

IN THIS ISSUE

Vietnam in the Early 21st Century

National Rural Employment Guarantee

Family Ties and Adolescent Relationships

Specialist and Non-Specialist Teachers



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IMAGE: ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS,
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Journal Content

In this Issue



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- i. Journal introduction and copyrights
- ii. Featured blogs and online content
- iii. Journal content
- iv. Curated Editorial Board Members

-
- 1. “Improving Family Ties and Adolescent Relationships in Open Schooling”. **1-15**
 - 2. Pragmatic Theory in Education: The Case of Iran. **17-31**
 - 3. Modern Woodcut ART in Vietnam in the Early 21st Century. **33-41**
 - 4. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-2005: Implementation and Impact. **43-50**
 - 5. Didactic Analysis of School Volleyball Teaching in Tunisia Case Study of two Specialist and Non-Specialist Teachers. **51-59**

-
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"Improving Family Ties and Adolescent Relationships in Open Schooling"

Kolla Eleni

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we attempt to clarify the concept of open school and to highlight relevant actions and main characteristics. A school can be described as open when a culture of cooperation and mutual trust prevails among students, teachers and parents., a pedagogical practice is presented that was implemented in two sections of the 1st class at the 1st Lyceum of Spata, with the aim of a) preventing intra-school violence cases, b) fostering the integration and inclusion of foreign students by looking at common adolescent concerns and problems, and c) strengthening the institution of the family. The action, which took place at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year and is expected to be completed at the end of January, was accompanied by a sample survey using questionnaires answered by 47 students, 28 teachers and 36 parents. The students were given a questionnaire before and after the action to identify the effects of the pedagogical practice. Of particular interest are the answers A part of the action was presented on January 20 at the International conference "Learning from the Extremes."

Keywords: acceptance and inclusion of refugee students, acceptance and respect for otherness, cooperation, empathy and emotional intelligence, experiential learning, open school, reduction in intra-school violence and strengthening of family ties.

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"Improving Family Ties and Adolescent Relationships in Open Schooling"

Kolla Eleni

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we attempt to clarify the concept of open school and to highlight relevant actions and main characteristics. A school can be described as open when a culture of cooperation and mutual trust prevails among students, teachers and parents., a pedagogical practice is presented that was implemented in two sections of the 1st class at the 1st Lyceum of Spata, with the aim of a) preventing intra-school violence cases, b) fostering the integration and inclusion of foreign students by looking at common adolescent concerns and problems, and c) strengthening the institution of the family. The action, which took place at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year and is expected to be completed at the end of January, was accompanied by a sample survey using questionnaires answered by 47 students, 28 teachers and 36 parents. The students were given a questionnaire before and after the action to identify the effects of the pedagogical practice. Of particular interest are the answers A part of the action was presented on January 20 at the International conference "Learning from the Extremes."

Keywords: acceptance and inclusion of refugee students, acceptance and respect for otherness, cooperation, empathy and emotional intelligence, experiential learning, open school, reduction in intra-school violence and strengthening of family ties.

I. INTRODUCTION

In all the schools I have served so far as a teacher, I observed the behavior of the teenagers and I was particularly troubled by the aggression they display in their relationships with each other and the conflicts they reported having with their parents. The school unit operates interaction with

the social environment. It constitutes an open social system with its own members, its social subsystems – the school classes and its own culture (Pasiardis & Pasiardi, 2006, Saitis, 2002). Therefore, the operation of a school unit is affected by the school environment and the relationships that develop among those involved in the educational process.

The school, as an institution of society, aims at the all-round development and formation of the student's personality and his integration into the social system. The open school seeks to develop the humanitarian values and the equality of all people along with solidarity, understanding, acceptance and respect for diversity, the cultivation and development of empathy and emotional intelligence, the sense of individual responsibility and the awareness of people's same problems. The open school educates students through experiential actions and programs in personal and social development skills and functions as a community in which students, teachers and parents are actively involved. The most essential characteristics of the open school are experiential learning, innovative educational actions, creativity, collegiality, cooperation, decision-making, the cultivation of critical thinking and the ability to solve problems effectively.

The culture of the open school aims at the all-round cultivation and development of the students' personality in the context of emotional security, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for fellow human beings. The positive school environment is enhanced through the development, cultivation and strengthening of the school's relationships with parents and the wider local community. A key parameter for strengthening relationships is cultivating a culture

of cooperation and mutual trust among students, teachers and parents. We believe that open schools should be seen as catalysts for integrating all elements of schooling into an educational ecosystem fit for the 21st century. (Daniel Ferreira, 2009).

In this work, we present an action/project that took place in two sections of the 1st class of Lyceum, to approach the students and cultivate empathy, acceptance and improvement of their relationships with their family and classmates. Before the start of the activity, a questionnaire was given to the students, to detect any problems with their peers on the one hand, and with their family environment on the other.

Afterwards, in the A3 section, the role of the mother was taught during the first four months of the Literature course through literary texts (prose and poetry), while in the A4 section, respectively, the role of the father. After the teaching phase was completed, the students collaboratively created PowerPoint presentations on the vital elements concerning each person's role. Then, in the context of the Modern Greek Language course, the problems that teenagers face with their parents were discussed and recorded. The school became a meeting place for teachers and children on Friday afternoons. There, the children of the two sections exchanged views on the problems with their parents. Opinions of refugee children were also heard. Gradually, the students began to bond with each other, discovering common concerns that led to a reduction and elimination of conflicts between them. In addition, the students, cultivating their empathy and understanding the most significant difficulties of the refugee children, embraced them with love and fully accepted them. Friday afternoons became a favorite habit for the students. Then, with the consent of the students, we organized an event in which the school psychologist talked and advised parents on the relationship changes of their children during adolescence. The children, with the guidance of the psychologist, listened to the concerns and fears of the parents and understood their parents' perspectives. After the completion of the action questionnaires were given to the students, parents and teachers to detect the results of the action.

Afterwards students enriched the PowerPoint presentations they had initially created in Literature class with experiential elements and interviews of children and parents. At the end of the school year, there was a drastic reduction in intra-school violence and conflicts among the students of the two sections, acceptance and inclusion of refugee students, improvement of family relations, strengthening of family ties and development of friendship among students.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Intra-School Violence - School Bullying

"Gender, racism, xenophobia, family environment, low academic performance, the education system, the origin of students (socially excluded groups, or minorities) are some parameters that lead to the appearance of violence and delinquency" (Artinopoulou, 2001, p. 9). With the terms "intra-school bullying" and "intra-school violence" we describe a repeated situation of abuse of a person within the school (Kourkoutas & Kokkiadis, 2015, p.60). The forms of violence and bullying observed in the school environment are physical violence, verbal violence, social bullying and electronic bullying.

Attendees of violent incidents that can occur within a school unit are student observers and adult observers. The role of those people who are present or have knowledge of the existence of the problem is significant, as their indifference and lack of response strengthens and encourages the abuser. On the contrary, their reaction and mobilization can significantly help in dealing with such situations (Estebanet et al., 2020).

In recent years, there has been an alarming increase in incidents of school violence and delinquency (Karakatsani, 2023). These incidents not only endanger the safety and well-being of students but also create a psychological discomfort (fear and anxiety) hindering the learning and development of students (Bravo-Sanzana, M., Bangdiwala, S. I., & Miranda, R. (2022); Ferrara et al., 2019). The phenomena of school violence and delinquency have severe effects on the physical and mental health of children and for this reason the need to

immediately recognize the problem and take appropriate measures to prevent and deal with it becomes imperative.

2.2 Marginalization of Foreign Students - Racist Attitudes

Racism and xenophobia are social phenomena that significantly affect all aspects of social life. Also, in school life, these two phenomena appeared in school classrooms, affecting both the outcome of the educational process and the formed perceptions of the students (Kardamilioti, 2019). The continuous integration of foreign students into school classes leads to integration problems that favor social segregation. In the vast majority of schools in Greece, some children are "different" in terms of origin, color, language, morals and customs, values and ideas, etc. It is those children who primarily fall victim to direct or indirect racism and marginalization. (Maniatis, Nikolaou, Papadopoulos, 2010). In several cases, this racism is expressed through physical violence, threats, abusive comments, or verbal violence. Racism, however it appears, affects psychologically and without exception, the perpetrator, the victim, witnesses and society as a whole. Especially in the case of the victim, intense discomfort, stress, and a feeling of inferiority are created, which have devastating consequences both for the person himself and for his family and school environment.

The constant changes and otherness that characterize modern society highlight acceptance, inclusion, respect and "education for all", critical characteristics of the open school, as the primary pursuit of the school. As the student population in Greek schools shows heterogeneity and shows a wide range of differences, it is essential to create a positive school atmosphere, which provides a safe environment and allows all students to express themselves and make use of their unique abilities, skills, experiences and their cultural capital.

The educational system, each school unit, and each teacher must make every possible effort to alleviate social discrimination and combat exclusions.

2.3 Adolescent-Family Relationships

Adolescence is a period of significant changes and challenges for the individual, mainly accompanied by the search for autonomy and identity. It is the developmental stage characterized by alternating and possibly dysfunctional transitions (Cook, T. D., & Furstenberg, F. F., Jr. (2002)). During children's adolescence, roles in the family are redefined, teenagers become independent, and parents have to accept this fact. Adolescents mature, acquire their thinking, reflect, have their ideas and opinions and want to make their decisions about their lives. Often parents are hurt, worried, anxious, upset or confused because they don't know how to behave. Parents are not always ready to accept that their child is growing up. They worry about their child's school performance and socialization, the dangers the child might encounter while it prefers to stay away from their protection, and they refuse to give enough freedom.

The behavior of parents is directly influenced by the behavior of teenagers. Parents, not knowing how to manage the adolescent's behavioral changes, want to gain control. To do this, they shout, criticize, and command the teenager. The result of this behavior is an increase in tension between parents and teenagers. Frictions and conflicts are created and this has as a result that teenagers feel alone and parents excluded from their child's life. The lack of communication leads to unpleasant feelings on both sides, and a vicious circle is created. The more the teenager closes in on himself, the more the parents react, and the more they react and shout, the more they withdraw.

2.4 The Open School

The open school can be the rallying pole of the social fabric. It is an essential point of reference for the student for the development of a coherent identity, taking care of his concerns, aspirations and interests, his relationship with his peers, his parents, teachers, the world, and the local community (Anttila & Vaananen, 2013).

The open school responds to modern social challenges, aims to instill in students'

humanitarian values, the value of participation, cooperation, respect, acceptance of diversity, empathy, solidarity and democracy. Mulford and Silius (2001) state that the opening of the school to the local community contributes to a large extent to the strengthening of the ties of the school with the environment to which it belongs. This is achieved through educational activities that are implemented within the standard curriculum through interdisciplinary creative projects, but also beyond that, with semi-formal and informal school practices through innovative programs (Cultural, Environmental Education, Health Education, Career Education, etc.) and other activities, such as meetings, speeches, exchange of views, etc. The open school is a local versatile center, a center of knowledge and culture, utilizing its infrastructure not only for the educational needs of students, but also for cultivating their communication and social skills, inclinations and talents. However, it is worth mentioning that the creation of long-term and close relationships among schools, families, and the local community is an area of research that has been of great concern to researchers, mainly because no guide provides instructions and guidelines regarding forging bonds for these relationships.

The open school educates its students through experiential actions and programs in personal and social development skills, such as respect, adaptability, the ability to communicate effectively and resolve disputes peacefully. It is the school that functions as a community in which students, teachers and parents are actively involved. In the open school, through experiential actions, equality and trust, dropout, marginalization, exclusion, and violence are combated.

Learning in an open school is not limited to the development of skills related only to the typical school environment, but also extends to those related to everyday life experience (life skills). Elements of personal development are integrated into the school program and teaching methodology, which strengthening the student's self-awareness and awareness of the school and broader social environment. In particular, the

development of skills such as the ability of planning and plan actions, the ability to process alternative solutions, creative participation in a group and the use of multiple sources of information is pursued. Overall, what is aimed for is the development of skills related to communication and interpersonal relationships, as well as practical problem management.

In this direction, the school is open to the society, the theoretical courses are matched with experiential intra-school and extra-curricular activities integrated as a natural course into the whole of school life.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present action was to mitigate incidents of violence at school, to promote the inclusion and assimilation of foreign students into the student community and to strengthen family ties.

1. At the beginning of the activity, a questionnaire was given to the students of the two sections, in order to detect their relationship with their peers and their relationship with their parents.
2. Afterward, poems and short stories by Greek and foreign Poets and Writers were taught within the timetable, which related to the role of the mother, and the father.
 - The mother, George Vizyinos (A3)
 - And God made the mother, Paolo Coelho (A3)
 - My house, Dido Sotiriou (A3)
 - Reference to Greco, Nikos Kazantzakis (A3)
 - Letters to My mother, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (A3)
 - To my mother, Alexandros Papadiamantis (A3)
 - My father by Leo Buscaglia (A4)
 - Profession father actor, Titos Patrikios (A4)
 - Sacred memory, Elias Simopoulos (A4)
 - The father, Maria Kentrou- Agathopoulou (A4)
3. Following the completion of the teaching process, meetings were organized at the school every Friday afternoon with the teachers who participated in the activity in question and the students of the two sections.

In these meetings, the students exchanged opinions, listened carefully to the problems and concerns of their classmates, and tried together-with the guidance and encouragement of the teachers - to find solutions to their everyday problems. During this process, the children's relationships were strengthened and improved. Furthermore, the assimilation of foreign students into the student community and the "friendship" of their peers began.

4. Considering that six meetings had taken place, the school psychologist was invited to help the students further, to improve their relationships with each other, but also to discuss what concerns them about their relationships with their parents.
5. At the urging of the psychologist and with the consent of the students, the parents were also invited to the Friday meetings. Fruitful dialogues occurred among the students, parents, teachers, and psychologist in a positive atmosphere. Parents were also allowed to express their anxieties, concerns, and worries about their relationship with their children.
6. Following the completion of the meetings, which amounted to 12, a questionnaire was

given to the students, the teachers of the two sections and the parents, to determine whether the objectives of the action were achieved.

In the questionnaires, the collected data were statistically processed using Excel.

3.1 The Survey Sample

- 47 students of the 1st Grade of Lyceum, precisely 23 students of section A3 and 24 students of section A4
- 28 teachers who teach in the two sections and
- Thirty-six parents who attended the in-school meetings on Fridays.

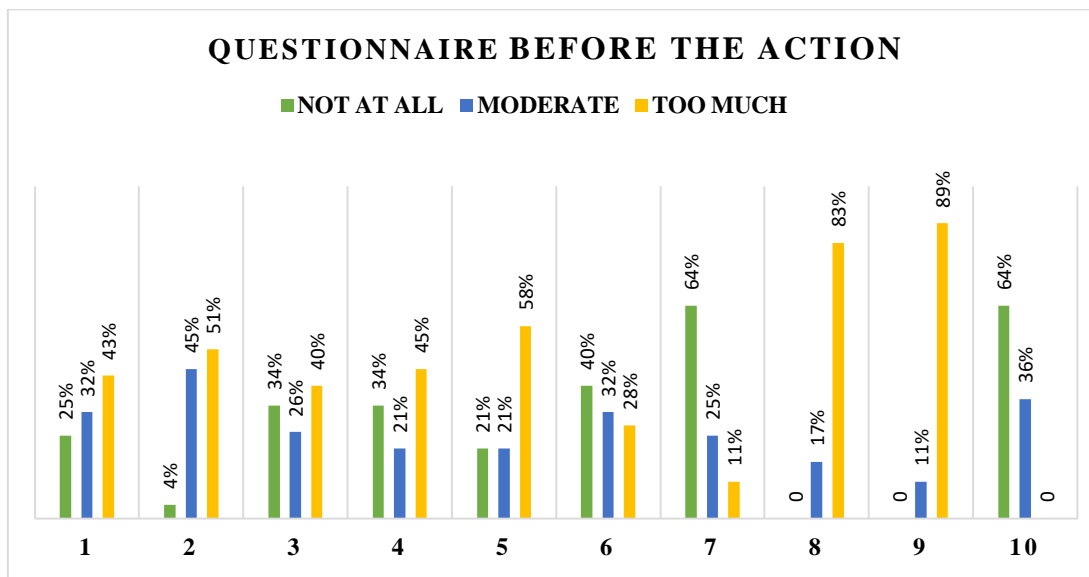
3.2 Presentation - Analysis - Discussion of the Results

Since the action is to be completed at the end of February 2024, i.e. in three weeks from the moment this paper is being written, the questionnaires have not been fully processed, the demographic data of the teachers and parents have not yet been processed, nor the gender and the students' country of origin. In this paper, only the quantitative data of the students', teachers' and parents' responses will be presented, and interpreted.

Student questionnaire (before the action)

		NOT AT ALL	MODERATE	VERY MUCH
1	Do you like your classmates who come from another country?	25%	32%	43%
2	Have you noticed incidents of violence at school?	4%	45%	51%
3	Have you been a victim of violence at school?	34%	26%	40%
4	Do you feel marginalized?	34%	21%	45%
5	Are there students who are marginalized?	21%	21%	58%
6	Do you ever think that some of your classmates might feel really bad at school?	40%	32%	28%
7	Do you enjoy coming to school?	64%	25%	11%
8	Do you often clash with your parents?	0	17%	83%

9	Do you think your parents are overreacting?	0	11%	89%
10	Do you think you can improve your behavior towards your parents?	64%	36%	0



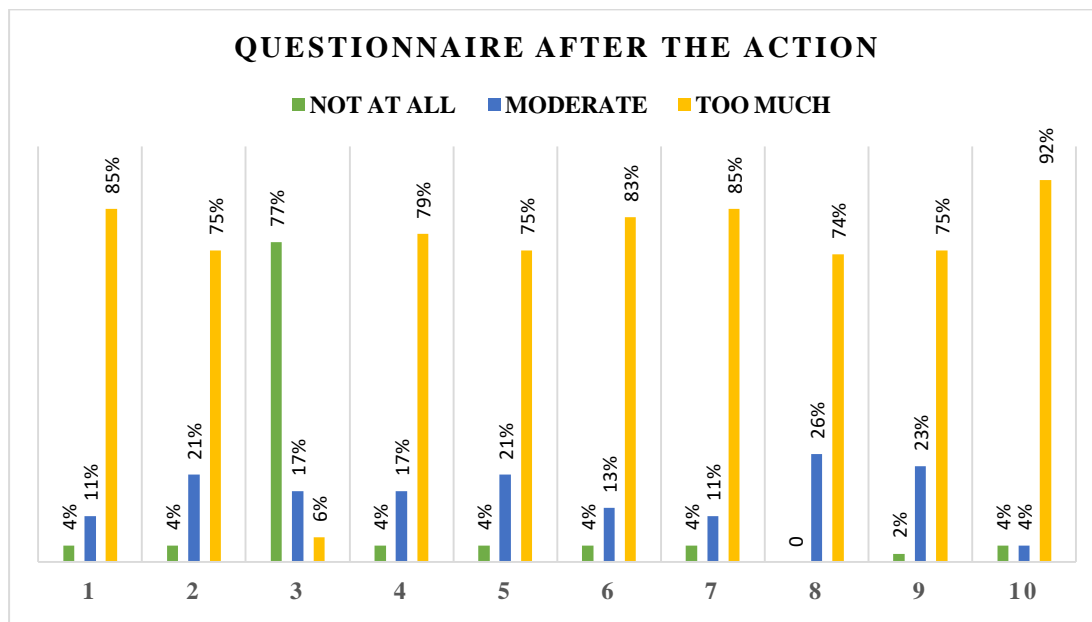
Before the beginning of the action - based on the principles of the open school - a questionnaire was given to the students of sections A3 and A4, to detect the relationships among them and the relationships with their parents. More than half of the students (57%) answered that they do not like at all or like a little their classmates from other countries. A significant concern was caused by the fact that 96% of students have witnessed violent incidents at school, while 66% have themselves been victims of verbal or physical violence. Most

students in both sections feel marginalized, whereas 40% do not care how their classmates think. It is worth emphasizing that only 11% of students come to school with a feeling of enjoyment. Regarding their relationship with their parents, they all stated that they often clash and that they consider them to be excessive in their reactions. Finally, 64% of the students claimed they cannot change their behavior towards their parents.

Student questionnaire (after the action)

		NOT AT ALL	MODERATE	Very much
1	Do you like your classmates who come from another country?	4%	11%	85%
2	Has school violence decreased?	4%	21%	75%
3	Do you feel marginalized?	77%	17%	6%
4	Did you feel closer to your classmates when you found out that you have common problems and concerns?	4%	17%	79%
5	Do you enjoy coming to school?	4%	21%	75%
6	Were you moved by the poems and texts you were taught?	4%	13%	83%
7	Have you ever wondered about the role of your parents in your life?	4%	11%	85%

8	Did you justify their reactions?	0	26%	74%
9	Do you think your relationship with your parents has improved?	2%	23%	75%
10	Would you participate in a similar action again?	4%	4%	92%



Through this activity, the students raised awareness by discussing and exchanging opinions, concerns, and worries. The children who reacted violently understood the impact their behavior had on those who were victims of their anger, resentment, or frustration, and all together found out that they faced common problems and concerns.

Understanding the common problems and also the effects that has an expression of violent behavior, mitigated the differences of the students and almost eliminated the incidents of violence in the school area. Moreover, the cultivation of a spirit of cooperation among students with an emphasis on the value of acceptance of diversity, dialogue, and the peaceful resolution of differences in daily intra-school and extra-curricular life helped, on one hand, to eliminate the phenomena of violence, on the other hand to accept the diversity, inclusion and the assimilation of foreign students into the school community.

The students realized that they must coexist harmoniously with people of different nationalities, different races, different economic

possibilities, etc. They became familiar with diversity and showed respect towards all their classmates and fellow human beings. Through this specific action, which was based on the principles of the open school, an environment of sincere acceptance and respect was created. In this atmosphere, we hope to build real friendships and shape people receptive to diversity. It is worth emphasizing that now 96% of students come to school with a feeling of enjoyment.

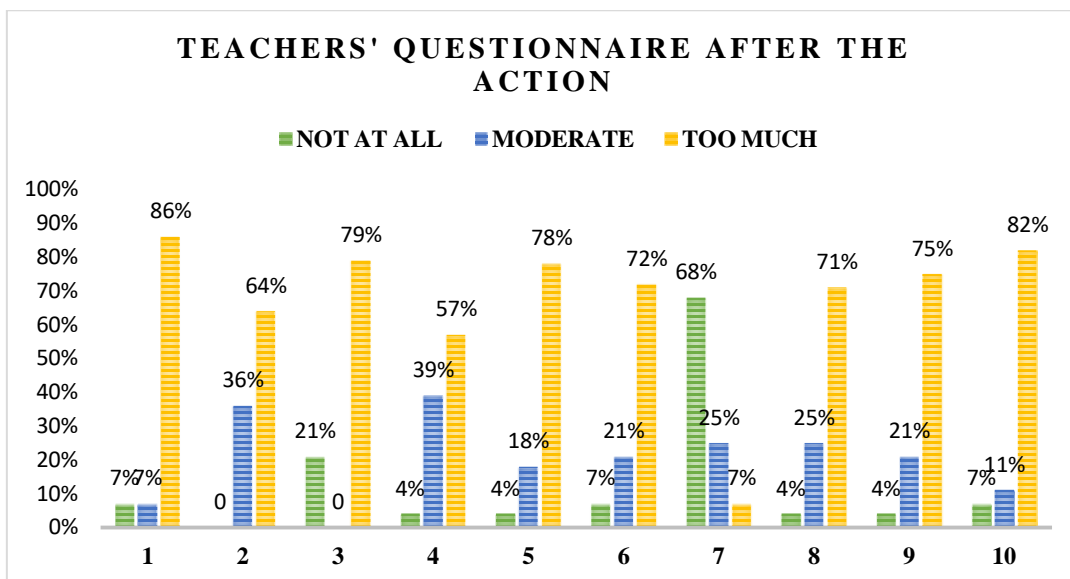
Through the teaching of poems and texts, through the discussion with their peers and with the help of the teachers and the psychologist, the teenage students, developed their empathy, which resulted in understanding the anxiety and concerns of their parents about the desire for absolute independence. On the other hand, the parents realized that their children had grown up and it was time to use everything they had been taught with love and hope for many years. This realization helped parents to cope better with the fact that their children are now on the route to becoming self-sufficient and well-rounded adults. According to the results of the questionnaires, healthy emotional communication was

established in the parent-adolescent relationship with active listening, empathy, and the avoidance of criticism from both sides. The vast majority of parent-adolescent relationships are now governed by elements of respect, trust and acceptance, because any tension and challenges that

characterize the teenage period are now dealt with directly and through dialogue. It is worth mentioning that the psychologist's contribution was particularly important as the students found significant help and guidance during the intense conflict situations they experienced.

Teachers' questionnaire (after the action)

		NOT AT ALL	MODERATE	VERY MUCH
1	Have you noticed tension in the relationships of the students of sections A3 and A4?	7%	7%	86%
2	Have you found foreign students to be marginalized?	0	36%	64%
3	Have you used time of your class to resolve differences and conflicts that have arisen among students?	21%	0	79%
4	Have you witnessed incidents of violence at school?	4%	39%	57%
5	Do you know the action that took place at school?	4%	18%	78%
6	(During the action) Did you notice an improvement in the relationship among the students of the two sections?	7%	21%	72%
7	(During the action) When they entered the classroom after recess, were they upset over the dispute they had among them?	68%	25%	7%
8	(During the activity) Did you find integration of the foreign students into the company of their classmates?	4%	25%	71%
9	(During the action) Did you see a reduction of incidents of violence at school?	4%	21%	75%
10	Do you think that the action contributed to improving the school environment?	7%	11%	82%

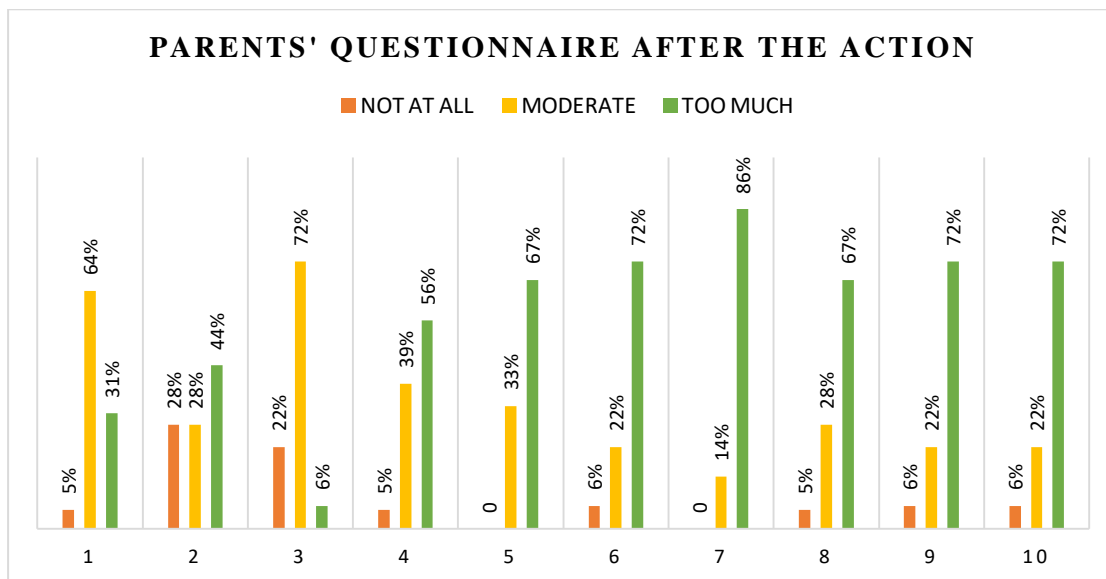


In the questionnaire given to the teachers after the completion of the action, most (96%) reported that they had witnessed incidents of violence at school, and that they had seen many times (86%) tension among the students of the two sections. In addition, many teachers responded that they had taken several teaching hours from their course to try to appease students' conflicts. 96% of the

teachers were aware of the action that took place in the school and claimed that it contributed to the improvement of student relations, the improvement of the school environment, the drastic reduction of incidents of violence and the inclusion of foreign students in the student community.

Parents' questionnaire (after the action)

		NOT AT ALL	MODERATE	Very much
1	Has your child reported an incident of violence at school?	5%	64%	31%
2	Do you think your child is marginalized at school?	28%	28%	44%
3	Have you ever spoken to a teacher about an incident or delinquency in which your child was involved?	22%	72%	6%
4	Do you feel safe sending your child to school?	5%	39%	56%
5	Do you know the action that took place at school?	0	33%	67%
6	Has your child reported an improvement in the school environment?	6%	22%	72%
7	Did you benefit from your participation in the action?	0	14%	86%
8	Have you noticed milder reactions in your child?	5%	28%	67%
9	Has your relationship with your child improved?	6%	22%	72%
10	Do you think that the activity helped to improve your relationship with your child?	6%	22%	72%



A questionnaire was also given to the parents at the end of the action, from which exciting information was gathered. Most parents (95%) reported that they had heard from their children about incidents of violence at school, while 72% of parents considered their children to be marginalized. On a favorable site, 95% of parents felt safe sending their child to school. Regarding the action, within the framework of the principles of the open school, on one hand, all parents were informed from the beginning of the school year, on the other hand, they actively participated in it. 94% of parents responded that their children reported an improvement in the school environment and the relationships with their classmates. All parents also reported that they gained many benefits from their active involvement and participation in this activity. Finally, most parents (90%) answered that their relationships with their children improved, because of milder reactions and considered this change to be due to their participation in the open school project.

IV. EXTENSION OF THE RESEARCH

The implementation of the principles of the open school and the opening of the school on Friday afternoons made the students treat the school as a place familiar and pleasant and not as a place stressful and unfriendly.

The action was considered quite successful, having achieved the initial goals set, namely

reducing violence at school, including foreign students, and strengthening family ties. For these reasons, it is proposed to implement similar programs, based on the principles of the open school, in all classes and sections. A small part of the action that concerns only the texts taught and the relationships of the teenagers with their parents, will be presented at the 1st student conference of the Secondary Education of Eastern Attica on April 12-14, 2024, giving a step this way to the students to express their views on the action. Finally, the action aroused the interest of the Local Government and the Municipal Authorities, and it was proposed to be implemented in other schools in the area.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaires

Questionnaire for the students of sections A3 and A4 (before the action) (47 students)

Gender

(Answer by putting one **X** in the corresponding box)

Boy	
Girl	

Country of origin : _____

Part II: Opinion Questions

	1= Not at all 2= Moderate 3 = Very much	Not at all	Moderate	Very much _
1	Do you like your classmates who come from another country?	1	2	3
2	Has school violence decreased?	1	2	3
3	Do you feel marginalized?	1	2	3
4	Did you feel closer to your classmates when you found that you have common problems and concerns?	1	2	3
5	Do you enjoy coming to school?	1	2	3
6	Were you moved by the poems and texts you were taught?	1	2	3
7	Have you ever wondered about the role of your parents in your life?	1	2	3
8	Did you justify their reactions?			
9	Do you think your relationship with your parents has improved?	1	2	3
10	Would you participate in a similar action again?	1	2	3

Questionnaire for the students of sections A3 and A4 (after the action) (47 students)

Gender :

(Answer by putting one X in the corresponding box)

Boy	
Girl	

Country of origin : _____

Part II: Opinion Questions

1= Not at all 2= Moderate 3 = Very much		Not at all	Moderate	Very much —
1	Do you like your classmates who come from another country?	1	2	3
2	Has school violence decreased?	1	2	3
3	Do you feel marginalized?	1	2	3
4	Did you feel closer to your classmates when you found that you have common problems and concerns?	1	2	3
5	Do you enjoy coming to school?	1	2	3
6	Were you moved by the poems and texts you were taught?	1	2	3
7	Have you ever wondered about the role of your parents in your life?	1	2	3
8	Did you justify their reactions?			
9	Do you think your relationship with your parents has improved?	1	2	3
10	Would you participate in a similar action again?	1	2	3

Questionnaire for the teachers of classes A3 and A4 (after the action) (28 people)

A. Demographics

Please mark a ✓ in the information that concerns you:

1. GENDER: Male Female
2. AGE: _____
3. YEARS OF SERVICE: _____
4. EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP:
Permanent Substitute Hourly
5. SPECIALTY: _____
6. LEVEL OF EDUCATION:
Basic degree Postgraduate Ph.D

B: Questions Expression of Opinion

	1= Not at all 2= Moderate 3 = Very much	Not at all	Moderate	Very much —
1	Have you noticed tension in the relationships of the students of sections A3 and A4?	1	2	3
2	Have you found foreign students to be marginalized?	1	2	3
3	Have you taken hours of your class to resolve differences and conflicts that have arisen among students?	1	2	3
4	Have you witnessed incidents of violence at school?	1	2	3
5	Do you know the action that took place at school?	1	2	3
6	(During the action) Did you notice an improvement in the relations among the students of the two sections?	1	2	3
7	(During the action) When they entered the classroom after recess, were they upset over the dispute they had among them?	1	2	3
8	(During the activity) Did you find integration of the foreign students into the company of their classmates?	1	2	3
9	(During the action) Did you see a reduction of incidents of violence at school?	1	2	3
10	Do you think that the action contributed to improving the school environment?	1	2	3

Questionnaire for the parents of sections A3 and A4 (after the action) (36 parents)

A. Demographics

Please mark a √ in the information that concerns you:

1. GENDER: Male Female
2. AGE: _____
3. EDUCATION:
Municipal High School High School University
Other (Please specify: _____)
4. WORK:
Unemployed Private sector Public sector
Self-employed
Other (Please specify: _____)
5. GENDER OF YOUR CHILD: Boy Girl

B. Questions Expression of Opinion

	1= Not at all 2= Moderate 3 = Very much	Not at all	Moderate a	Very much —
1	Has your child reported an incident of violence at school?	1	2	3
2	Do you think your child is marginalized at school?	1	2	3
3	Have you ever spoken to a teacher about an incident or delinquency in which your child was involved?	1	2	3

4	Do you feel safe sending your child to school?	1	2	3
5	Do you know the action that took place at school?	1	2	3
6	Has your child reported an improvement in the school environment?	1	2	3
7	Did you benefit from your participation in the action?	1	2	3
8	Have you noticed milder reactions in your child?	1	2	3
9	Has your relationship with your child improved?	1	2	3
10	Do you think that the activity helped to improve your relationship with your child?	1	2	3

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"Pragmatic Theory in Education: The Case of Iran"

Dr. Elham Shirvani

ABSTRACT

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Keywords: pragmatic theory, pedagogy, educational systems, challenges, iran.

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The application of pragmatic theories, particularly Dewey's views, in pedagogy has brought about significant transformations in educational systems worldwide. However, in the case of Iran, the implementation of pragmatist theories in education has faced various challenges. This paper examines the Iranian educational system, focusing on the obstacles hindering the application of pragmatist theories for children aged 8-12. It explores the characteristics of pragmatist theories and analyzes three dimensions of the Iranian educational structure: (1) defining childhood, child marriage, and child labor; (2) the social backgrounds of education in Iran; and (3) the educational facilities necessary for effective pedagogy. The conclusions highlight political factors and the absence of a robust educational model as the main barriers to realizing pragmatist pedagogy for Iranian children aged 8-12.

Keywords: pragmatic theory, pedagogy, educational systems, challenges, iran.

I. INTRODUCTION

In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle shows that moral understanding requires moral training (Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* 1104a). He further suggests in his *Metaphysics* that even our knowledge is influenced by our behavioral habits. However, this Aristotelian insight has often been overshadowed by a dualistic metaphysics and marginalized voices that opposed this tradition. Within this dualistic framework, human action was considered irrelevant to truth, as truth was believed to reside in a separate world of ideas. In the modern age, this tradition came under scrutiny, primarily by philosophers such as Nietzsche, Marx, and Schopenhauer. (Aristotle,

(2009). However, it was pragmatists who systematically criticized the division between truth and practice. By emphasizing the unity of truth and practice, pragmatists expanded our understanding of the world and ourselves, including our perspectives on pedagogy.

John Dewey stands as a prominent philosopher of pedagogy in our time. As Putnam argues, Dewey's focus on the philosophy of pedagogy is not accidental but rather an extension of his pragmatist approach (Putnam, 2004: 105). One of the key features of pragmatism is its alignment with the ideals of the Enlightenment while also being critical of certain Enlightenment principles such as independent reason, individualism, and ahistoricism. Pragmatists remained loyal to the ideals of the Enlightenment, particularly humanism. However, their concept of humanism differed from Kant's abstract notion of the human or the ideal man in early religious thought. They focused on the concrete human, shaped by practice, and believed that truth and essence were constructed through this process. According to pragmatists, truth is not preexisting but rather built through practice. Thus, understanding and morality should be developed through practice, fostering personal and critical thinking instead of merely accepting inherited notions. (Dewey, J. (1916).

Pedagogical implications of education have long been discussed and integrated into educational systems, drawing upon the works of Dewey (Czujko, 2013). In Iran, although some works of pragmatism pioneers have been translated into Persian, the core concepts of pragmatism, such as experience and reconstructing experience, have not been effectively integrated into the education system. (Bernstein, R. J. (2010). This can be seen in the exclusionary nature of the philosophy of education in Iran, as evident in the later act called

the "Fundamental Reform Act of Education." (Misak, C. (2013).

This paper aims to investigate the pivotal elements of pragmatist pedagogy and explore why this pedagogy has not been implemented in Iran. Specifically, we will examine obstacles and issues related to the accessibility of education in Iran, focusing on the criterion of reconstructing experience as a core concept of pragmatic education. Our primary focus group is children aged 8-12, and we aim to identify the challenges these children face in their educational process in Iran.

As Hegel proposed in his dialectical method, the part must be observed in relation to the whole, and understanding the whole is only possible through its connection with its parts. (Hegel, G. W. F. (1977). An analysis that disregards this interconnectedness is bound to be incomplete or one-sided, as Hegel argued. Therefore, assessing the role of children in Iran and studying the obstacles they encounter in their personal and educational development requires an examination of the dominant structures of Iranian society. Furthermore, children's educational problems cannot be isolated to specific areas or institutions. Problems at home, school, and in society are interconnected. By adopting Hegel's methodology, we aim to conduct an immanent critique of these problems, illustrating their interrelationships, mutual influences, and their impact on children's education. (Hegel, G. W. F. (1969). It is important to note that Iranian children face numerous educational challenges beyond the scope of this article. Here, we primarily address the main problems, and in the main body of the text, we will explore additional issues concerning children's education. Preconditions and secure environmental components are crucial for embracing the reconstruction of experience as a pragmatist theory. Without these preconditions, certain aspects such as the reconstruction of experience cannot occur. Research questions related to child marriage, child labor, teaching methods, and mother-tongue education highlight some of these preconditions.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a rigorous narrative review approach to investigate and critically assess the challenges associated with the accessibility of education for children aged 8-12 in Iran. The primary objective of this review is to offer a comprehensive overview of the key issues influencing the educational experiences of this particular age group within the Iranian context.

Stage 1: Identifying the Research Question

The primary research question guiding this review is as follows: "What are the challenges encountered by children aged 8-12 in their educational journey within the Iranian context?"

Stage 2: Identifying Relevant Studies

To collect relevant literature, an extensive search was conducted across reputable academic databases, including PubMed, ERIC, JSTOR, Scopus, and Web of Science. The search process involved the utilization of pertinent keywords such as "education challenges," "children aged 8-12," "Iran," and "educational accessibility." Boolean operators "AND" and "OR" were used to refine search results. The lead author carried out this initial search process between January 2022 and April 2023, resulting in the identification of 350 peer-reviewed articles.

Stage 3: Study Selection

The inclusion criteria for article selection encompassed both qualitative and quantitative studies that addressed the challenges faced by children aged 8-12 within the Iranian educational system. Inclusion criteria included studies published in English, studies focusing on educational challenges within the specified age group, and studies conducted within the Iranian context. Exclusion criteria consisted of non-English articles and studies focusing exclusively on higher education. Through a systematic screening process, a final selection of 45 articles was deemed relevant and incorporated into this review.

Stage 4: Charting the Data

To ensure a systematic analysis and organization of data, all selected articles were meticulously

documented in an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet cataloged essential information from each article, including author names, publication years, research methodologies employed, main findings, and key challenges identified.

Stage 5: Collating, Summarizing, and Reporting Results

The culmination of the review process involved the comprehensive analysis of the charted data. Themes and findings extracted from the included articles were meticulously organized into distinct sections. The presentation of results in the subsequent sections is guided by their relevance to the overarching research question, focusing on highlighting the primary challenges and issues faced by children aged 8-12 within the Iranian education system.

By embracing a narrative review methodology and systematically adhering to the above-stated stages, this study endeavors to provide a thorough understanding of the barriers and obstacles affecting the accessibility of education for children aged 8-12 in Iran.

III. OVERVIEW OF IRAN'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Here, we survey the main components of the pragmatist philosophy of pedagogy, drawing on which we seek to account for the fundamental problems of education in Iran. But before that, we must provide a summary of Iran's government structure.

3.1 Religious Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its Role in Iranian Children's Lives

The official nomenclature of the "Islamic Republic of Iran" underscores the central role of Islamic principles in the country's legal and societal framework. It is stipulated in the Iranian Constitution that all laws, including the constitution and criminal laws, should be in accordance with Islamic laws. In the event of a conflict between different legal codes, Islamic laws take precedence (Constitution of IRI: Article 15). Within this framework, religious institutions hold significant authority, and their responsibility

includes ensuring that the laws conform to Islamic principles. (Afary, Janet. 1906-1911.)

Of particular importance is the Guardian Council, known as Shoraye Negahban, which plays a pivotal role in harmonizing enacted laws with Islamic tenets. This council is responsible for evaluating the compatibility of the established laws with Islamic principles. (Banakar, Ziaee, 2018)

It is essential to note that within any religion, including Islam, there exist diverse interpretations and understandings. These interpretations can vary, encompassing mystical, rational, and fundamentalist perspectives. For instance, Saeed (2006) highlighted the multitude of interpretations of the Quran, the sacred text of Islam, among Muslims. However, the Islamic Republic predominantly adheres to conservative and traditional interpretations prevalent in the Islamic world. This interpretation of Islam places significant emphasis on jurisprudence (Fiqh), a cornerstone of the legal system. (Wael B. Hallaq. 2011.)

Fiqh, the body of Islamic jurisprudence, derives regulations governing personal conduct and societal rituals from the Quran, traditions, and the sayings of the Prophet, as well as the teachings of the Twelve Imams of Shia Islam. This comprehensive legal framework allows the governing regime to exert influence over various aspects of individuals' lives, including those of children. This is rooted in the nature of Islam itself, as it is a religion with an extensive and ancient Sharia law system. In Shiite Fiqh, even the most intimate and private aspects of individuals' lives are expected to conform to Sharia laws. (Ali, J. A. (2019).

The primary challenge faced by children in Iran relates to their definition within this religious and ideological context, which differs from international standards. This disparity results in significant difficulties when addressing the issues affecting children. The initial step in resolving these challenges is to recognize and acknowledge children as distinct individuals with specific rights that correspond to their age and stage of development.

3.1.1 Pedagogy and Child's Life

Educational systems often prioritize adult perspectives and objectives over the interests and needs of children. This approach dictates what children should learn, with the aim of preparing them for their future roles as adults. However, such pedagogy seldom seeks to enhance the quality of life or promote the creation of more desirable forms of existence, even if these involve some risk. Instead, it focuses on maintaining control over children's desires and energies.

In contrast, the pragmatist approach places the child at the center of pedagogical decision-making. According to this perspective, children play a critical role in determining how education should be conducted. They learn through their experiences, and learning itself is regarded as a form of doing. Consequently, pragmatists argue that educational curricula should be driven by the needs and experiences of children. (John J. McDermott, 1981)

The concept of experience is a fundamental aspect of pragmatist pedagogy. John Dewey, a prominent pragmatist, emphasized the need for the reconstruction of experience. Dewey's view is that no experience can provide an absolute, unchanging answer to life's challenges. Instead, human experiences should continuously adapt and evolve. Dewey's definition of experience extends beyond mere feelings and encompasses the connections between experience and thought. It arises from human interactions with the environment. (Troels Nørager 2010)

Efficiency, another key principle in Dewey's educational philosophy, is intrinsically linked to his instrumentalism. (Andrew Pollard, 1985). Dewey argued that pure science and applied science are interdependent, mutually influencing activities. He opposed the separation of instrumental and final values, underscoring their interdependence. (Knud Illeris, 2007)

In Dewey's view, the method of teaching involves presenting fresh material to students as a means of problem-solving and addressing objections. It also requires providing students with the tools to access information, data, experimental

explanations, and empirical knowledge, allowing them the freedom to experiment and learn through trial and error. This approach promotes a student-centered and child-centered pedagogy, emphasizing flexibility and adaptability on the part of the teacher. (Daniel Muijs, 2007)

Pragmatism contends that curricula should be rooted in life, and a primary concern is to nurture and account for children's interests. When children engage in experiments and experiences, they assume greater responsibility for their learning. (William F. Pinar, 2006)

In contrast, when children are presented with predetermined solutions by authority figures, such as teachers and scientists, they are unable to apply these solutions to their own experiences. Additionally, the presented solutions may fail to capture the children's interest since they have not personally engaged in the problem-solving process. Educational systems often view childhood as a mere preparatory phase for adulthood, focusing on the acquisition of skills required for adult life. This perspective not only neglects the unique qualities of childhood but also overlooks individual differences among children, seeking to standardize them. (Mary Renck Jalongo and V. Sue Haverstock, 2008)

The loss of the joy of learning and the gradual erosion of the world of childhood discoveries can have detrimental psychological and social consequences. Childhood should not be seen as a phase to be rushed through but rather as a period with valuable qualities. Preserving the spirit and characteristics of childhood can benefit individuals throughout their lives, contributing to happiness and a sense of fulfillment. (John Dewey (1902)

Unfortunately, in the Iranian educational system, childhood is often perceived differently. This discrepancy is apparent in the broader definition of childhood in Iran.

The fundamental challenge faced by children's development in Iran revolves around the definition of a "child," which diverges from international standards. This distinction gives rise to numerous issues when addressing children's

concerns. The first step toward addressing these problems is recognizing children as unique individuals and acknowledging their rights, as stipulated for children.

In Iran, childhood and its transition are intricately connected to the institution of the family. Childhood is considered a preparatory stage for entering into family life.

While most countries recognize coming of age at 18, in Islam, this transition is delineated by different standards. Girls are considered to come of age at 9 years, while for boys, the age is 15 (Peyvandi, 2011: 153). Additionally, reaching puberty or displaying signs of physical maturity can mark the transition to adulthood. Age, as a fixed criterion, is not always necessary. These fluid and variable definitions of childhood give rise to various issues, which will be further explored.

In Iranian legal contexts, the term "child" is characterized by ambiguity and vagueness, with multiple definitions existing in different laws. Some definitions are based on religious coming-of-age standards (9 for girls and 15 for boys), while others draw from the legal age of marriage (13 for girls and 18 for boys).

Remarkably, in Iran, celebrations are held to mark children's maturity. These festivities symbolize children's readiness to fulfill their religious duties, including marriage and parenthood. The fact that such celebrations are primarily held within educational institutions reflects how children are perceived within the educational system. This perspective has consequences, including early marriages among children and their subsequent effects, which we will discuss later.

3.1.2 Gender Issues

Another significant ideological dimension within the Islamic Republic of Iran that shapes the understanding of childhood pertains to gender and sexual orientation. Under the religious framework endorsed by the Islamic Republic, LGBTQ individuals are not recognized as distinct gender categories. The official definition of a child

in Iran acknowledges only two gender categories: boy and girl, disregarding other gender variations. Consequently, children who do not conform to the established norms of religious laws regarding their gender or sexual orientations must conceal their true selves, including their sexuality, personality, and religious practices, right from an early age.

The Iranian government enforces strict punitive measures, including hanging and imprisonment, against any form of non-normative sexual orientation. Moreover, these inclinations are generally stigmatized and condemned within Iranian culture. The absence of freedom to express personal and sexual orientations and desires, coupled with self-censorship, presents significant challenges for children.

Regrettably, due to the closed nature of the Iranian government and the cultural restrictions concerning sexual orientations, there are no official statistics or comprehensive studies available in this area. Furthermore, conducting research or experiments addressing these problems is severely limited. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that children in Iran face psychological and personal difficulties, as well as instances of sexual abuse (given the taboo nature of other sexual orientations) and harassment. These challenges remain a pressing concern. (Ziba Mir-Hosseini, 2010)

3.1.3 Child Marriage

Defining Childhood and the Consequences of Ambiguity: A Case Study of Early Marriages in Iran.

Zinali and Karimi (2016) argue that the absence of a clear demarcation between childhood and adulthood, based on scientific criteria and human rights principles, can have adverse implications, particularly concerning child victimization. Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child unambiguously characterizes a child as an individual under the age of eighteen, with the provision that the age of majority may vary under legal frameworks. However, the interpretation of this definition may, at times, diverge from the

paramount interests of children. (Zinali, Amir Hamzeh, & Karimi, Tachara. (2016).

Within the Iranian context, the determination of childhood's age deviates from international norms, influenced by cultural relativism and Islamic standards. Early marriage stands as a significant concern faced by children in Iran, deeply rooted in religion, culture, and official regulations (Ahmadi, 2017: 53). Child marriage is not only tacitly endorsed but also actively promoted in the teachings and sayings of the official Shiite denomination in Iran. The government, through its media channels, advocates for child marriages, often utilizing religious justifications to counteract the declining youth population.

Religious tenets also contribute to the conceptualization of puberty and adolescence, offering justifications for child marriages. The consequence of these early unions frequently leads to school dropouts and profoundly constrains the educational and personal development of children in Iran. While official statistics pertaining to early marriages of 8-12-year-old children are lacking, circumstantial evidence and research suggest that a considerable number of children within this age bracket enter into marriage. The prevalence of underreporting and non-registration of many such marriages further complicates the issue. Alarmingly, there have been documented cases of marriages involving girls below the age of ten, in violation of legal restrictions. (Ahmadi, K. (2017).

The problem extends beyond the 8-12 age group, as per data from the National Organization for Civil Registration. In recent years, thousands of marriages involving girls under the age of 15 have been recorded. An estimated 20% of Iranian girls under the age of 18 are married, with divorces among girls aged 10-14 also on the rise. It is crucial to emphasize that these statistics exclusively reflect registered marriages, and the extent of unregistered cases remains unknown. The true scale of the issue becomes apparent when considering these unreported instances.

3.2 Child Labor

A significant issue arising from the failure to recognize childhood as an independent period is the pervasive problem of child labor. If childhood is not considered a phase that should be sacrificed for adulthood, in line with pragmatist principles (Dewey, 1958: 62), the practice of child labor should be unequivocally discouraged. Child labor is fundamentally rooted in the notion that children should be prematurely initiated into the responsibilities and tasks of adulthood. Although economic poverty is often a driving factor behind child labor, cultural elements are far from irrelevant. Regardless of whether child labor is predominantly influenced by cultural or economic forces, the result remains consistent: it obstructs the implementation of pragmatist pedagogy.

Regrettably, the availability of precise official statistics regarding the number of working children in distinct economic sectors, categorized by gender, weekly working hours, geographical location, and age, remains an elusive challenge in Iran. Official and unofficial statistics exhibit significant discrepancies, rendering the acquisition of an accurate count of working children aged 8-12 an arduous endeavor.

According to surveys conducted by Alipour (2019), an official representative of the Iranian Statistics Center, 92.17% of children are reported to be engaged in studies, while 1.82% are engaged in work without simultaneously pursuing an education. These surveys also suggest a concerning trend of children who work while attempting to balance their studies, with a rise from 0.90% to 1.21% in 2018 compared to prior years. (Alipour, Mohammad Sadegh. (2019).

However, in light of analogous statistics and additional contextual factors, it is likely that a substantial number of children aged 8-12 continue to labor while attempting to maintain their education. The act of child labor, whether it impedes educational access or diminishes its quality, remains a pertinent issue. The Statistical Centre of Iran's 2006 report highlights the gravity of the situation, where out of a total of 13,253,300 children aged 10-18, a staggering 3,600,000 were not attending school, with 1,700,000 directly

involved in labor. Among them, 1,670,000 were classified as "child labor," with 1,300,000 being boys and 370,000 being girls within the 10-18 age range. In a study published in 2019 for the World Day against Child Labor, the Center for Statistics and Information of the Ministry of Labor estimated that approximately 499,165 children aged 10-17 were involved in child labor. However, it is crucial to emphasize that official statistics in Iran are fraught with reliability issues, and anecdotal observations on the streets reveal a more extensive presence of children below the age of 12 engaged in child labor. (Statistical Centre of Iran (2006).

Moreover, the actual scope of child labor exploitation transcends official statistics. Hidden labor practices flourish within small industries, unregistered workshops, underground operations, domestic work, agricultural labor in rural areas, and other concealed sectors. These illicit occupations often remain unreported, as parents fear legal consequences or other repercussions. Consequently, children engaged in illegal and covert labor activities are often excluded from official censuses. For instance, Safakhani's (2016) study on children laboring in brick kilns underscores the impact of this form of child labor on their education and highlights the hazardous and grueling conditions endured by these young laborers. Brick kilns are recognized as one of the most perilous forms of child labor. (Safakhani, Samra. (2016).

IV. SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS OF EDUCATION

Drawing upon the foundational principles of pragmatist pedagogy, as championed by John Dewey, the educational approach prioritizes the fulfillment of four distinct desires inherent in children: the desire for social relationships, the desire for inquisitive exploration of objects, the desire for engaging in activities, and the desire for artistic interpretations. According to Dewey, when the curriculum is constructed upon these principles, it nurtures the natural growth of children. Pragmatists assert that school curricula should not exist in isolation from social contexts; instead, they should serve as platforms for the

cultivation of democratic ideals. Curriculum content should draw from ordinary life experiences, enriched to align with educational objectives. (Dewey, John. (1988).

Dewey underscores the school's fundamental role as a social institution, and pedagogy, in his view, is a collaborative social process. The school environment should not alienate children from the broader social sphere; educational content and teaching methods should be collaborative, rather than competitive or self-centered, fostering a sense of social connectedness. Suppression of children's desires for exploration and change is discouraged. Children should be nurtured with the belief that well-being and welfare are collective pursuits requiring interpersonal relations. This educational approach aims to empower children to envision and create a desirable future society while addressing the flaws within their current social systems. (James, William. (1922).

In terms of evaluating children's tasks and activities at school, pragmatists advocate for criteria that are not rigid or unalterable. Instead, they propose flexible criteria adaptable to the subject matter and individual talents of children. Recognizing the diversity among children and respecting each child's uniqueness is central to the pragmatist perspective. (Dewey, John. (1958).

It is important to note that pluralism is a fundamental concept embraced by all pragmatists. Renowned pragmatists such as William James, John Dewey, and Richard Rorty identify themselves as pluralists. A significant critique of traditional educational systems within the pragmatist framework is the utilization of uniform educational methods and rigid, fixed content that presumes all children possess identical needs and desires. This approach often results in the wastage of children's time, energy, and talents as their individualities are suppressed. The pedagogical system tends to deliver fragments of various sciences that may not resonate with children's needs, thus fragmenting their unified experiences. Pragmatist pedagogy is rooted in the belief that a democratic pedagogical approach is essential. This approach demands that school

curricula be connected to the broader social context and inspire children's inclination toward collaborative work and the initiation of independent projects.

However, within Iranian schools, a significant divergence from the pragmatist ideal is observed. There is a prevailing tendency towards uniformity, with school curricula being top-down, designed without considering the cultural and environmental diversity of students. The aim often appears to be the homogenization of students into a single, idealized persona. This practice, rooted not only in contemporary Iran but also in its historical context, departs from Dewey's vision of education, which seeks to nurture critical and questioning individuals. Dewey's ideals align with the Enlightenment vision of encouraging independent thought and the pursuit of individual understanding. Kant, in his work "What is Enlightenment?" emphasizes the importance of intellectual self-sufficiency and the development of critical thinking from childhood, underscoring that critical thinking in later stages of life is contingent upon early intellectual nurturing.

4.1 The School and its relationship with the society in Iran

The primary challenge in the Iranian education system, particularly concerning the age range of 8-12, lies in the absence of a collaborative and socially engaging environment within schools. One of the critical issues is the limited agency children have in selecting their preferred teaching methods. The prevailing hierarchical dynamics among teachers, principals, and assistant principals have fostered a top-down approach to education and discipline. This traditional structure, which formerly allowed for corporal punishment, remains deeply ingrained in Iranian culture. Even though corporal punishment has waned in recent years, other forms of punitive measures, such as verbal abuse and excessive assignments, persist. This punishment-oriented system tends to give rise to antisocial behavior, a lack of self-confidence, and imitation, rather than nurturing effective social participation, as advocated by Dewey's educational ideals.

In practice, the Iranian educational process is heavily influenced by systems of punishment and reward. Instead of engaging in learning activities with enthusiasm and curiosity, children often perform tasks hurriedly and without creativity, driven by fear of potential repercussions from their teachers. The role of teachers, regrettably, has been reduced to enforcing compliance through punishment, which stifles the inherent playfulness of childhood. Playfulness is frequently viewed negatively in schools, with teachers and principals equating politeness with unwavering adherence to their authority. Consequently, many children lack initiative and are primarily controlled or disciplined according to these conceptions of politeness, leading to high dropout rates among students of various ages. The situation has become so dire that, in 2018, the Minister of Education and Training in Iran went so far as to liken Iranian schools to prisons, with children feeling a sense of liberation when schools are closed. Attendance feels like imprisonment, highlighting the non-collaborative educational environment.

Moreover, Iranian schools typically do not encourage social interactions among children during short breaks between classes, and group work is not emphasized. This lack of social engagement deprives children of the opportunity to acquire essential social skills. Pedagogy predominantly revolves around rote memorization, often tied to exam periods, which does little to foster genuine learning. Competition within this framework fails to contribute to educational progress; instead, it reinforces individualism at the expense of the social dimensions of education. Instead of playing for enjoyment and shared experiences, children engage in games to win or defeat their peers, perpetuating a win-lose mentality influenced by the adult world. It is essential to replace this spirit of competition with one of group collaboration. While some games may naturally involve winning and losing, creating a sense of rivalry by overly rewarding winners diverts children's focus from the core objective of better learning. It redirects their time and energy toward winning at all costs. In a more constructive educational environment,

games should stress teamwork over creating situations where only a select few can succeed. This can be achieved by tailoring tasks and activities to the unique interests and motivations of groups of children. Additionally, all children should have the opportunity to acquire general skills and engage in activities that cater to their individual needs and talents.

4.2 Educational Problems of Ethnic Groups

The most deprived areas in Iran are often situated in border regions, marked by political, racial, and religious tensions with the central government. Inhabitants of these border areas are primarily composed of ethnic groups, including Arabs, Baloch, Kurds, and Turks. The genesis of these tensions can be traced back to a period preceding the 1979 revolution, particularly during the Pahlavi regime. It was during this era that the concept of the nation-state and nationalism, inspired by the governance model of Ataturk in Turkey, was introduced to Iran.

Historically, Iran has been a melting pot of diverse ethnic groups, and while tensions between these groups and the central government are not novel, they have often stemmed from issues related to power distribution and the central government's perceived weaknesses. However, with the emergence of the Pahlavi regime's brand of nationalism, the very notion of ethnic identity was thrust to the forefront of Iran's political landscape (Abrahamian, 2005: 174). Nationalism, owing to its inherently exclusive nature, necessitates the construction of an "other" to sustain its dominant role. In the case of Iranian nationalism, this "other" was often the denial of the identities of various ethnic groups within its territories. This denial evolved into a significant political controversy that endured into subsequent governments. (Abrahamian, E. (2005).

The Islamic Republic, in contrast, endeavored to define itself more in terms of religious identity rather than a narrow nationalistic one. However, due to the structural constraints within the system, a form of nationalism persisted, and it has become more pronounced in recent years. Despite the central role of religion within the framework

of the Islamic Republic, the government retains a nation-state structure. Notably, in recent times, the paradigm for defining the Islamic Republic has shifted toward a Shiite nationalist perspective, which has posed challenges for ethnic groups that identify more closely with their linguistic or religious affiliations.

4.3 Mother Tongue

In recent years, a prominent issue that has garnered significant objections pertains to mother tongue-based education in Iran. The prevailing educational system, influenced by political considerations and an aim to reinforce a specific brand of nationalism, has imposed restrictions on the use of mother tongues for instruction in regions where Persian is not the native language. These regions are home to various ethnic groups, each with its distinct mother tongue, including Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish, among others. Opposition to this perceived discrimination has not only resulted in the sentencing of many civil activists but has also led to a complete prohibition of mother tongue-based education. This contentious issue not only represents a fundamental denial of the rights of ethnic groups but also imposes numerous challenges on children.

Many children in these regions, especially within the age group under consideration, either lack proficiency in Persian or struggle to communicate and comprehend the language at a level necessary for effective education. Numerous studies conducted in Iran have consistently indicated that students from Persian-speaking backgrounds tend to achieve higher acceptance rates and educational progress compared to those whose mother tongue is not Persian. Furthermore, during the initial years of education, when a child's grasp of the Persian language is still developing, failure rates tend to be notably higher.

Research, such as the study conducted by Moradi and Saifullah (2013), underscores the effectiveness of mother tongue-based education in fostering motivation, self-confidence, and preventing feelings of alienation among students. Nevertheless, the situation remains deeply

challenging. According to the second chapter and the fifteenth principle of the Iranian constitution, which addresses language, script, national date, and the official flag of the country, Persian is declared as the official and common language and script for the Iranian populace. While it permits the use of local and ethnic languages in press, mass media, and the teaching of their respective literatures, it refrains from allowing the use of mother tongues as a medium of instruction in formal education. (Moradi, F., & Saifullah, S. (2013).

It is essential to note that although the constitution seemingly supports the teaching of local and ethnic languages and literatures alongside Persian, this practice is conspicuously absent from the contemporary education system. As such, it is imperative to explore the implications of this gap between constitutional provisions and the practical implementation of language policies in Iran.

V. EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS DUE TO THE LACK OF ENOUGH TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

5.1 *Learning through doing and Acting*

At its core, pedagogy is grounded in the principle of learning through practice and experience. In this discussion, we seek to elucidate the pivotal concept that underscores the discipline, one intrinsically linked to pragmatism—the concept of usefulness. In the realm of education, the intersection of interests, skills, usefulness, and experience plays a crucial role. Pragmatist pedagogy emphasizes an active approach to learning, where children are encouraged to harness their personal experiences, ultimately cultivating their talents and preparing them for the intricacies of life. In this pedagogical context, the process of learning is redefined as learning by doing, experiencing, and actively engaging with the world.

Notably, John Dewey, a prominent pragmatist philosopher, offers a critical perspective on contemporary educational theories, coining the term "experience equals art." Dewey contends that aesthetic and artistic experiences hold a

superior position among various types of experiences. These experiences are esteemed for their intrinsic value and are characterized by emotive, intellectual, and practical dimensions. In Dewey's educational framework, the traditional approach of inundating children with information and data takes a back seat. Instead, the value and relevance of knowledge are contingent upon the capacity of the individual to translate it into action.

Crucially, pragmatism raises a fundamental question: Does adopting or rejecting a particular viewpoint translate into a practical difference in one's life? This pragmatic boundary discerns the useful from the non-useful and underscores the importance of education grounded in the personal experiences of children. In a pedagogical framework inspired by pragmatism, children are encouraged to explore, experiment, and act, providing them with the capacity to face real-life challenges. This methodology fosters a deep and creative form of learning.

In this pedagogical paradigm, children are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in their educational journey. Dewey's term "self-teaching" captures this concept, where teachers establish an environment that encourages children to experiment, act, and engage in activities. The role of the teacher evolves from a sole provider of knowledge to a facilitator of experiences, guiding children in their self-education. Collaborative learning and group activities enable children to collaboratively address a myriad of problems.

However, these principles encounter significant challenges in the current educational landscape of Iran. Educational systems that revolve around scores and competition often overlook the essence of collaborative and experiential learning, centralizing the teacher as the authoritative source of knowledge. The spirit of group collaboration and shared experiences is often lost in the pursuit of individual success.

Dewey's understanding of experience extends beyond mere engagement; it underscores the importance of reconstruction and reorganization

of experiences. Notably, not all experiences are created equal, and Dewey posits that the enrichment of experience arises from its reconstruction. Rather than limiting experiences, pedagogy should expose children to diverse problems, thus cultivating agile minds that develop a broad spectrum of talents. Through the process of actively engaging with the world, children are equipped to find solutions for a multitude of issues.

Yet, this philosophical approach faces two key challenges in Iran. Firstly, the predominant teaching method remains rooted in traditional teacher-student dynamics. Secondly, many regions of the country lack high-quality educational facilities, limiting opportunities for active, experience-based learning.

A pressing issue in the Iranian educational landscape is the growing trend of home-schooling. While concerns regarding the limitations of home-schooling are raised by education officials, they often overlook the roots of this trend. Many parents who opt for home-schooling are concerned that the current educational system fails to adequately address the development of crucial social skills. These parents endeavor to provide their children with the space to acquire essential life skills that formal education might not adequately foster.

5.2 Educational Facilities

Iran has a high percentage of the nomadic and rural population. However, there are no standard facilities such as schools, teachers, or pedagogical plans in many villages and nomadic populations. Sometimes, it is observed that children should commute long distances to the neighboring cities in order to have access to education. In several villages, students prefer to drop out of school because they have to travel for long distances to get there; since they do not have access to suitable transportation, or that it costs a fortune for their families, they prefer to give up education. The long distances, far from other problems mentioned above, sometimes lead to accidents and death. Furthermore, in those areas where there are elementary schools, there are not middle

schools. Therefore, children cannot continue their education when they are 11 or 12 or leave their home for schools at these early ages. For example, only in one border province of Iran (Sistan and Baluchestan), there is a deficit of 11000 teachers and 15000 classrooms. Moreover, some Iranian officials have reported that there will be an enormous deficit of teachers in the next five years.

Another problem derived from the lack of enough teachers and facilities is that in regions where there are nomadic people, 8–12-year-old children have to be in one classroom altogether. The teacher should divide her time for different levels. In other words, she should teach 5 different levels in one single day! Obviously, such ramifications decrease the quality of education drastically. Since in situations like this, students would not be in one class with their peers nor receive their proper curriculum.

In addition to these problems, the plan for combining schools has also exacerbated this problem. The minister of education first issued this plan in the ninth administration of the Iranian government. It claimed to increase the quality of education by combining schools with less than 15 students together. Despite many objections against this plan, Ahmadi Nezhad's administration set a precedent and this unfair plan is still practiced in small areas. Despite the fact that in the issued instructions, it was maintained that the plan should not leave out the necessary education of students, some of these students cannot continue their studies due to enormous obstacles that education far from home creates for them.

Its connection to the structure of the Islamic Republic, this time, lies in the economic issues. Despite its aggressive denial of Western systems, the economic structure of the Islamic Republic is built on the most brutal form of capitalism. The ninth administration (after the 1979 revolution), which executed the policies of combining schools, simultaneously enacted the most cases of privatization in Iran. This privatization could not be done on a standard basis without governmental intervention and interference. In the name of privatization, they put public sectors

into the hand of certain people connected to the government, thus introduced a kind of state capitalism.

Regarding education, apart from the recent attention to private schools, the right to education, which is one of the basic human rights, has been denied from students. By combining schools and assigning education to private schools, the government is practically evading its responsibility to provide free education. This delegation, not only in deprived areas but also in urban areas, ends up in an unfair education in which students do not receive the same quality of education.

The other side of the issue is the lack of education facilities in borderline and deprived areas of Iran. In a number of them, school facilities are impoverished; some classes do not have safety standards, but some occasionally take place outdoors. For example, using non-standard and insecure heating systems and buildings cause casualties every year in Iran. Iran's Minister of Education said this year that 42% of Iranian schools do not have standard and safe heating systems. In addition, he said that there are approximately 2000 classes made from mud and about 2000 portable classes. There is a high chance of disasters in these classes; for example, the accident of the girl school at Shin Abad could be mentioned in which a fire took place in 2012 because of a non-standard heating system. In this accident, 29 girl students got burned which two of them died and three of them lost their fingers. Last November, the ceiling of a classroom in an Iranian city collapsed. To take another example, according to an official in the renovation of schools, in just one Iranian province, heaters of 3500 classrooms are nonstandard; 32 percent of classrooms are not solid, and 26 percent are half-solid. This increases the possibility of an accident similar to that of Shinabad girls. In October 2021, the head of the Iranian Organization for the Renovation of Schools said that over 19 percent of Iranian schools should be demolished, rebuilt, and structural strengthening. He also reported that there are 4000 stone schools in Iran; that is, schools without ceilings or

of very low standards, which might collapse at any time.

Another example, which recently has received much attention, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, is the financial difficulties of families that cannot provide PCs, smartphones, or tablets for their children to attend their courses. Apart from a huge number of school dropouts, more than a few young students have committed suicide because they did not have smartphones; there are many students who think of leaving their schools altogether. The Minister of Education said in an interview that out of 14 million students, just 10 million sign up in online educational systems, and more than 3 million could not sign up and attend online education due to not having smart devices or not having access to the internet. This latter group of students, many of whom are between 8 to 12 years old, are subjected to dropouts. The last February, the Deputy of Elementary School stated that just 89,000 students are left out from elementary education in the 2021 educational year. Three days before his report, the General Director of the Office for the Extension of Educational Fairness and Nomadic Education announced that the number of students who left the schools in elementary levels was 210,000. According to another statistics reported by the deputy minister of education and training, 25 percent of students dropped out of school because they did not have smart phones.

It is necessary to say that although this is not a problem only in deprived or borderline areas and is recurrent all around the country, it is more intense in these regions. For instance, in the villages of two towns in Iran alone, over three thousand orphans have been identified: children who cannot afford to pay even small amounts of money, such the small amount required for the print of their report cards, which is just one-fifth of one euro!

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings presented in this study illuminate a spectrum of pressing educational challenges within the Iranian context, encompassing issues such as child labor, socio-economic disparities,

ethnic inequities, and shortages in both teaching staff and educational infrastructure. The statistical evidence underscores the severity of these challenges, underscoring the imperative need for immediate intervention.

In accordance with the data, a conspicuous gender gap in digital education access emerges among children aged 7-12, with 55% of girls and 45% of boys possessing such access. This gender-based discrepancy in digital education availability represents a significant hurdle in the pursuit of educational equity and opportunity.

Equally noteworthy are the obstacles associated with mother tongue education, which afflict 45% of children and manifest as substantial language barriers within the educational system. These statistics emphasize the urgency of addressing the underprovision of mother tongue-based education, as it bears a substantial impact on children's motivation, self-confidence, and the prevention of feelings of alienation.

The dearth of qualified educators poses yet another formidable challenge, with only 40% of the required teaching workforce available. This scarcity detrimentally affects educational quality, leading to larger class sizes and a restricted capacity to provide individualized attention to students. Furthermore, an alarming urban-rural imbalance exists in the distribution of teachers, with 55% concentrated in urban areas and a mere 10% serving in rural regions.

The cumulative ramifications of these challenges call for immediate and multifaceted action. The disparities observed in digital education access, mother tongue-based education, and teacher availability underscore the exigency of comprehensive reforms within the education system. It is imperative that substantial resources and investments be allocated to ameliorate the gender gap, institute inclusive educational practices, and ensure an ample supply of competent educators in both urban and rural domains.

Addressing these multifarious challenges necessitates a concerted approach, encompassing policy overhauls, precisely targeted interventions,

and the mobilization of resources. Endeavors should be directed at enhancing educational infrastructure, offering comprehensive training and support to teaching personnel, fostering inclusivity and cultural sensitivity, and prioritizing the educational needs of marginalized demographic groups. By addressing these formidable educational issues, Iran can take significant strides toward crafting an inclusive and equitable educational framework that affords every child the opportunity to flourish and unlock their full potential.

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Modern Woodcut Art in Vietnam in the Early 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Modern woodcut art in Vietnam has a long-standing tradition from various folk woodcut art styles, such as Dong Ho, Hang Trong, Lang Sinh, Do The, and Kim Hoang. In 1925, the establishment of the Dong Duong School of Fine Arts marked an important milestone in the development of modern woodcut art. Today, artists are experimenting with various creative trends, innovating techniques in woodcutting, printing, reduction woodcuts, and notably, some have harnessed the power of Industry 4.0 to create contemporary and high-quality artistic works. During this period, modern woodcut art exhibits newfound vitality, diversity in artistic techniques, various creative trends, rich subject matter, diverse material techniques, and expressive forms reflecting the region's culture, which is the hallmark of modern woodcut art in Vietnam.

Keywords: diversity, folk woodcut art, modern woodcut art, 21st-century, creative work, vietnam.

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Dr. Doan Minh Ngoc

ABSTRACT

Modern woodcut art in Vietnam has a long-standing tradition from various folk woodcut art styles, such as Dong Ho, Hang Trong, Lang Sinh, Do The, and Kim Hoang. In 1925, the establishment of the Dong Duong School of Fine Arts marked an important milestone in the development of modern woodcut art. Today, artists are experimenting with various creative trends, innovating techniques in woodcutting, printing, reduction woodcuts, and notably, some have harnessed the power of Industry 4.0 to create contemporary and high-quality artistic works. During this period, modern woodcut art exhibits newfound vitality, diversity in artistic techniques, various creative trends, rich subject matter, diverse material techniques, and expressive forms reflecting the region's culture, which is the hallmark of modern woodcut art in Vietnam. In general, every artist using their individual strengths in practical creativity has played a part in changing the face of modern Vietnamese art in the early 21st century.

Keywords: diversity, folk woodcut art, modern woodcut art, 21st-century, creative work, vietnam.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In today's context of international integration, modern woodcut art in Vietnam has evolved under the influence of historical, economic, political, and cultural factors. Artworks created during this period exhibit fresh stylistic changes, distinctive nuances, and contemporary relevance. Contemporary art is a fusion of various art forms, and the era of Industry 4.0 has reshaped the

artistic thinking and aesthetic perspectives of creative individuals. The process of international exchange and integration serves as a precursor to the development and diversification of artistic trends. Groups of authors following distinct creative trends engage with the community, observe societal changes, aiming to capture beauty and reflect the contemporary spirit in each artwork.

II. BACKGROUND

2.1 Diversity in Techniques and Expressive Forms

Modern woodcut art in Vietnam is influenced by contemporary artistic trends worldwide and has steadily developed. In the past, artists primarily focused on creating solemn and revolutionary-themed works. However, today, these themes are less common, replaced by subjects that reflect contemporary life. The issues of integration and development directly impact the creative perspectives of many artists. As a result, art adapts to new artistic trends to blend with the modern art scene globally. Consequently, modern woodcut art during this period embodies contemporary diversity and innovation.

From the traditional hand-printing technique using handmade paper materials, often in small sizes and made from natural materials, today's artists have shifted towards using large-sized imported papers like Canson and foreign-made handcrafted papers. Furthermore, they even print directly onto canvas (toile) using modern printing machines to create artworks with large dimensions and high artistic quality.

Moving away from traditional woodcut techniques, artist Tu Duyen explored new material techniques like silk printing on woodblocks, which she calls "Seal of Approval".

Her artwork, "Better to be a demon in the South than a king in the North" inspired by the resolute words of General Tran Binh Trong in the face of Mongol invaders, serves as a powerful source of inspiration. The artwork portrays Tran Binh Trong as an unyielding figure, standing tall. It seems to strip away the essence of a forgotten hero who sacrificed himself for the nation and its people.

The innovation in techniques within modern woodcut art in Vietnam has acted as a catalyst for artists, particularly for those who matured after the year 2000. They have been exposed to technology and frequent international exchanges, leading to various new modes of expression and artistic presentation.

Contemporary art today is a fusion of various art forms, and the rapid development of information technology and global connectivity has transformed the artistic thinking and aesthetic perspectives of creative individuals. New shifts in economics, culture, and politics in the early 21st century have had an impact on artistic movements in Vietnam. Notably, this period has seen an increase in the number of woodcut artists in Vietnam, with many exemplary artists and high-quality works that hold great aesthetic value, such as Le Thanh Tru, Nguyen Xuan Dong, Tran Van Quan, Le Xuan Chieu, Nguyen Duc Hoa, To Uyen, Nguyen Nghia Phuong, Doan Minh Ngoc, Dang Minh Thanh, Phan Hai Bang, Pham Khac Quang, Vu Dinh Tuan, Nguyen Khac Han, Vu Bach Lien, and others.

In general, woodcut art during this period has been a unique and technically rich medium, possessing high aesthetic value in the minds of art enthusiasts. It has had a certain influence on the artistic sensibilities and spiritual life of the people. Woodcut art in this era is clearly vibrant, diverse, and rich, with numerous notable artists and works.

The artworks unveiled during this period reflect a more youthful and open-minded perspective in art, with many experiments ranging from realism to innovation, from decorative trends to realistic ones. These can be seen as new signs, an

inevitable consequence of the international integration process, representing a definite innovation in Visual Arts with fresh forms of expression. As a result, the content, themes, and creative ideas of artists have expanded and gained respect. Artists are now free to paint what they like, based on their thoughts, without being confined to revolutionary or military themes as in the past. Modern woodcut art in Vietnam has indeed become more open, contemporary in outlook, and has seen numerous international exhibitions and collaborations between domestic artists and their international friends.

During this period, the forms of artistic expression have undergone changes. The dynamics of the market economy and international integration trends have instilled strong emotions and practical experiences in artists, enabling them to create contemporary artworks. Many artists have developed their unique artistic styles, enriching the field of modern woodcut art while maintaining their national identity. Artists like Le Thanh Tru, Nguyen Xuan Dong, Tran Van Quan, To Uyen, Tran Tuyet Mai, Nguyen Duc Hoa, Vu Dinh Tuan, and others have shaped their artistic styles that add depth to modern woodcut art in Vietnam, keeping its national essence intact.

In this era, artists have selectively embraced European modern art techniques in spatial handling, form expression, color usage, and the essence of Eastern woodcut art to create a distinctive character for modern woodcut art in Vietnam. It can be said that contemporary artistic concepts and perspectives have evolved, with many innovative approaches, improved and diverse materials in a positive direction.

During this period, woodcut art has transformed in terms of space and size. It has evolved from being primarily a graphic art form to incorporating more painterly aspects, particularly with an emphasis on color, showcasing the art's ability to harmonize in a spatial context. Woodcut art during this time exhibits new technical elements, intricate detailing, expressive freedom, depth in pictorial representation, and a variety of

methods for conveying artistic ideas by individual artists.

Artists have shifted from small-scale spatial layouts to grand and majestic compositions. Traditional woodcut techniques, characterized by the use of single-color areas and simple lines, have evolved into reduction woodcut techniques that use multiple colors to manage light relationships in expansive woodcut artworks. These artworks exemplify the splendid scale of woodcut art, such as Nguyen Trung Tin's "Hoa Binh market" with dimensions of 70cm x 200cm, Le Xuan Chieu's "Ho Chi Minh City triumphant song" measuring 110cm x 175cm, Huynh Thi Tu's "flock of sheep" with a size of 65cm x 135cm, and Nguyen Khac Han's "Chase your dreams" measuring 100cm x 300cm.

The works published during this period reflect a younger, more open-minded perspective, with fresh nuances in their forms of expression and increased diversity. There is a connection to traditional Vietnamese art, Eastern art, and various new forms of artistic expression that exhibit Western artistic influences. Many experiments ranging from realism to innovation trends are new indicators, an inevitable consequence of international integration, a definite innovation in contemporary Visual Arts with various forms of artistic expression today.

2.2 Diverse Trends in Creative Work

As the history of art in the world progresses into modern society, the need for innovation becomes increasingly essential. Therefore, artistic innovation has no fixed point, in other words, no artistic trend or style is immutable. The process of international exchange and integration serves as a prerequisite for the development and diversification of artistic trends. As a result, each artist consistently showcases their work wherever they are, employing specific techniques and materials, and each work reflects the regional characteristics of each country and ethnicity. Each trend group expresses unique characteristics in the way they articulate the visual language of each author in terms of composition, engraving and printing

techniques, the use of color, and the construction of imagery within their works.

2.2.1 Group of Artists Following the Traditional Woodcut Preservation Trend

The majority of works created by the group of artists who aim to preserve traditional values often involve black and white woodcut, executed with great finesse. Artist Nguyen Phu Hau manipulates space within his artworks to evoke a sense of levity and fantasy, as seen in his piece "Dragon and serpent ascending to the clouds" (2009). Artist Le Thanh Tru, on the other hand, preserves the distinctive characteristics of traditional woodcut, bearing a resemblance to Dong Ho paintings and paying little attention to the laws of proximity in his works, as evident in "Dong Thap early morning" (1996). Nguyen Manh Hung employs intricate curved lines with bold strokes and skillfully refines black areas to create beautiful compositions. Tran Dinh Phuoc Loi leans towards romanticism with an airy and ethereal quality, but one can still perceive a captivating sense of luminosity and movement within his artwork. Nguyen Khac Han captivates his audience with his masterful traditional woodblock carving techniques, achieving an exceptional level of precision that transcends the constraints of traditional woodcut. Notably, the content of his works often delves deep into social critique, as exemplified by "Project for my child" (2016) and "by oneself" (2020).

In general, artists following this trend utilize a system of imagery borrowed from traditional folk woodcut, combined with modern shaping elements to convey contemporary themes. The distinctive feature of the traditional preservation trend is its emphasis on lines and distinct blocks, coupled with limited color usage, resulting in a rustic and close resemblance to various Vietnamese folk art styles such as Dong Ho, Hang Trong, and Do The from the southern region.

Artists in the traditional trend primarily focus on shapes and colors while letting go of the black outlines of the forms, blurring the lines that connect the elements in what is commonly referred to as the "single-line diagram." This

specific technique has the ability to infuse rhythm and a rich tempo into the artwork.

Through the process of approaching both Eastern and Western art, these artists have combined shapes, blocks, and smooth lines to create a rhythm and tempo that elicits aesthetic expression, establishing the distinctive characteristics of modern Vietnamese woodcut.

2.2.2 Group of Artists in the Innovation Trend

In the 21st century, artists must find a harmonious balance between emotion and technology to reach higher levels of artistic expression, enriching and diversifying the emotional nuances of contemporary art. The visual language continually tends toward innovation, with each artist choosing their own path and approach to create harmony in their artistic expression.

"In general, Vietnamese artists and particularly those in the innovation trend tend to focus on experimenting with the new and the unusual but rarely offer theories or explanations for what they convey in their works" [5].

The innovation trend in art refers to the process of making something new in a particular art form compared to what existed before. In the realm of woodcut, innovation entails deviation from traditional art in terms of technique or expression (color, lines, composition, imagery, etc.).

Each material has its own unique characteristics, and woodcut or lacquer paintings, regardless of how much one wants to innovate in terms of materials or techniques, cannot be easily innovated in the same way as oil paintings or watercolors. This is because oil and watercolor materials allow artists to quickly express spontaneous emotions, whereas woodcut or lacquer paintings require a significant amount of time to handle the technical aspects of the materials.

Furthermore, woodcut are closely tied to the traditions of Vietnamese folk art, so when artists attempt to innovate, the methods of expression

are markedly different from those in Western oil paintings.

The innovation trend in modern Vietnamese woodcut in the early 21st century is characterized by its diversity in content and experimental forms. Notably, there have been explorations in changing perspectives, modes of expression, alterations in block carving techniques, printing techniques, large-scale printing, combining various materials, and using multiple printing plates. Technical innovations are seen as specialized tools that assist artists in conveying complex forms and expressing the intentions of their works in a more modern direction.

Handling shaping elements like decorative motifs, strong color usage, contrasting shapes, innovative lines, and the artistic interpretation of content all contribute to the creation of modern woodcut that meet specific interior design criteria and have high practical utility. These qualities are advantageous for the group of artists following the innovation trend.

Many experiments have been noted, including innovations in technique, woodblock carving, printing, color processing, post-printing treatments, and the exploration of large-scale printing and overprinting effects on the artwork. However, many experimental trends are still seen as positive signals in the creative process that need further time to take clear shape. Despite the various creative experiments, a significant proportion of the woodcut works during this period reflect vivid realities regarding the socioeconomic development of the country. This is also a distinct and unique feature of modern Vietnamese woodcut.

On the other hand, the imagery, language, and expressive techniques that are simple and closely tied to social realities can be seen as a distinctive characteristic in woodcut during this period.

2.2.3 Group of Artists in the Realism Trend

The realism trend places a strong emphasis on the tangible aspects of the artwork, focusing on imagery and scenes that are closely connected to nature, daily life, and labor in the external social

context. Realism is an expression of an artist's "view" of the objective world. However, true success in realism is achieved when the portrayal is so faithful that it captures the essence of the subject.

In general, the majority of modern Vietnamese woodcut, despite technical innovations in carving, printing, and coloring, lean towards realism. Although there are different trends, the element of realism is pervasive in the genre of modern woodcut in Vietnam. The artists' creative perception is greatly influenced by the dominant aspects of real life. Their works seldom separate from the daily reality that is unfolding. Many artists employ traditional woodcut techniques, producing raw prints in multiple layers of color before adding final lines. For instance, Dang Huong's work "Return to Truong Sa" (Figure 1) and Le Thanh Tru's "The path of Mau Than" (Figure 2) are examples of this approach.

Additionally, some artists employ multi-color block printing that aligns along the edges, creating harmony during the printing process. This technique allows for variations in line thickness and hidden details within the innovation trend, as seen in works like Vu Dinh Tuan's "Ladies I, II, III, IV" (Figure 3) and Pham Khac Quang's "Human market" (Figure 4).

Many artists prioritize expressive lines, focusing on motion, rhythm, and the combination of lines before adding a layer of blurred lines. For instance, Vu Bach Lien's "Winter is coming" (Figure 5), Dang Minh Thanh's "Still life with Phu Dung flowers" (2012), and Huynh Thi Tu's "Flock of sheep" (Figure 6) all follow this approach.

The diversity in content and forms of expression also depends on the composition of the artistic team. Young artists who grew up after the war tend to depict contemporary social themes, such as Nguyen Nghia Phuong's "Test tube" (2011), Vu Dinh Tuan's "Lady with her reflection" (2011), Do Thi Thanh Tam's "making a living" (2013), Nguyen Tran Bao Linh's "before the show" (2013), Nguyen Van Chung's "Study online" (2022), and Doan Minh Ngoc's "The era of technology 4.0" (2019).

On the other hand, artists who lived through the war continue to carry the weight of historical themes and express them through a social realism lens. Their works often focus on the past, such as Tran Nguyen Dan's "Hoi An in my eyes" (2007), Hoang Trung Hieu's "Truong Son Forest" (2015), and Nguyen Phu Hau's "Comrade" (2017).

The distinctive feature of the realism trend is that the artworks rarely detach from the daily real world unfolding around the artists. Artists in the realism trend breathe new life into the existing reality, turning it into imagery and elevating it through the language of printing, carving, color blending, and painting. This approach makes the reality depicted in woodcut more flexible and captivating.

A defining characteristic of modern Vietnamese woodcut during this period is that they bridge the gap between graphic art and painting, infusing a strong sense of color and embodying a sense of harmony within the realm of contemporary art.

III. CONCLUSION

Modern Vietnamese woodcut both reflect the connection to the traditional folk woodcut and carry forward the values of modern woodcut, while also possessing their own unique nuances, gradually shaping the characteristics of modern woodcut in the early 21st century. New elements in woodcut today include highly detailed carving techniques, expressive freedom, a sense of elevation in visual art, a variety of colors, and diverse methods for conveying artistic ideas, which contribute to the diversity, harmony, and distinctive visual language of each artist. During this period, woodcut exhibit new vitality, diverse creative trends, richness in subject matter, material techniques, and forms of artistic expression that result in beautiful artworks.

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PHOTO APPENDIX



Figure 1: Dang Huong, Returning to Truong Sa, 2014, Woodcut, 107cm x 165cm

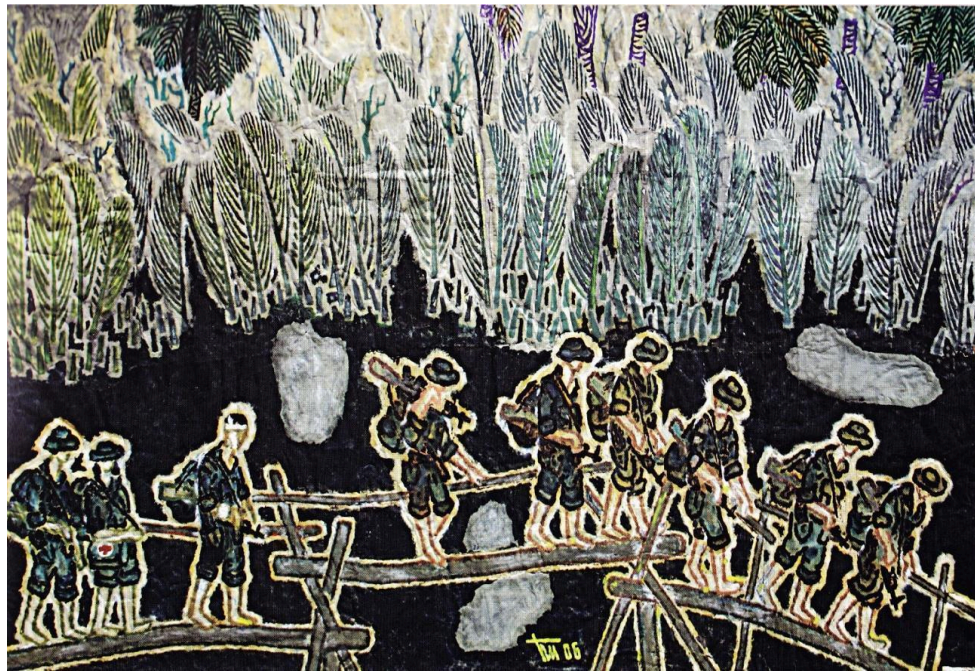


Figure 2: Le Thanh Tru, *The path of Mau Than*, 2008, 120cm x 180cm



Figure 3: Vu Dinh Tuan, *The Ladies I, II, III, IV*, 2009, Woodcut, 40cm x 110cm

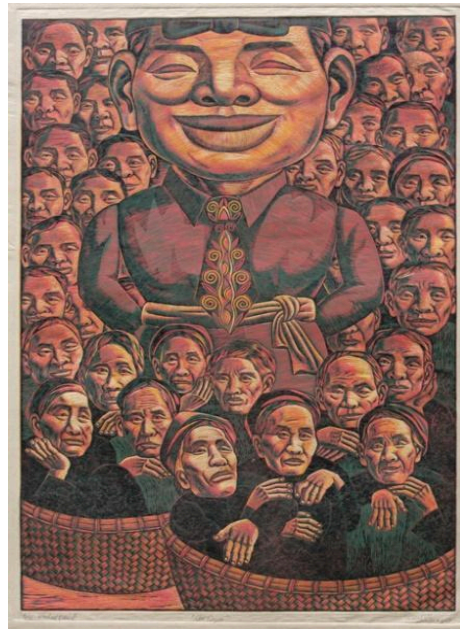


Figure 4: Pham Khac Quang, *Human Market*, 2010, Woodcut



Figure 5: Vu Bach Lien, *Winter is coming*, 2011, Woodcut, 70cm x 217cm



Figure 6: Huynh Thi Tu, *The flock of sheep*, 2015, Woodcut, 65cm x 135cm

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Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-2005: Implementation and Impact

Mr. Surinder Kumar

ABSTRACT

Employment is fundamental pre-requisite to raise per capita income and eradicate household poverty. Poor employment opportunity is one of the key reasons for the endurance of poverty in India. After independence and particularly from the Fifth Five Year Plan onwards, Government of India has initiated several rural development programmes for raising rural employment for the alleviation of rural poverty. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one amongst them. MGNREGA scheme is as a flagship program by the Government of India started on February 2, 2006. As per the Scheme, each rural household gets 100 days of guaranteed employment (unskilled works) every year.

Keywords: nrega/mgnrega/mgnregs, convergence, bpl and apl household, social capital.

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Employment is fundamental pre-requisite to raise per capita income and eradicate household poverty. Poor employment opportunity is one of the key reasons for the endurance of poverty in India. After independence and particularly from the Fifth Five Year Plan onwards, Government of India has initiated several rural development programmes for raising rural employment for the alleviation of rural poverty. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one amongst them. MGNREGA scheme is as a flagship program by the Government of India started on February 2, 2006. As per the Scheme, each rural household gets 100 days of guaranteed employment (unskilled works) every year. Although the major objective of this scheme is to provide livelihood security for rural households, it also facilitates the creation as well as maintenance of rural infrastructure and employment generation. The present paper is an attempt to overview the implementation and impact of MGNREGA on employment generation in rural India. It also examined the financial progress of MGNREGA and employment generated by this scheme. It not only provides security for food but also supports rural development. To perform the objective of the paper secondary data has been used.

Keywords: nrega/mgnrega/mgnregs, convergence, bpl and apl household, social capital.

Author: Assistant Professor (Dept. of Political Science) Sri Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College, Mahilpur Hoshiarpur (Punjab).

I. INTRODUCTION

The prevailing daily wage rate for manual labour in 2004-05, it was necessary for at least three members of an agricultural labour household to get employment for more than 200 days in a year in order to maintain itself above the poverty level. We also noted that since in reality it is difficult for many households to get this much employment, the poverty level in rural households is still high. The ground reality continues to reveal disturbing trends. While the availability of foodgrains has come down in general (rural + urban) from about 510 grams in 1990-91 to about 444 grams in 2009, the per capita consumption of foodgrains in rural households has declined relatively more from 373 grams in 1987-88 to 313 grams in 2009-10. Further, besides a continued increase in the proportion of marginal farmers over time, among all the three classes of agricultural households (landless, marginal and small farmers), there is a significant income deficit (to a tune of 20 to 40 percent) to meet their minimum consumption needs. As a result, the rural households are indebted with the landless/marginal/small farmers segment being more dependent on informal lending sources to meet their minimum consumption needs. More specifically, while in the aggregate close to 50 percent of rural households are indebted, more than 60 percent of landless labour incur debt for meeting their consumption expenditure. The wages paid to rural labour are often far below the statutory minimum wage and are differentiated by gender, location and nature of work/activity. Due to these disturbing trends, the government in its mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Plan (2002-07) raised serious concern on the 'distress' experienced by agricultural labourers and marginal/small farmers. The government has

since taken many steps to mitigate their hardship experienced. One of the notable initiatives of the government in the direction of providing guaranteed wage employment opportunities for rural unskilled manual labour was to enact a legislation The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, (NREGA) in August 23, 2005. The Act guarantees employment at statutory minimum wages for all those persons who sought manual unskilled labour for at least up to 100 days in a year.

II. KEY PROCESSES IN IMPLEMENTATION

The process of implementation of the Act/scheme works in stages as follows.

- **Submission of Names and Issuing of Job Card:** Adult members of rural household can submit details of their name, age, address and photo to the Gram Panchayat. The particulars of job seekers in the applications made are verified by reliable local sources in order that job cards are not issued wrongly. After due enquiry, the GP registers and issue a job card containing the details and the photograph of the member.
- **Eligibility for Applying for Work:** A registered person becomes eligible to apply for work. Applicants are required to apply for at least 14 continuous days of work. The Panchayat or the Programme Officer accepts valid applications and issue a receipt. Letter of providing work would be sent to the applicant and also displayed at the Panchayat Office.
- **Offer of Employment or Unemployment Allowance:** Employment would be provided within a radius of 5 km within 15 days of receipt of application. While the wage rates may be different for different regions, the per day wage for work provided shall not be less than Rs. 60 per day. The employment provided would be at least 100 days of employment per household per year. If work is not provided within this time limit, daily unemployment allowance will be paid to the applicant. If the distance for work offered is more than 5 km, extra wage is paid. The rate of unemployment allowance paid is to be notified by the state government and shall not be less than 25 percent of wages fixed

by the state for the first 30 days during a financial year and not less than 50 percent of the wages during the remaining part of the financial year. Further, in the event of inability to disburse the unemployment allowance in time, the programme officer shall report the matter to the district programme co-ordinator with reasons for the non-payment duly specified.

- **Cost Sharing:** The central and the state governments would share the cost of works initiated under the Act in the ratio of 3:1. It means 75 percent by central government and 25 percent by state government.

III. MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME

It is pertinent to note here that three articles of the constitution of India have bearing on the right to work and these are listed in the Directive Principles of State Policy. These three articles are:

- Article 39 envisage that the state to direct its policy towards securing for all its citizens, men and women, the right to an adequate means of livelihood.
- Article 41 enjoins the state to make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in any other of undeserved want, all within the economic capacity of the state.
- Article 43 direct the state to secure to all its citizens, work, living wage conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities.

Unemployment is a cause of poverty and generation of employment is central to eradicate poverty from rural India. The MGNREGS was launched in 2004 in 200 backward districts and later on extended to all the districts in the country in 2008. The mandate of the MGNREGA is to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. On 2nd October 2009 an

amendment was made in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, to rename the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act with the words the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Employment Guarantee Act. The major differences between NREGA and MGNREGA are summarized below:

NREGA	MGNREGA
The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is the foundation for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and provides guaranteed employment	The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, created as directed in NREGA and the means to implement the Act so that the guarantee comes into effect
The Central Government specified the features and conditions for guaranteed employment in NREGA 2005	The State Governments have to incorporate all features of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in the State Mahatma Gandhi NREGS as mentioned in Schedule –I and condition of employment as mentioned in Schedule-II of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA
The Central Government has powers to make rules and to amend NREGA	The State Governments have powers to make rules and amend the concerned State Act
NREGA has been notified through the Gazette of India Extraordinary notification and is National legislation.	Mahatma Gandhi NREGA of a State shall be notified through the Official Gazette of concerned State.

IV. COMPONENTS OF MGNREGS

4.1 Salient features of the MGNREGS Some of the salient features of MGNREGS are as follows

- At least 100 days of employment for at least one able-bodied person in every rural household
- Minimum wages on rate prevailing in states as per Minimum Wage Act 1948 and Centre to step in if wages go up beyond minimum or less than rupees 60.
- Panchayats to finalize, approve, implement and monitor the projects. The scheme shall not permit engaging any contractor for implementation of the projects.
- The task under the scheme shall be performed by using manual labour and not machines.
- A minimum of 33 percent reservation to be made for women, where the number of applicant is very large.
- The scheme will ensure transparency and accountability at all level of implementation and

- All accounts and records relating to the scheme shall be made available for public scrutiny.

4.2 Strategies of the MGNREGS Some of the strategies adopted are as follows

- Central government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, three fourth of material costs and certain percentage of administrative cost.
- The state governments meet the cost towards unemployed allowances, one fourth of material cost and administrative cost.
- Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with photos to gram panchayats for registration.
- Block is the basic unit of implementation.
- Gram panchayats are the main implementing agencies and
- Gram Sabha is the main work identifying body.

4.3 Mandatory Worksite Facilities some of the mandatory work site facilities needed to be available in the work sites of MGNREGS are

- Drinking water facilities for the workers.
- Provision of shade near the work sites.
- Provision of medical aid.
- Provision of creche, if more than five children below six are present at the work sites.

4.4 Gender Related Provisions

- Equal wage to both male and female worker employed
- No gender discrimination in employment and wage
- Priority in allocation of work to women and at least 33 percent of the workers in a particular work should be women

4.5 Permissible works

- Water conservation activities: (a) digging of ponds and (b) de-silting of ponds
- Small check dam/other harvesting structure
- Afforestation in common land/waste land areas
- Construction of minor irrigation canals
- Repair of minor irrigation facility to SCs/STs
- De-silting of old canals
- De-silting of traditional open well
- Land development of common waste areas
- Drainage/Nallah to drain extra water in water logged/flood affected areas
- Construction of embankment for flood control
- Repair of embankment for flood control connecting road to village main road
- Any other work which may be notified by the central government in consultation with the state government

4.6 Cost Sharing Central government has to pay for

- Wage costs
- 75% of material costs
- Some administrative costs

4.7 State governments have to pay for

- 25% of the material costs
- Other administrative cost
- Unemployment allowances

4.8 Social Audits

- Gram Sabha will conduct social audits of all work done within the panchayat.
- All relevant documents of the NREGS will be provided by the Panchayat to the Gram Sabha such as work register, muster roll etc.

V. DECENTRALIZED PLANNING AND MGNREGS

Under the MGNREGS each district has been asked to prepare a district perspective plan. Customarily, the district plan will be an aggregate of block plans and block plan is the sum total of the village panchayat plans. In some states there are wards within the panchayat, then the district could have the ward plan and the panchayat plan is the aggregate of ward plans like Himachal Pradesh. The key to plan preparation is the panchayat plan, as panchayat is the main implementing agency of MGNREGS.

5.1 Importance of Decentralized Planning

In recent years decentralized planning i.e. planning below the national and subnational level has become an instrument for future development of the local areas in most of the democratic societies including India. Both the decentralized as well as the democratic planning go hand in hand for facilitating development in the democratic societies. The decentralized planning in a democratic society believes in multi-level planning at the sub-national government levels to facilitate maximum utilization of available local resources and manpower for the local development.

5.2 Some of the differences between the centralized and decentralized planning are

- Decentralized planning is planning by the people and is democratic in nature. On the other hand, the centralized planning is a

planning for the people and authoritative in nature.

- Decentralized planning is based on the bottom-up approach, while centralized planning is based on top-down approach.
- Decentralized planning, the people through Gram Sabha and the elected representatives of village Panchayats took part in plan preparation. Thus, in other word, the decentralized planning is people's planning and more realistic in nature and closer to the accuracy and while the centralized planning is government's planning prepared in the white chamber without taking into consideration the views of the people for whom the plan is prepared.
- Centralized planning a single plan is prepared by the government for the state; while in case of decentralized planning each district and even of blocks and villages of a state have their own plan based on their local needs and is a integration of the plans of the both urban and rural areas.
- In case of centralized planning, the elected representatives are least involved, however, in decentralized planning, the elected representatives of the Urban Local Bodies and the Rural Local Bodies are largely associated in plan formulation exercises.

The need for decentralized planning and development was felt in India in the First Five Year Plan (1951-56), which advocated that there is a need to break the planning exercise into national, state, district, and local community levels. The two new components of decentralized planning came into picture in the Second Five Year Plan, namely, the establishment of the District Development Council and the drawing up of Village Plans. In 1969, the Planning Commission communicated guidelines to the states that to formulating district plans, encompassing the concept, the methodology and the detail drawing up plans within the framework of annual, medium term and perspective plans. The 39 Administrative Reforms Commission report (1967) highlighted that the district planning needed to be focused in those areas where local variations in the pattern and process

of development were likely to yield quick results in terms of growth. M.L.Dantwala Committee (1978) also laid stress on Block Level Planning to form a link between village and district level planning. In 1984, Hanumantha Rao Committee recommended for decentralization of functions, powers and finances and setting up of district planning bodies and district planning cells.

5.3 District Plan Preparation

The first to prepare a district plan is to prepare a need-based village plan. The bottom-up approach is usually followed in the preparation of District Plan. At the outset, village plan or panchayat plan is prepared. The block plan is the sum total of panchayats plan. The district plan is the aggregate of block plans. The organization or individual involved in the preparation of the village plan has to involve and work in co-ordination with the district and block administration and the functionaries of the line department in the district administration.

5.4 Steps in Preparation of District Plan

Step III	District Plan
Step II	Block Plan
Step I	Village Plan

VI. VILLAGE MGNREGS PERSPECTIVE PLAN

The Village MGNREGS plan preparation is the key to the district plan. In North Indian states where one village plan is also called the panchayat plan. But in the southern state where each panchayat consists on an average seven to eight villages, the panchayat plan is the aggregate of village plans.

VII. STRATEGY FOR VILLAGE PLAN PREPARATION

7.1 While preparing the village plan following points have to be kept in mind

- Assessing the demographic and other dynamics of the villages/ panchayats
- Identifying the available resources with the villages/ panchayats

- Identifying the gaps and practices and their relation to the problems
- Identifying the possible infrastructure required to deal with the problems
- Resource mapping for the creation of required infrastructure
- Man days and manpower mapping for creation of required infrastructure
- Year-wise prioritization of activities to be conducted, work generated and resources required
- Preparation of a strategic five years plan

7.2 Process of Village Plan Preparation Following steps needed to be followed in the process of village plan preparation

- Informing the panchayat and through its, the people about the need and importance of grass roots planning and making them understand how their participation is vital for plan preparation.
- Collection of required data both primary as well as secondary.
- Conducting Gram Sabha for identification of existing and required infrastructure.
- Year wise prioritizing the need and their implementation through PRA in which panchayat is actively involved.
- With the help of panchayat and line department functionaries estimating the project wise activities and expenditure requirement.

VIII. ORIENTATION ABOUT GRASSROOTS PLANNING

8.1 The following people functionaries and community based organization may be oriented about the importance of grassroots planning

- Members of the village panchayat and members of the intermediate and district panchayats who are in the panchayat.
- Youth club and Mahila Mandal members
- Self-help group members
- Members of farmers association
- Line department functionaries
- Opinion leader of the village

- Representatives of the NGOs, if any
- Any interested villagers

8.2 The important topics to be covered in the orientation programme are

- What is planning and grassroots planning
- Need and importance grassroots planning
- NREGS and its various features
- How to prepare grass-roots plan and importance of people's participation in grassroots planning.

8.3 Collection of Data Both primary and secondary data to be collected for the preparation of village plan:

A. Primary Data: The Primary data have to be collected on following aspects:

- Demographic aspects
- Type of households: caste wise and religion wise population
- Percentage of BPL families
- Percentage of Migratory households
- Land/ irrigation pattern
- Occupation of the households
- Literacy status
- Banking facility
- Cropping pattern
- Village small scale/cottage industry
- Village common land and their utilization pattern
- Available infrastructure and required infrastructure
- Number of unemployed persons
- Various sources of income of the panchayats

B. Secondary data: The secondary data for the village plan will be collected from following sources:

- Panchayat record and register
- Records available with block and district offices

8.4 Conduction of Gram Sabha

- People should be informed well in advance about the date, timing and agenda of discussion in Gram Sabha

- Registering the members who attended the Gram Sabha. The required quorum of the Gram Sabha needed to be fulfilled
- The president of the Gram Sabha should preside over the Gram Sabha and secretary of the village panchayat prepare minutes of Gram Sabha
- The wish-list of the Gram Sabha need to be posted in the panchayat houses after the end of Gram Sabha

8.5 Prioritizing the Needs through PRA One small working group must be constituted who will conduct PRA and perform following functions

- Year wise prioritization of activities
- The calculation of man days and budget
- Passing the final plan in the Gram Sabha

IX. REPORT WRITING

The report on the District Perspective Plan, MGNREGS needs to have following six chapters and an executive summary. The Chapters are discussed below:

Executive Summary: It would give a brief of the plan with objectives, methodology, physical and financial mapping.

CHAPTER-I: INTRODUCTION

The introduction will contain the information about the district. Information from various secondary sources has to be collected for writing this chapter. The information will cover aspects such as demography, caste-wise and religion-wise population; employment status of the population; agricultural productivity; size of land holding; depth of water table; sources of irrigation, literacy, main crop; occupation of the population; village small and cottage industries; banking facilities; etc.

CHAPTER-II: RESOURCE ENVELOPE: DISTRICT, BLOCKS AND PANCHAYATS

The second chapter will deal at length, the data on various sources of income of the district, block and panchayats collected with the help of questionnaire. The sources of income from

different centrally and state sponsored schemes are SGSY (Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana); BRGF (Backward Region Grant Fund); MPLAD (Member of Parliament Local Area Development Fund); MLALAD (Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Fund); etc. The own sources of revenue of the district panchayat; block panchayats and village panchayats have to be included in the calculation of the resource envelope.

CHAPTER-III: PANCHAYAT-WISE DETAILS OF INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT

The third chapter will discuss the panchayat-wise details of the list of infrastructure already existing and the list of infrastructure required. Secondly, it will also include the total finance available to a panchayat in the current year and the expected finance to be available in the next five years. Thirdly, the chapter will discuss the number of employment and man days to be generated in the next five year in the panchayat.

CHAPTER-IV: BLOCK-WISE DETAILS OF INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT

The fourth chapter will discuss the block-wise details of the list of infrastructure already existing and the list of infrastructure required. Secondly, it will also include the total finance available to the block in the current year and the expected finance to be available in the next five years. Thirdly, the chapter will discuss the number of employment and man days to be generated in the next five year in the block.

CHAPTER-V: DISTRICT-WISE DETAILS OF INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT

The fifth chapter will discuss the district-wise details of the list of infrastructure already existing and the list of infrastructure required. Secondly, it will also include the total finance available to the district in the current year and the expected finance to be available in the next five years. Thirdly, the chapter will discuss the number of

employment and man days to be generated in the next five year in the district.

CHAPTER-VI: EFFECTIVENESS OF MGNREGS

This chapter will discuss the effectiveness of MGNREGS in creating employment, promoting wage earning, checking rural-urban migration, promoting irrigation, raising productivity etc.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The physical education and sport (PE) teacher, in a contemporary school lured by the concept of interdisciplinarity (Dimitri Le Roy, Jean Trohel and Michaël Attali, 2020), can help a student progress in several ways. By explaining more simply, at greater length or in a different way. By engaging them in another task, one that is more challenging or commensurate with their abilities. By alleviating his anxiety, by restoring his confidence. By offering him other reasons to act or to learn. By placing him in another social setting, by de-dramatizing the situation, by modifying the didactic relationship or contract, by modifying the pace of work and progress, the

nature of the sanctions and rewards, and the student's share of autonomy and responsibility. Tardif and Lessard (1999) note that "interactivity characterizes the main object of the teacher's work, since the essence of his or her professional activity consists of entering a classroom and initiating a program of interactions with the students". First of all, regulation gestures appear as typical of PES teaching (Gal-Petifaux, 2000; Lémonie, 2009; Marsenach, 1987; Thorel, 2007). In this sense, the didactic intervention constitutes for them a fundamental descriptive category of the teacher's work. The second pitfall leads to a different and legitimate understanding of the teacher's intervention. It is a question, in this framework, of not remaining at a relatively macroscopic analysis where one seeks to account for the way in which the interventions and consequently the interactions structure the task of the teacher, but to analyze with a more "microscopic" focus how these interventions function, and more precisely, how it is constituted by the joint action of the teacher and the pupil. Consequently, we can postulate that the intervention of didactic regulation (IRD) of PES teachers is a process by nature complex: it can be indissociably communicative, verbal, didactic and social, which is influenced by several variables such as the expertise/speciality of the teacher.

For a better understanding of the teaching/learning process, it is important to articulate in a systemic way three distinct and interdependent logics: that of the learner, that of the teacher and that of the subject taught. However, this articulation generates several questions concerning the reliability of the didactic system and the originality of each of these elements in

the dynamics of the system. Thus, the study of one element will allow the understanding of the whole and the observation of any of these components only takes a didactic meaning when it is related to the two others (Mercier, 2000). Indeed, these three elements are articulated in a didactic environment which has several facets: institutional (schools); human (learners); temporal (sessions, cycles); material and didactic spaces. All these variables interact and evolve over time and constitute the basic elements from which we conduct our research.

II. METHODOLOGY

In this research, we considered it useful to mention a main hypothesis which aims to verify that the modalities of didactic intervention of teachers vary according to their speciality. Our study will concern two teachers of physical education and sports in the region of Kef (northwest Tunisia): Kais 32 years, specialist in volleyball as well as trainer for the categories of young volleyball players, has been teaching for 8 years in middle school and high school.

Ramzi is also 30 years old, he is a football coach and has been teaching PE at the secondary school for 10 years. These two teachers work in the same school. The beginning of April (after the spring break) is the starting point of our research which lasts four weeks to film four teaching sessions after having ensured a familiarization session to minimize the parasitic effects during the video recording with three fixed cameras and a tie microphone.

Therefore, ten interviews were conducted to question their teaching practices, to identify their beliefs concerning their actions in class and to note their personal conceptions of verbal and non-verbal interventions. The first part of the interview was a general interview on didactic teaching regulations, what they included in each category and what role they attributed to these communications in the didactic relationship. A second part of the interview, based on reminders stimulated by a montage juxtaposing selected passages of their interventions, aimed at collecting their comments about these sequences

and their intentions at that moment. This second part of the interview allowed them to confront the reality of their practice with the beliefs expressed previously. The different interviews will be transcribed.

It is therefore a question of building an empirical tool from an illustrative analysis of the interventions of these teachers during volleyball sessions, based on examples and a case study that will focus on the content of the statements made by these teachers as well as the discursive categories that appear through their didactic interactions (Austin 1970).

2.1 Processing of Verbal Interventions by Teachers

The method requires an initial joint work of cutting and naming. The verbal communications addressed to the students in the context of the task are transcribed in full, task by task. They are simultaneously divided into two units: "episodes" and "objects". An "episode" begins when the teacher communicates with a student (or a group of students) and ends with the teacher's departure or a new observation. An "object" represents a particular content of the communication. Each episode can thus comprise several objects. Each "object" is given a name corresponding to its content. In addition, elements of description of the teacher's gestures (demonstrations, manipulations) are notified. In addition, it is specified whether the communication is preceded by an observation (Tables 1 and 2 do not give an account of this in order to simplify the reading) and to whom the teacher is addressing (in the example below, the roles held by the pupils are identified: thrower, passer or receiver). Note that, when processing the data, the objects of regulation are sometimes grouped into macroscopic categories.

As a result of this work, we isolate the objects of intervention of didactic regulation. Communications that follow an observation and are of a didactic nature (as we have defined it) are given the designation "IRD". Each object named "IRD" then receives a coding corresponding to the four categories of didactic regulation: "task";

"results of the action"; "technical means"; "attitude towards learning" J-M. Boudard, J-F. Robin (2012). Objects that do not correspond to this definition are coded as "other". Finally, the IRDTs are isolated and subjected to qualitative analyses. The purpose of these analyses is to

better identify the characteristics of the knowledge actually taught (formal/functional, declined/macroscopic, explicit/metaphorical, dispersed/tight, convergent with the instructions or not, etc.).

Table 1: Processing of kais' verbalizations. Session 1, Step 1.

Verbatim	Object	Episode	Addressing	Object
In the semi-bent position you will concentrate on your arms and legs. Trunk straight and slightly bent forward	10	6	launcher	Throwing position of the ball
Throw the ball when your friend is ready	11	7	launcher	Time of the ball
The solution is to feel the force before launching	12			Throwing dosage
Give the ball a parabolic trajectory and accompany it with your body.				Ball trajectory
	13			
Are you OK?	14	8		Request for success
Before touching the ball you must have your free leg slightly bent and offset from the other leg.	15	9	passer	Fundamental position of vb
You have to put your hands on the front and look at the ball at that level.	16	10	passer	Reception technique
The reception of the ball must be always with the first three fingers of each hand and especially with damping.	17	11	passer	Reception technique

Table 2: Processing Ramzi's verbalizations. Session 1, Step 1.

Verbatim	Object	Episode	Addressing	Object
During the landing you have to be always in balance	10	6	passer	Basic position of vb
Have the ball thrown correctly, higher, higher.				Ball path
	11	7	launcher	
You have to find a good position trying to get your hands to the front	12		passer	Hand position
That's it, you're vibrating, block your support.	13		passer	Basic position of vb

It's better and don't forget to always look at the ball	14	8	passer	Basic position of vb
No, you're going to throw faster before he gets to the cone.	15	9	launcher	Speed of execution
You have to touch the ball with all your fingers	16	10	passer	Reception technique
Let's call it a day.	17	11	passer	Management/ comp

Table 3: Processing of Kais' verbalizations. Session 1, Step 2.

Verbatim	Type	SUBJECT	MACRO OBJECT	Nature
In a semi-bent position you will concentrate on your arms and legs.	IRD	Position ball throwing	Ball handling and orientation	Good
Throw the ball when your friend is ready	IRD	Time of the ball	Partner control	Medium
The solution is to feel the force before launching	IRD	Throwing dosage	Report with pass type	Excellent
give the ball a parabolic trajectory and accompany it with your body.	IRD	Choice of ball path	Concentration / choice of trajectory	Good
Are you OK?	OTHER	Request for success		
Before touching the ball you must have your free leg slightly bent and offset from the other leg.	IRD	Basic position of vb	Regulations/Safety	Task
You have to put your hands on the front and look at the ball at that level.	IRD	Reception technique	Hand position/ timing	Good
The reception of the ball must be always with the first three fingers of each hand and especially with damping.	RD	reception technique	touch of the ball / looks	Medium

Table 4: Processing Ramzi's verbalizations . Session 1, Step 2.

Verbatim	Type	SUBJECT	MACRO OBJECT	Nature
During the landing you have to be always in balance	RD	Basic position of vb	Orientation and hand position	Medium
Have the ball thrown correctly, higher, higher.	RD	Ball path	Throwing force	Medium

You have to find a good position trying to get your hands to the front	RD	Hand position	Contact with ball	Medium
There you go, you're vibrating, block your support.	RD	Basic position of vb	travel	Medium
It's better and don't forget to always look at the ball	RD	Basic position of vb	Location	
No, you're going to throw faster before he gets to the cone.	RD	Speed of execution	Regulations /Safety	Task
You have to touch the ball with all your fingers	RD	Reception technique	Look and touch	Medium
Let's call it a day.	RD	Management / comp		

The analysis of the video recordings allows us to report, during the 8 sessions, on the interactive decisions related to the micro didactic variables negotiated during the analysis. In accordance with Guerchi's (2015) analysis protocol, we proceed by processing the words of the associated teachers in order to put forward elements of response to the guiding questions.

First of all, we make a first global reading to mark the didactic interventions that interest us (nature and moment of the intervention). The analysis of the videotapes allows us to make a finding that highlights two possibilities of decisions related to the micro didactic variables.

- The modalities of the micro didactic variables emerging from the verbal intervention are identical to those decided during the questionnaire phase.
- The modalities of the micro didactic variables that emerge from the verbal intervention are fundamentally different from those that were planned.

These two possibilities occur in interactive contexts that evolve. Depending on the singularity of the teacher, and depending on the adequacy or inadequacy of the didactic functioning to the teacher's project and expectations.

The analysis of interactive decisions thus implies the distinction between two extreme states with regard to the project and the teacher's

expectations. Either the didactic functioning is deemed acceptable by the teacher (the students are involved in the task and produce behaviours "in line" with the teacher's expectations) who considers their involvement and their achievements acceptable. There is therefore an "adequacy" (A) between the teacher's project and the didactic functioning. Or the didactic functioning is judged unacceptable by the teacher (the pupils are not involved in the proposed tasks and produce behaviours that do not conform to the teacher's expectations such as agitation, non-cooperation and repeated failure). There is therefore a "mismatch" (I) between the teacher's project and the didactic functioning.

This step allows us to account for the effects of verbal regulation interventions on the content actually taught.

In this research, we are particularly interested in the ways in which the verbalizing subject, who is at once singular, subject and specialist/non-specialist, intervenes and communicates knowledge/technique for girls and boys.

In order not to make the analysis too heavy and in order to ensure equivalence between teachers, we will select only the most relevant video passages. For data processing, we opted for complementary approaches. These approaches are quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach consists of processing numerical data illustrated from the coding of certain qualitative data. This

phase consists of assigning a unique number to a variable, a modality or a given response to make possible the processing and statistical analysis of the collected data that follows. In the continuity of the analyses, the quantitative analysis makes it possible to measure the quantitative intra-individual variability thanks to the study of the quantitative variations of the decisions of the two teachers during 8 sessions. To do this, we conduct an analysis by variable category. In the context of a cross-case study, this approach also allows us to account for quantitative variability between teachers. In this study, for each "case" we will count the number of interventions carried out in continuity with the project with regard to the didactic functioning (Adequacy or Inadequacy). The quantitative approach enriched by the qualitative approach allows us to make an analysis of the regularities allowing us to point out certain analogies in the two cases with regard to our research questions.

III. RESULT

As pointed out by Touboul (2011), expertise is one factor among others that structures knowledge. It relates to the knowledge and mastery of the specific objects of knowledge taught.

In volleyball, Kais' personal knowledge is built through his practice of volleyball from a young age, completed and enriched at the ISSEP of Kef and maintained in his experience as a coach and referee. However, Ramzi is not a volleyball expert like Kais, he is a football specialist. His first encounter with volleyball was at the ISSEP of Kef where he completed training cycles in volleyball. These training cycles represent the only basis of information and experience in the practice of volleyball. He teaches volleyball for the first time, his training cycles represent the only information base and the only experience in the practice of volleyball. Beyond their singularity, what differentiates these two teachers is essentially their expertise in volleyball.

The knowledge in volleyball is known before the cycle, both teachers have in their heads all the objectives to teach, even the most relevant knowledge to transmit for girls and boys in the school setting.

For the expert, he plans to transmit knowledge centred on technical, tactical, strategic and regulatory elements plus other ethical knowledge: *"in volleyball I prefer to work with my pupils on everything that is basic technique with the work of some technical-tactical and tactical combinations ...and I will insist on other aspects such as respect for the partner and the opponent, the spirit of the group, respect for the girls since the boys dominate the game and the notion of the rules of the game"* (Interview).

In the negotiation interviews, Kais had stressed that his knowledge was commonplace for him. The observation of the event confirms his words, he explicitly addresses technical, tactical and strategic notions to give his students the means to collectively build a project of actions in volleyball. Kais tries to transmit to his students an expert knowledge that he is led to simplify. Thus, his expertise is identifiable through the nature of the knowledge used and the conditions to transmit it.

The quantitative analysis of Kais's language approach allowed to highlight different points concerning the nature of the knowledge to be transmitted in his class. Using the verbal language approach, Kais transmits a priori technical knowledge with 60%, followed by tactical knowledge with 17% and 12% for regulatory knowledge and 11% for strategic knowledge. During the test, his knowledge is enriched by the knowledge acquired during his practical specialization. This strategy leads to the knowledge actually taught in the classroom and leads Kais to refer to theoretical knowledge, to knowledge "by practice" and "for practice" (Terrisse, 2000). Unlike Kais, Ramzi does not use the same references to construct knowledge. These are knowledge that can be found in school programs. They are not enriched with expert knowledge. His teaching was focused on learning technical elements, tactical, strategic and regulatory knowledge is never addressed during the test. The lack of specialization in volleyball puts Ramzi in difficulty, as he teaches a sport that he does not master and does not know enough about. The didactic contract established by Ramzi focuses on knowledge from his academic training. During the test, the teacher only aims at

reproducing what he knows about volleyball: "I remember some notions from my training at the

ISSEP in Kef about volleyball ... I was not too interested in volleyball at that time" (interview)

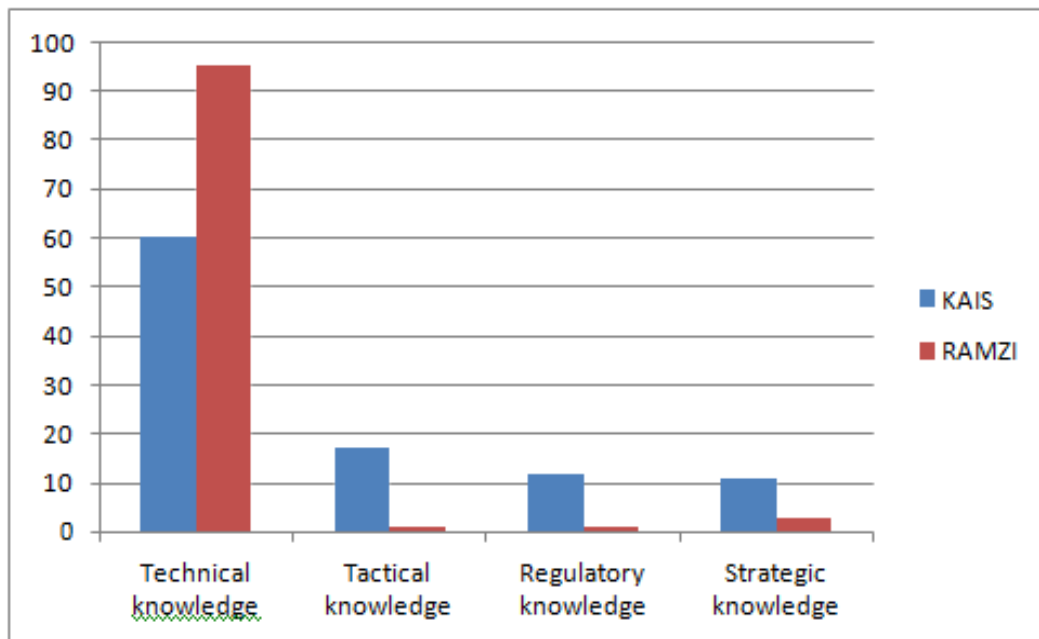


Figure 1: Indicators on teaching content

The analysis of the test shows that Ramzi often communicates technical knowledge with 95.04% of the total knowledge communicated against 1.48% for tactical knowledge, 2.97% for regulatory knowledge and only 0.49% for strategic knowledge. To do this, he puts his pupils in an opposition situation without any strategy of the game. The pupils do not try to organize themselves collectively to play, and start looking for the easiest solutions by using an individual game. As a result, the pupils are in difficulty and Ramzi cannot define precisely the causes of their problem. He becomes aware of this as the situation unfolds and declares that he wants to remedy it: "I don't know...but...they didn't try to follow my instructions as we explained at the beginning of the session" (interview).

Thus, expertise in volleyball is identifiable through the nature of the knowledge transmitted, and the way teachers transmit this knowledge to students. The knowledge taught is not only that found in the disciplinary didactic literature, it is enriched by the conversion of knowledge acquired during academic training and practical specialization.

IV. CONCLUSION

The teaching of PES is based on the "expert knowledge" (Joshua, 1996), these expert knowledge of physical practices are constituted by knowledge of the initial training and "empirical observations of the field". It is professional disciplinary knowledge (Léziart, 1997) assimilated to technical knowledge is specific to the activities taught (Bouthier and Durey, 1994). However, it has been shown that specialization is also linked to specialized body practice, discourse on practice, as well as the use of knowledge, know-how and know-how (Brière-Guenoun, 2005; Buznic et al., 2008).

The quantitative and qualitative study shows that the teachers' decision-making process, before, during and after the interaction, has an effect on the organization of the teaching content. The changes that take place are linked to the teacher's reading of the interactive context and guide his or her interventions, which constantly evolve over time under the effect of the circumstances of the didactic situation.

This analysis sheds light on the sources of difficulty for the non-expert teacher when teaching volleyball.

Thus, we were able to notice that the weight of expertise does not act in the same way in organizing the different practices of each teacher in a singular manner.

At the end of this research, we attempt a synthetic vision of this weight by articulating the different elements identified in our successive analyses. Our intention is to position each teacher on a continuum according to his or her relationship to the test and to knowledge. This essay constitutes a didactic analysis framework in which we can situate each teacher observed according to the weight of expertise. The value of this framework is in fact the final draft of this approach, which was built up from various didactic interpretative elements. This draft is based on the initial analysis framework of the "didactic triangle" (Terrisse, 1994).

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