds allocation programme in Bandung Regency

According to the findings of the interviews, the village's success in increasing PADes (Village Original Income), which influenced the increase on the Allocation of Village Funds, was inseparably linked to the active role or significant participation of the community in development. Development to enhance people's welfare can also be accomplished with the village fund allocation. To assist in the implementation of the management of Village Fund Allocations, a Secretariat Working Group was formed, with a secretary of the District Level Assistance Team as the Head of the secretariat, assisted by staff who specifically handle Village Fund Allocations as a service and information center for the Secretariat having addresses at the respective District Secretariats. With the components involved in implementing the Village Fund Allocation at the village, sub-district, and district levels.

In 2020, the central government gave Rp. 322,217,180,000 to the Bandung Regency Government for the Village Fund Budget (ADD). The allocation comes from the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN). With the existence of ADPD (Village Balance Fund Allocation) and DD (Village Fund), now the village has turned into a development subject, where the determination of village needs, and development is planned together with the community itself. It is hoped that this will help villages in Bandung Regency become developed, independent, and competitive villages.

The direction for the use of the Village Fund Allocation in Central Margahayu Village is divided into 2 (two) expenditure sectors, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Community Development Sector. Expenses in the field of activities of the village administration are prioritised for fixed revenues and allowances for the village chief and village appliances, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, Operations of the Village Consultative Body, Benefits of the Village Consultative Council, RT Operations, and Sub-Sectors on Fixed and Operational Income Village Administration, Participatory Village Poverty Mapping and Analysis is Rp. 18,950,000, and Village Governance and Development Cooperation

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issued in the amount of Rp. 18,000,000. Village Fund Allocation Expenditures for community development activities are prioritized for Culture and Religion, namely activities for organizing Art, Customary/Cultural and Religious Festivals (Indonesian Independence Day, Religious Holidays etc.) as well as LKMD/LPM/LPMD Development in the amount of Rp. 20,000,000.

The instructions for the utilization of village funds allocations in the village of Sayati are divided into four areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, (3) Community Development Sector and (4) Community Empowerment Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors on Fixed and Operational Income Village Administration. In the field of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to villages on alert for health in the amount of Rp. 30,000,000. Village Fund Allocation Expenditures for community development activities are prioritized for LKMD/LPM/LPMD Development in the amount of Rp. 18,000,000 and Village Fund Allocation Expenditures for the Community Empowerment Sector are prioritized for increasing the capacity of village apparatus, namely Rp. 9,000,000.

The direction for the use of the Village Fund Allocation in Cipelah Village is divided into three areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors on Fixed and Operational Income Village Administration. In the field of Village Development Implementation, priority is given to the education sub-sector, namely the Organization of Non-Formal Village-Owned PAUD/TK/TPA/TKA/TPQ/ Madrasah (In terms of salary, clothing etc.) in the amount of Rp. 5,000,000. Maintenance of Non-Formal Village-Owned PAUD/TK/TPA/TKA/TPQ/Madrasah Facilities in the amount of Rp. 10,000,000. Implementation of Village Health Posts/Village-Owned Polindes (in terms of medicine, incentives, family planning, etc.) of Rp. 25,000,000, and Maintenance of Posyandu/Polindes/PKD Infrastructure of Rp. 10,000,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to LKMD/LPM/LPMD Development in the amount of Rp. 18,000,000.

According to a Cipelah community leader, residents of the village of Pasirkaliki said that on behalf of the community he was very lucky and thanked the government through the Village Government for implementing the improvement of Jalan Pasirkaliki infrastructure. With the improvement of concrete road infrastructure in Pasirkaliki Village, it can boost the economy of the people of Cipelah Village, Kec. Rancabali, Kab. Bandung, and can increase people's income, besides that it can also support the maximum service provided by the Village and District Government for Cipelah residents.

The direction for the use of the Village Fund Allocation in Bojongsalam Village is divided into 3 (three) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors in Fixed and Operational Income Village Administration. In the field of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to the sub-sector of Organizing Non-Formal Village Owned PAUD/TK/TPA/TKA/TPQ/Madrasah (such as salary, clothing etc.) in the amount of Rp. 21,600,000. Development/rehabilitation/improvement/hardening of residential neighborhood roads of Rp. 52,934,100., and Development/Rehabilitation/Improvement of Village Road Infrastructure (Culverts, ditches, etc.) of Rp. 129,308,900. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to Community Institution Development Training in the amount of Rp. 5,601,700.

The direction for the use of Village Fund Allocations in Cinunuk Village is divided into 4 (four) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, (3) Community Development Sector and 4) Community Empowerment Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors in Fixed and Operational Income Village Administration. In the field of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to the Implementation of Village Health Posts/Polindes Owned by Villages (such as medicines, incentives, family planning, etc.) in the amount of Rp. 3,000,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to Karangtaruna/Youth Club/Village Level Sports Development in the amount of Rp. 6,000,000.

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LKMD/LPM/LPMD coaching Rp. 18,000,000., as well as Others Sub Sector of Community Institutions of Rp. 26,000,000. Meanwhile, in community empowerment, the BPD Capacity Building is prioritized in the amount of Rp. 10,000,000.

The direction for the use of the Village Fund Allocation in Ganjarsabar Village is divided into 3 (three) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Fixed Income Sub-Sector and Government Operations Village. In the area of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to educational support for poor students and outstanding students in the amount of Rp. 12,000,000. Implementation of a Health Alert Village of Rp. 24,100,000. In the community development sector, priority is given to LKMD/LPM/ LPMD development in the amount of Rp. 7,000,000.

The direction for the use of the Village Fund Allocation in Ganjarsabar Village is divided into 3 (three) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors in Fixed Income and Operations Village Administration. In the field of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to organizing Non-Formal Village-Owned PAUD/TK/ TPA/TKA/TPQ/Madrasah (in terms of salary, clothing etc.) in the amount of Rp. 25,900,000. Educational support for poor students and outstanding students in the amount of Rp. 10,000,000. Implementation of village health posts/ maternity huts owned by the village (in terms of medicines, incentives, family planning, etc.) in the amount of Rp. 11,000,000. Activities in the Health Sub Sector in the amount of Rp. 2,200,000., Maintenance of Environmental Roads/Alleys in the amount of Rp. 47,000,000., Maintenance of clean water connections to households (piping, etc.) of Rp. 11,000,000., Maintenance of Public Latrine Facilities etc. in the amount of Rp. 17,500,000., as well as Development/Rehabilitation/Improvement of Settlement Sanitation (Selected) of Rp. 9,400,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to Other Activities in the Cultural and Religious Sub-Sector in the amount of Rp. 7,500,000., as well as LKMD/LPM/LPMD coaching of Rp. 18,000,000.

The direction for using the Village Fund Allocation in Ganjarsabar Village is divided into 3 (three) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Government administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Sub-Sectors in Fixed Income and Operations Village Administration. In the field of Implementation of Village Development, priority is given to organizing Non-Formal Village-Owned PAUD/TK/ TPA/TKA/TPQ/Madrasah (in terms of salary, clothing etc.) in the amount of Rp. 25,900,000. Educational Support for Poor Students and Outstanding Students Rp. 10,000,000. Implementation of village health posts/ maternity huts owned by the village (in terms of medicines, incentives, family planning, etc.) Rp. 11,000,000. Activities in the Health Sub Sector Rp. 2,200,000., Maintenance of Environmental Roads/Alleys Rp. 47,000,000., Maintenance of clean water connections to households (piping etc.) of Rp. 11,000,000., Maintenance of Public Latrine Facilities etc. Rp. 17,500,000., as well as Development/Rehabilitation/ Improvement of Settlement Sanitation (Selected) of Rp. 9,400,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to Other Activities in the Cultural and Religious Sub-Sector in the amount of Rp. 7,500,000., as well as LKMD/LPM/LPMD coaching of Rp. 18,000,000.

The direction for the use of Village Fund Allocations in Mekarsari Village is divided into 3 (three) areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditure in the field of Village Government administration activities is prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Fixed Income Sub-Sector and Government Operations Village. In the field of village development implementation, priority is given to the implementation of village health posts/ village-owned maternity huts (in terms of medicines, incentives, family planning, etc.) in the amount of Rp. 28,200,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to LKMD/ LPM/ LPMD Development, namely Rp. 5,900,000.

The direction for the use of Village Fund Allocations in Padamukti Village is divided into 3 (three)

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areas, namely: (1) Village Administration Sector, (2) Village Development Sector, and (3) Community Development Sector. Expenditures in the field of Village Administration activities are prioritized for fixed income and allowances for the Village Head and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Social Security for Village Heads and Village Apparatuses, Provision of Operational Operations for Village Government Activities, BPD Operations, BPD allowances, RT Operations, Fixed Income Sub-Sector and Government Operations Village. In the field of Village Development Implementation, priority is given to the Implementation of Posyandu (in terms of Complementary Food, Classes for Pregnant Women, Elderly, Incentives) in the amount of Rp. 7,500,000., as well as Implementation of a Health Alert Village of Rp. 8,000,000. In the Community Development Sector, priority is given to Other Community Institutional Sub-Sectors, namely Rp. 11,428,000.

Mekarsari Village and Ganjarsabar Village only have medical personnel, such as midwives, so that in determining the Allocation of Village Funds, efforts are made to improve health facilities. 30% of the Village Fund Allocation is used for:

a. Operational Assistance for Village Head and Village apparatus
b. Operational Assistance for Village Government Offices and Operational Assistance along with Allowances for the Village Consultative Body;
c. LPM Operational Assistance, RT, and other Institutions.

70% of the Village Fund Allocation is used for the implementation of activities and development on a village scale in accordance with the Village Development Work Plan for each village in Sukadana District which has been prepared and discussed by prioritizing community empowerment programs. The use of Village Fund Allocations for community empowerment activities is carried out with the principles of participatory, transparency, and accountability.

This principle of participation is one of the important strengths that led to the Village Fund Allocation policy, so participation is still a top priority in the management process. Even the district, which gave the money, says that participation is a key part of being transparent and accountable. With the village's budget, which is made up of people funds and community cooperation, the goal is to work on development projects and improve the village. The demand for transparency is not a threat to village government administrators, because the key to implementing development lies in participation, although participation in this context still refers to the willingness of residents to bear the costs of the proposed project.

Until mid-2020, a number of programs that have become community agreements are in the finalization phase. The most important items on the agenda are road repair, the construction of retaining walls, and paving. Due to the difficulty of the task, the entire community is involved in implementing the program. The community helps the village use the money by coordinating plans and putting them into action. The community participates in the labor and completion phases of activity execution.

In villages, the use of Village Fund Allocations has a substantial positive effect on the development of village facilities and infrastructure, because of increased community cooperation. However, the negative effects of the existence of the Village Fund Allocation Program, such as the village's dependence on these funds, and the village government's efforts to acquire its own financial resources are progressively diminishing.

Supporting factors encountered by the community included close coordination and communication between the Village Government and the community, village government transparency in reporting Village Fund Allocation accountability, and synchronization between community aspirations and Village Fund Allocation activities.

Management of Village Fund Allocations must be integrated into management of the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget, so that the principles of managing Village Fund Allocations are the same as those of managing the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget, which must adhere to the principles of good governance, namely:

a. *Participatory:* The process of managing the allocation of village funds, from planning, from decision-making to monitoring and assessment, must involve many parties. This means that in managing Village Fund Allocations it does not only involve the elite but also other communities such as farmers, workers, local governments, etc.
b. *Transparency:* All parties can know the whole process in an open way. In addition, efforts are being made to provide the village community with information on the goals, objectives, results and benefits it derives from each activity that uses these funds. The attitude of transparency in the sample locations has been applied by the Village Government to the community, the community even knows about it through posters announcing the Village Fund Allocation which contains Village Fund Allocation activities as well as the accountability of the SPJ ADD (Accountability Letter).
c. *Accountable:* The entire process of using the Village Fund Allocation starting from the proposed designation, implementation, and achievement of the results, can be accounted for in front of all parties, especially the village community.

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c) *Community Participation in Taking Benefits of the Village Fund Allocation Program in Bandung Regency*

It is essential to have supervision from the community as beneficiaries when receiving benefits from Village Fund Allocations. Supervision is a set of activities and follow-up activities done out to ensure that the planned development is carried out in accordance with the goals and objectives established, and that the funds used are appropriate. Supervision is an activity that monitors the progress of the development plan's execution, identifies problems that occur, and anticipates problems that will arise as a result of the program's existence. All program actors are required to monitor their activities and ensure that they are carried out in accordance with the objectives, plans, and schedules. The key actors of the program are the District government and the Village government. *First,* it is expected that the community will accept the results of development as if they were their own, so that in the end, the community will keep and use the results of development for stability and mutual progress. *Second,* community participation can be seen in the benefits that can be drawn from construction; community benefits can also be felt as a result of the construction of clean water, roads, and so on. In this case, the community is helped by how easy it is to get clean water and how easy it is to get to garden roads. During pipeline renovations, the community receives clean water from mountain sources. *Third,* community participation in maintenance can be seen from the community that regulates and secures each program that has been implemented. In this case, the community is given the freedom to regulate each program that has been implemented, including taking advantage of the development that has been carried out by making the best possible use of it. Indeed, it is appropriate for the community to use development as effectively as feasible in order for this development to be sustained and maintained.

The factor of awareness or motivation. Participation in a development activity does not occur spontaneously; it is prompted by encouragement. Community awareness itself is one of these factors. Clearly, community members will become more involved in development if they understand its significance. The factor of education. Education is a factor that contributes to numerous transformations. Education level and community participation in development are inextricably linked. Communities with a high level of education are typically very concerned with both government-led and community-led development initiatives.

d) *Community involvement in evaluating the implementation of the village funding allocation program in Bandung Regency*

These five evaluation measures are carried out on the use of Village Fund Allocations for village development as follows: 1). *Effectiveness*. Has the desired result been achieved? Based on the objectives of the Village Fund Allocation program, which include poverty alleviation, community empowerment and increasing community self-sufficiency, the village development carried out in Bandung Regency has built infrastructure which is felt to have facilitated their various economic activities. 2). *Efficiency*. How much effort is required to achieve the desired result? The large number of programs implemented through mutual cooperation and community participation so that the desired results are achieved even though the budget is limited indicates efficiency in implementing Village Fund Allocations for village development. 3). *Equality*. Are costs and benefits distributed equally among certain groups? Village Fund allocations are distributed to finance village development based on program urgency and development priorities, considering the number of problems to be resolved compared to the amount of funds available. 4). *Responsiveness.* Do the policy outcomes satisfy the needs, preferences, or values of particular groups? The results of the evaluation show that development through village fund allocation has not fully satisfied all community groups. 5). *Accuracy*. Is the desired result (goal) really useful or valuable? The goal of development through Village Funds Allocation is very useful for the community because poverty alleviation, community empowerment, service, and community self-reliance are conditions that are most desired by the community and have been realized in stages through various development programs.

IV. Conclusion

Community participation in the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation (ADD) program has been quite optimal. Community participation in planning the allocation of village funds is quite good. For several villages with an industrial/service typology, due to the large number of migrants who only live to work, participation from the community is still lacking. The community's participation in the implementation of the Village Fund Allocation has been good. This can be seen from the active contribution of the community in implementing village fund allocations. Community participation in the utilization of village fund allocations is quite good. The village fund allocation, which is the remainder of the fixed income of the village head and village officials, has benefited the wider community. Participation in the evaluation stage was very high, as evidenced by the program evaluation meetings, where many people were eager to participate.

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A Gamification Approach for Ocean Sustainability Awareness

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Abstract- Ocean sustainability calls for a method of ocean management that protects the ocean and the goods and services it provides. The world moreover depends heavily on the oceans, particularly coastal regions that are home to a wide variety of habitats and ecologies. Since Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 intends to conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development, the oceans are essential to accomplishing this sustainability goal. To maintain the ocean ecosystems healthy and productive, Malaysia has endorsed numerous ocean conservation initiatives towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14; Life Below Water. Therefore, not all communities across Malaysia are concerned about it. Thus this study aims to propose a new approach to enhance Malaysian awareness of ocean sustainability issues.

Keywords: *ocean sustainability, environment sustainability, sustainability, awareness.*

GJHSS-C Classification: *FOR Code: 050209*

AGAMIFICATIONAPPROACHFOROCEANSUSTAINABILITYAWARENESS

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A Gamification Approach for Ocean Sustainability Awareness

Nuur Najaahtul Nabilah Baharuddin [α] & Norfadilah Kamaruddin [σ]

Abstract- **Ocean sustainability calls for a method of ocean management that protects the ocean and the goods and services it provides. The world moreover depends heavily on the oceans, particularly coastal regions that are home to a wide variety of habitats and ecologies. Since Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 intends to conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development, the oceans are essential to accomplishing this sustainability goal. To maintain the ocean ecosystems healthy and productive, Malaysia has endorsed numerous ocean conservation initiatives towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14; Life Below Water. Therefore, not all communities across Malaysia are concerned about it. Thus this study aims to propose a new approach to enhance Malaysian awareness of ocean sustainability issues.**

Keywords: ocean sustainability, environment sustainability, sustainability, awareness.

I. Introduction

The goal of ocean sustainability is to protect the ocean and its resources so that the next generations can enjoy them. As the earth's oceans are vital, the ocean has always been essential to the nation's socioeconomic development because it is the foundation of international trade and commercial endeavors such as shipping, tourism, fishing, and offshore oil and gas. As part of its commitment to establishing a sustainable ocean by 2030 as a United Nations member, Malaysia has incorporated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14 (life below water) into the 11th Malaysia Plan (MP) for the 2016–2020 term (Zaideen and Ramli, 2022).

The goal of the "blue economy" is to preserve and manage marine environments (Zaideen and Ramli, 2022). Nevertheless, in the present era, oceans are becoming more and more contaminated and damaged. The main causes of contamination are human activities such as those that result in solid waste, oil spills, industrial and agricultural effluent, chemical input, and similar factors. As claimed by Bassem (2020), water pollution causes the quality of the water to decrease, which in turn affects marine life and the productivity of the marine environment, ultimately resulting in the extinction of species and the degradation of their habitats. Contributing to the achievement of SDG 14 requires maintaining, restoring, and safeguarding the diversity of our marine ecosystems as well as their critical functions.

The lack of awareness regarding ocean problems is by far the most significant obstacle, far surpassing the lack of motivation (Min, 2021). Reaching youngsters can be challenging as there are not many places where they can gather and talk about ocean sustainability. When it comes to participation, young people typically have the weakest voice. Yet young people must take the lead in effecting change, as the society we will all inherit is shaped by the actions and decisions of today (May 2018). According to (The Commonwealth, 2021), youths in Malaysia are not involved in marine conservation due to a lack of ocean literacy and sustainability education. (Fernandez, 2021) also mentioned there were no opportunities where young people could be inspired to work toward a more.

Concerning this scenario, this research aims to propose a new approach based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14; Life Below Water that can enhance awareness of ocean sustainability issues. Toward this aim, there are 2 research objectives as follows (i) to study suitable educational board games that focus on ocean sustainability for youth, and further (ii) to propose a design of educational board games that are related to ocean sustainability for youth based on their preferences.

II. Literature Review

Since the 1980s, the ocean has absorbed about 90 percent of the surplus heat trapped by greenhouse gas emissions and one-third of the carbon dioxide released by human activities. Excessive and destructive fishing degrades ocean habitats and biodiversity, from coastal margins to open oceans and the deep sea (IPBES, 2019). As studied by (Lubchenco et al, 2020) unsustainable development along coastlines is damaging coral reefs, seagrass meadows, saltmarshes, and mangrove forests. These shelter wildlife, sequester carbon offer nurseries for fish, and cushion coasts from storm surges. Plastics and nutrients washed off the land also contribute to the demise of wildlife. All of these risks impair the potential of the ocean to offer nutritious food, jobs, medications, and pharmaceuticals as well as regulate the climate.

Conciliating the demand for a healthy ocean with the use of its resources in a sustainable manner is

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one of the greatest issues of the current decade. Individuals and their communities play a role in ensuring the sustainability of the ocean (Macneil, et al, 2021) yet the public's understanding of the marine environment and the hazards linked with human activities remains poor, as stated. Ocean literacy is a global movement that aims to close this knowledge gap by increasing awareness of the ocean's impact on us and our impact on the ocean.

A deeper understanding of the interplay between humans and marine ecosystems might be gained through the application of board games. Board games have proven effective in a variety of educational settings and have been used to teach a wide range of topics. Environmental education and spreading the idea of sustainable development to the general public can both benefit from the use of games as an instructional tool, which can be an effective strategy. Previous research (Chen, 2022) on serious games related to sustainable development concentrated for the most part on gaining an awareness of the challenges surrounding sustainable development. When first introduced to college campuses, board games were not seen as a frivolous distraction or a pastime for the young (Gonzalo et al, 2018). (Schoedinger, 2022) stated literacy in the ocean is defined as "knowledge of the ocean's impact on people and people's impact on the ocean." Therefore, board games could be used as a means of spreading environmental education (Fjællingsdal, 2020). This is crucial as with this awareness, people may better share information on the marine environment and make conscious decisions surrounding this issue (Macneil et al, 2021).

III. Methodology

This research was conducted using quantitative and qualitative approaches which consist of a document analysis, a survey questionnaire, and a non-participant observation. A document analysis involved compiling selected literature on color theory, ocean sustainability, and board games. The related literature is further analyzed using a thematic analysis procedure. The survey questionnaire used closed-ended questions with multiple-choice answers, and it consisted of two parts that required respondents to complete. part a is demographic information and part b is preferable of the participant in ocean sustainability board games. The survey questionnaire form was developed based on a 5 Likert score scale to obtain more accurate and reliable information. The questionnaire contains closed-ended questions with multiple-choice of answers, and it consists of two parts that respondents must complete: part A: Demographic Information and part B: Ocean Sustainability Board Games. A total of 300 respondents which are youth between the ages of 19 to 25, play board games as their leisure activity. Accordingly, the researcher visited 4 game stores and conducted non-participant observations on the subject of the study. The observation aims to study the current existing approaches in the market within board games as well as make the necessary formulations and conclusions. Using basic random sampling, all data were analyzed using descriptive methods which involves thematic analysis.

IV. The Results

300 participants have responded to the survey. The demographic information in section A, obtained from the respondents includes gender, age, education level, and current employment status.

Table 1: Percentage of Participants Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	200	66.7%
Female	100	33.3%
Total	300	100%

Based on Table 1, 200 respondents were male 66.7% of respondents and 100 respondents were female which is 33.3%. The male respondents have a higher percentage compared to the female respondents. All respondents were Malaysians.

Referring to the Age of the participants, based on Table 2, 73.3% of the respondents were at the age below 20 which represents 220 of the participants. This was followed by 16.7% of the respondents aged 21 to 25 years old and only 10% were aged above 26 years old representing 30 participants.

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Table 2: Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
20 years old and below	220	73.3%
21 - 25 years old	50	16.7%
26 years old and above	30	10%
Total	300	100%

For the highest level of education, table 3 shows that most of the respondents (210 respondents) have completed their diploma with a percentage of 70%. On the other hand, 90 respondents with bachelor's degrees level, and no respondents had master's degrees or PhD.

Table 3: Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage %
Diploma	210	70%
Bachelor's Degree	90	30%
Master's Degree or PhD	-	-
Total	300	100%

Regarding employment status, (Table 4) the result showed that the majority of the respondents were a student with percentages of 83.3% (250 respondents), followed by employed with 16.7% (50 respondents), full-time employed with 26.2% (16 respondents) and no respondents were unemployed.

Table 4: Employment Status

What is your Current Employment Status?	Frequency	Percentage %
Student	250	83.3%
Employed	50	16.7%
Unemployed	-	-
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents (6.7% of 20 respondents) knew of an existing board game related to ocean sustainability, while 83.3% of 250 respondents didn't know. The remaining respondents (10% of 30 respondents) weren't sure if they knew of any existing board games.

Table 5: Existing board game relating to Ocean Sustainability

Do you Know Any Existing Board Games Relating to Ocean Sustainability?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	20	6.7%
No	250	83.3%
Maybe	30	10%
Total	300	100%

As shown in Table 6, most of the respondents with 73.3% of 220 respondents preferred game stores and e-commerce websites in terms of purchasing board games, followed by 13.3% of 40 respondents who preferred to purchase on an e-commerce website.

Table 6: Preferences in purchasing a board game

Where do you Prefer to Purchase Board Games?	Frequency	Percentage %
Game Store	40	13.3%
E-Commerce Website	40	13.3%
All above	220	73.3%
Total	300	100%

The result also revealed that most of the participants of the study agreed that elements of design are important parts of designing a board game (96.7% of respondents). Respectably, 3.3% of respondents were unsure if elements of design could be one of the important parts of a designing board game.

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Table 7: The Importance of Design or Element in Designing Board Game

Do you Think the Element of Design is Important in Designing Board Games?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	290	96.7%
No	10	3.3%
Maybe	-	-
Total	300	100%

In regards to graphic design types of presentation, 53.3% of the respondents chose illustrations as the types of graphic design that they are most preferred in a board game. This was followed by 110 respondents preferring abstract (36.7%) and 30 respondents (10%) chose 3 Dimensional while none of the respondents preferred photography in designing the board game.

Table 8: Preferred types of graphic design

What Types of Graphic Design do you Prefer in Board Games?	Frequency	Percentage %
Illustration	160	53.3%
Abstract	110	36.7%
Photography	-	-
3 Dimensional	30	10%
Total	300	100%

90% of 300 respondents chose light color as a preferable type of color (Table 9) in a board game. Followed by 10% of the respondents (30 participants) who preferred dark color in terms of designing the board game.

Table 9: Colour Types Preferable

What Type of Colour do you Prefer in Board Games?	Frequency	Percentage %
Dark Colour	30	10%
Light Colour	270	90%
Total	300	100%

In Table 10, the majority of the respondents thought designing a board game could increase youth's understanding of ocean sustainability 93.3% of 28 respondents, followed by 6.7% of 2 respondents were unsure and none of the respondents thought designing a board game could not increase youth's understanding of ocean sustainability.

Table 10: Youth's understanding of ocean sustainability

Do you think that Designing Board Games can Increase Youth's Understanding of Ocean Sustainability?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	280	93.3%
No	-	-
Maybe	20	6.7%
Total	300	100%

V. Idea Development & Design Process

a) Design Process

The design process begins with idea generation and is supported by data collected from respondents, visual analysis, and library resources. The researcher visited the game store and discovered that there were no board games about ocean sustainability in the market. Additionally, the idea starts with creating board games that appeal to the intended audience. Regarding the features of design that respondents preferred, the majority of the respondents said that illustrations may help users or gamers especially young people visualize the game's settings and experience to comprehend it better. Accordingly, respondents preferred light and bright colors which can also lead to happiness emotion.

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b) Sketches and Concept Idea Development

Rough sketches were used to visualize the board game's concept at the beginning of the design process. The rough concepts for the development of board game ideas are displayed in Figure 1 below. At this point, more than ten basic ideas have been proposed; only the best one has been chosen to move forward with further development.

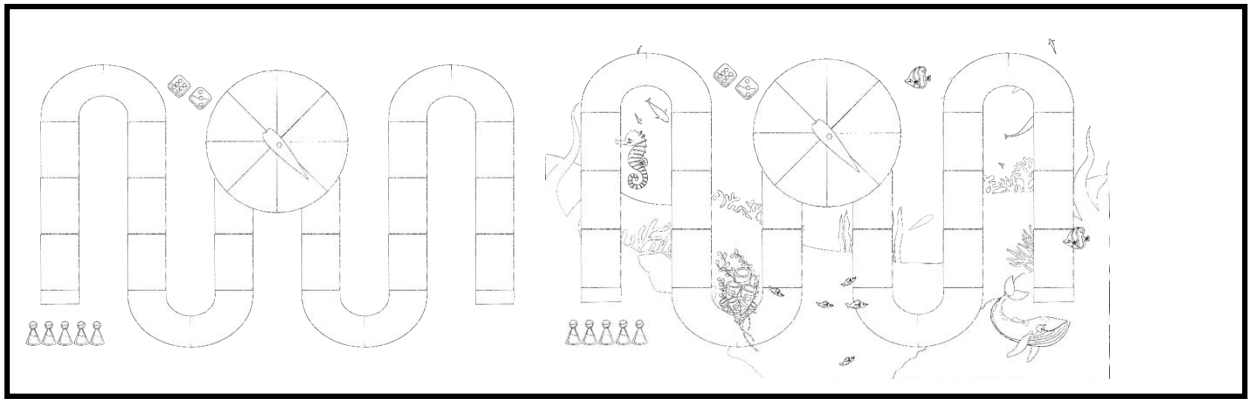

Figure 1: Rough sketches for the board game

After the rough sketches are done, the next process is the color selection. Based on the survey conducted, most of the colors preferred by the respondents come from the family of blue and red. The research further categorizes the family of blue and red into 10 different hues of it. Figure 2 shows the hues of the family color and how it has been used in board games.



Figure 2: Colour Selection based on the family color of blue and red.

Following the color selection is the game instructional design for the board game. This stage is also known as a game mechanic. A game mechanic is simply a system that is deployed by the designer to help the players interact with their game. For this board game, the instruction card was prepared for the player to guide them while playing the board game (Figure 3).

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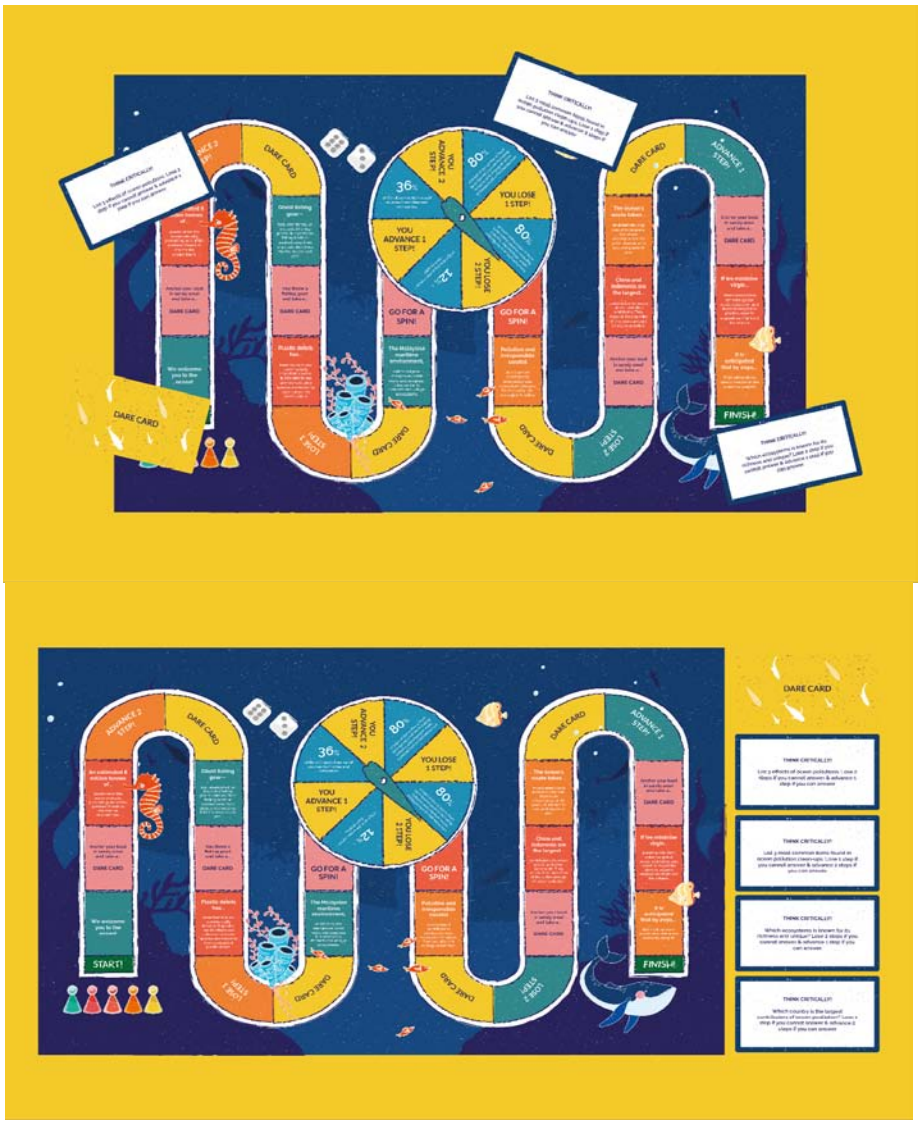

Figure 3: The Instruction Card For The Board Game



Figure 4: Final design of the board game

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VI. Discussion

Findings from the study are derived from data collected via observation and an online survey. Following that, it thoroughly examines the research's contribution before offering suggestions for more study. Following this discussion, the research discusses in depth its significance in detail:

1. According to the research findings, which are based on data collected, the study is focused on the Ocean Sustainability Board Game. Most of the respondents had never heard of the board game name related to ocean sustainability.
2. However, the average respondents agreed that board games could increase youth's understanding of ocean sustainability and it shows that designing board games concerning ocean sustainability is still needed and reasonable among the general public including youth.
3. By playing educational board games with the concept of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14: Life Below Water, players will have a clearer understanding of every action in the game, will be able to comprehend the interconnections of the global environment, especially ocean sustainability and will be able to provide meaningful feedback and suggestions after deep reflections.

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, publications on board games must contain visuals that are both pertinent to the subject matter and easy to comprehend by youths. The inability to create decent and appealing visual communication and presentation will result in an educational board game failing to attract its intended audience. It is the most effective means of communicating with the intended audience because it can catch their interest and influence their selection of board games. The design and layout of the board games led to an engaging and successful manner of communication with its target audience. Visual appearance in the board game makes it simpler, faster, and clearer to obtain and comprehend early information and messages. In the future, the game's mechanism and graphic designs will be enhanced to promote its usage in a variety of units and fields, including the government, businesses, and schools, to encourage a basic understanding of the SDGs.

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Tips for writing a good quality Social Science Research Paper

Techniques for writing a good quality homan social science research paper:

1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is selected by the interests of the author, but it can also be suggested by the guides. You can have several topics, and then judge which you are most comfortable with. This may be done by asking several questions of yourself, like "Will I be able to carry out a search in this area? Will I find all necessary resources to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area?" If the answer to this type of question is "yes," then you ought to choose that topic. In most cases, you may have to conduct surveys and visit several places. Also, you might have to do a lot of work to find all the rises and falls of the various data on that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information. Evaluators are human: The first thing to remember is that evaluators are also human beings. They are not only meant for rejecting a paper. They are here to evaluate your paper. So present your best aspect.

2. Think like evaluators: If you are in confusion or getting demotivated because your paper may not be accepted by the evaluators, then think, and try to evaluate your paper like an evaluator. Try to understand what an evaluator wants in your research paper, and you will automatically have your answer. Make blueprints of paper: The outline is the plan or framework that will help you to arrange your thoughts. It will make your paper logical. But remember that all points of your outline must be related to the topic you have chosen.

3. Ask your guides: If you are having any difficulty with your research, then do not hesitate to share your difficulty with your guide (if you have one). They will surely help you out and resolve your doubts. If you can't clarify what exactly you require for your work, then ask your supervisor to help you with an alternative. He or she might also provide you with a list of essential readings.

4. Use of computer is recommended: As you are doing research in the field of homan social science then this point is quite obvious. Use right software: Always use good quality software packages. If you are not capable of judging good software, then you can lose the quality of your paper unknowingly. There are various programs available to help you which you can get through the internet.

5. Use the internet for help: An excellent start for your paper is using Google. It is a wondrous search engine, where you can have your doubts resolved. You may also read some answers for the frequent question of how to write your research paper or find a model research paper. You can download books from the internet. If you have all the required books, place importance on reading, selecting, and analyzing the specified information. Then sketch out your research paper. Use big pictures: You may use encyclopedias like Wikipedia to get pictures with the best resolution. At Global Journals, you should strictly follow here.



6. Bookmarks are useful: When you read any book or magazine, you generally use bookmarks, right? It is a good habit which helps to not lose your continuity. You should always use bookmarks while searching on the internet also, which will make your search easier.

7. Revise what you wrote: When you write anything, always read it, summarize it, and then finalize it.

8. Make every effort: Make every effort to mention what you are going to write in your paper. That means always have a good start. Try to mention everything in the introduction—what is the need for a particular research paper. Polish your work with good writing skills and always give an evaluator what he wants. Make backups: When you are going to do any important thing like making a research paper, you should always have backup copies of it either on your computer or on paper. This protects you from losing any portion of your important data.

9. Produce good diagrams of your own: Always try to include good charts or diagrams in your paper to improve quality. Using several unnecessary diagrams will degrade the quality of your paper by creating a hodgepodge. So always try to include diagrams which were made by you to improve the readability of your paper. Use of direct quotes: When you do research relevant to literature, history, or current affairs, then use of quotes becomes essential, but if the study is relevant to science, use of quotes is not preferable.

10. Use proper verb tense: Use proper verb tenses in your paper. Use past tense to present those events that have happened. Use present tense to indicate events that are going on. Use future tense to indicate events that will happen in the future. Use of wrong tenses will confuse the evaluator. Avoid sentences that are incomplete.

11. Pick a good study spot: Always try to pick a spot for your research which is quiet. Not every spot is good for studying.

12. Know what you know: Always try to know what you know by making objectives, otherwise you will be confused and unable to achieve your target.

13. Use good grammar: Always use good grammar and words that will have a positive impact on the evaluator; use of good vocabulary does not mean using tough words which the evaluator has to find in a dictionary. Do not fragment sentences. Eliminate one-word sentences. Do not ever use a big word when a smaller one would suffice.

Verbs have to be in agreement with their subjects. In a research paper, do not start sentences with conjunctions or finish them with prepositions. When writing formally, it is advisable to never split an infinitive because someone will (wrongly) complain. Avoid clichés like a disease. Always shun irritating alliteration. Use language which is simple and straightforward. Put together a neat summary.

14. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence, and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments for your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

15. Never start at the last minute: Always allow enough time for research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

16. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time is a bad habit in the case of research activity. Research is an area where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work into parts, and do a particular part in a particular time slot.

17. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if the evaluator has seen it anywhere, you will be in trouble. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend on your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health, then all your efforts will have been in vain. For quality research, take proper rest and food.

18. Go to seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.
Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give your mind a rest by listening to soft music or sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory. Acquire colleagues: Always try to acquire colleagues. No matter how sharp you are, if you acquire colleagues, they can give you ideas which will be helpful to your research.

19. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, search for its reasons, benefits, and demerits. Think and then print: When you go to print your paper, check that tables are not split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

20. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information like "I have used MS Excel to draw graphs." Irrelevant and inappropriate material is superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should never take a broad view. Analogy is like feathers on a snake. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Never oversimplify: When adding material to your research paper, never go for oversimplification; this will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be specific. Never use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions shouldn't be used in a research paper. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands, abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words should be between brackets or commas. Understatement is always the best way to put forward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

21. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results, and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. An appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibited here. Proofread carefully at the final stage. At the end, give an outline to your arguments. Spot perspectives of further study of the subject. Justify your conclusion at the bottom sufficiently, which will probably include examples.

22. Upon conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium though which your research is going to be in print for the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects of your research.

.

Informal Guidelines of Research Paper Writing

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criteria peer reviewers will use for grading the final paper.

Final points:

One purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people interpret your efforts selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, with each section starting on a new page:

The introduction: This will be compiled from reference matter and reflect the design processes or outline of basis that directed you to make a study. As you carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed like that. The results segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and direct reviewers to similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you gathered to carry out your study.

The discussion section:

This will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implications of the results. The use of good quality references throughout the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness to prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job, no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record-keeping are the only means to make straightforward progression.

General style:

Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

To make a paper clear: Adhere to recommended page limits.



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Mistakes to avoid:

- Insertion of a title at the foot of a page with subsequent text on the next page.
- Separating a table, chart, or figure—confine each to a single page.
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence.
- In every section of your document, use standard writing style, including articles ("a" and "the").
- Keep paying attention to the topic of the paper.
- Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding the abstract).
- Align the primary line of each section.
- Present your points in sound order.
- Use present tense to report well-accepted matters.
- Use past tense to describe specific results.
- Do not use familiar wording; don't address the reviewer directly. Don't use slang or superlatives.
- Avoid use of extra pictures—include only those figures essential to presenting results.

Title page:

Choose a revealing title. It should be short and include the name(s) and address(es) of all authors. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations or exceed two printed lines.

Abstract: This summary should be two hundred words or less. It should clearly and briefly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript and must have precise statistics. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Do not cite references at this point.

An abstract is a brief, distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less, a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approaches to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Use comprehensive sentences, and do not sacrifice readability for brevity; you can maintain it succinctly by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than a lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to limit the initial two items to no more than one line each.

Reason for writing the article—theory, overall issue, purpose.

- Fundamental goal.
- To-the-point depiction of the research.
- Consequences, including definite statistics—if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account for this; results of any numerical analysis should be reported. Significant conclusions or questions that emerge from the research.

Approach:

- Single section and succinct.
- An outline of the job done is always written in past tense.
- Concentrate on shortening results—limit background information to a verdict or two.
- Exact spelling, clarity of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else.

Introduction:

The introduction should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable of comprehending and calculating the purpose of your study without having to refer to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give the most important references, but avoid making a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. Describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will give no attention to your results. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here.

The following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- Explain the value (significance) of the study.
- Defend the model—why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? Remark upon its appropriateness from an abstract point of view as well as pointing out sensible reasons for using it.
- Present a justification. State your particular theory(-ies) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- Briefly explain the study's tentative purpose and how it meets the declared objectives.

Approach:

Use past tense except for when referring to recognized facts. After all, the manuscript will be submitted after the entire job is done. Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point for every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need at least four paragraphs. Present surrounding information only when it is necessary to support a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read everything you know about a topic. Shape the theory specifically—do not take a broad view.

As always, give awareness to spelling, simplicity, and correctness of sentences and phrases.

Procedures (methods and materials):

This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A soundly written procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replicate your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order, but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt to give the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to replicate your outcome, but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section.

When a technique is used that has been well-described in another section, mention the specific item describing the way, but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to show all particular resources and broad procedures so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step-by-step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

Materials may be reported in part of a section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- Report the method and not the particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology.
- Describe the method entirely.
- To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures.
- Simplify—detail how procedures were completed, not how they were performed on a particular day.
- If well-known procedures were used, account for the procedure by name, possibly with a reference, and that's all.

Approach:

It is embarrassing to use vigorous voice when documenting methods without using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result, when writing up the methods, most authors use third person passive voice.

Use standard style in this and every other part of the paper—avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from:

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- Skip all descriptive information and surroundings—save it for the argument.
- Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.



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Results:

The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part as entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Use statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.

You must clearly differentiate material which would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matters should not be submitted at all except if requested by the instructor.

Content:

- Sum up your conclusions in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In the manuscript, explain each of your consequences, and point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation of an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and give remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
- Examine your data, then prepare the analyzed (transformed) data in the form of a figure (graph), table, or manuscript.

What to stay away from:

- Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surrounding information, or try to explain anything.
- Do not include raw data or intermediate calculations in a research manuscript.
- Do not present similar data more than once.
- A manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate information.
- Never confuse figures with tables—there is a difference.

Approach:

As always, use past tense when you submit your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.

Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report.

If you desire, you may place your figures and tables properly within the text of your results section.

Figures and tables:

If you put figures and tables at the end of some details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attached appendix materials, such as raw facts. Whatever the position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other, and include a heading. All figures and tables must be divided from the text.

Discussion:

The discussion is expected to be the trickiest segment to write. A lot of papers submitted to the journal are discarded based on problems with the discussion. There is no rule for how long an argument should be.

Position your understanding of the outcome visibly to lead the reviewer through your conclusions, and then finish the paper with a summing up of the implications of the study. The purpose here is to offer an understanding of your results and support all of your conclusions, using facts from your research and generally accepted information, if suitable. The implication of results should be fully described.

Infer your data in the conversation in suitable depth. This means that when you clarify an observable fact, you must explain mechanisms that may account for the observation. If your results vary from your prospect, make clear why that may have happened. If your results agree, then explain the theory that the proof supported. It is never suitable to just state that the data approved the prospect, and let it drop at that. Make a decision as to whether each premise is supported or discarded or if you cannot make a conclusion with assurance. Do not just dismiss a study or part of a study as "uncertain."



Research papers are not acknowledged if the work is imperfect. Draw what conclusions you can based upon the results that you have, and take care of the study as a finished work.

- You may propose future guidelines, such as how an experiment might be personalized to accomplish a new idea.
- Give details of all of your remarks as much as possible, focusing on mechanisms.
- Make a decision as to whether the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory and whether or not it was correctly restricted. Try to present substitute explanations if they are sensible alternatives.
- One piece of research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind. Where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

When you refer to information, differentiate data generated by your own studies from other available information. Present work done by specific persons (including you) in past tense.

Describe generally acknowledged facts and main beliefs in present tense.

The Administration Rules

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Segment draft and final research paper: You have to strictly follow the template of a research paper, failing which your paper may get rejected. You are expected to write each part of the paper wholly on your own. The peer reviewers need to identify your own perspective of the concepts in your own terms. Please do not extract straight from any other source, and do not rephrase someone else's analysis. Do not allow anyone else to proofread your manuscript.

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Topics	Grades		
	A-B	**C-D**	**E-F**
Abstract	Clear and concise with appropriate content, Correct format. 200 words or below	Unclear summary and no specific data, Incorrect form Above 200 words	No specific data with ambiguous information Above 250 words
Introduction	Containing all background details with clear goal and appropriate details, flow specification, no grammar and spelling mistake, well organized sentence and paragraph, reference cited	Unclear and confusing data, appropriate format, grammar and spelling errors with unorganized matter	Out of place depth and content, hazy format
Methods and Procedures	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
Result	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
Discussion	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

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