



ԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱԿԱԴԵՄԻԱ

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THE INTERRELATION BETWEEN YOUNG SPOUSES' INTERACTION IN CONFLICT AND THEIR PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FAMILY LIFE

LEVON SARGSYAN

Brusov State University, Chair of Management,
PhD in Psychology, Associate Professor
slsargsyanlevon@gmail.com

NAIRA SARHATYAN

Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan
Chair of Psychology named after Academician M. Mazmanyan, Applicant
n.sarhatyan@gazpromarmenia.am

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Abstract

This article examines the connection between young spouses' conflictual interactions and their parents' attitudes toward family life, with a focus on the mechanisms of intergenerational transmission.

The research aimed to uncover how parental behaviour models influence the conflict dynamics within young couples' marital relationships. The study employed the methodologies of the Parental Attitude Research Instrument (PARI) by E. Schaefer and R. Bell, as well as the Nature of Spousal Interaction in Conflictual Situations (NSICS) instrument. A total of 180 participants, including both conflictual and harmonious couples and their parents, were involved in the study.

The findings revealed that conflictual couples often inherit conflict patterns from their parents, particularly in areas such as child-rearing, role expectations, and behavioural norms. In contrast, harmonious couples tend to reflect their parents' cooperative behaviour. The main conclusion is that marital disagreements are frequently rooted in intergenerational transmission, highlighting the need for a systemic approach to address these issues.

The study emphasises the value of family counselling in helping couples identify inherited patterns, reevaluate roles, and build emotionally stable relationships. It is recommended that future research should examine the influence of cultural and social changes on family dynamics.

Keywords: Young spouses, family conflicts, intergenerational transmission, parental behaviour, role expectations, rearing.

ԿՈՆՖԼԻԿՏՆԵՐԻ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿ ԵՐԻՏԱՍԱՐԴ ԱՄՈՒՍԻՆՆԵՐԻ ՓՈԽԱԶԴԵՑՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԸՆՏԱՆԵԿԱՆ ԿՅԱՆՔԻ ՆԿԱՏՄԱՄԲ ՆՐԱՆՑ ԾՆՈՂՆԵՐԻ ԴԻՐՔՈՐՈՇՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ՓՈԽԴԱՐՁ ԿԱՊԸ

ԼԵՎՈՆ ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆ

Վ. Բրյուսովի անվան պետական համալսարանի
կառավարման ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
հոգեբանական գիտությունների թեկնածու
slsargsyanlevon@gmail.com

ՆԱԻՐԱ ՍԱՐՀԱՏՅԱՆ

Խ. Արսլյանի անվան ՀՊՄՀ
Մ. Մազմանյանի անվան հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ
n.sarhatyan@gazpromarmenia.am

Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում է երիտասարդ ամուսինների կոնֆլիկտային փոխազդեցության և նրանց ծնողների ընտանեկան կյանքի նկատմամբ դիրքորոշումների փոխկապակցվածությունը՝ կենտրոնանալով սերնդային փոխանցման հոգեբանական մեխանիզմների վրա:

Հետազոտության նպատակն է՝ բացահայտել, թե ինչպես են ծնողական վարքի մոդելներն ազդում երիտասարդ զույգերի ամուսնական հարաբերություններում կոնֆլիկտայնության վրա: Որպես մեթոդական գործիքներ՝ օգտագործվել են Ե. Շեֆերի և Ռ. Բելլի ծնողական դիրքորոշումների ուսումնասիրության (PARI) և կոնֆլիկտային իրավիճակներում ամուսինների փոխազդեցության բնույթի (ԿԻԱՓԲ) ուսումնասիրության մեթոդիկաները 180 հետազոտվողների շրջանում: Ընդգրկվել են կոնֆլիկտային և ոչ կոնֆլիկտային զույգեր ու նրանց ծնողներ: Արդյունքները ցույց են տվել, որ կոնֆլիկտային զույգերը ժառանգում են ծնողների կոնֆլիկտային օրինաչափությունները, հատկապես՝ երեխայի դաստիարակության, դերային սպասումների և վարքի նորմերի ոլորտներում: Մինչդեռ ներդաշնակ զույգերն արտացոլում են ծնողական փոխհամաձայնեցված վարք:

Հիմնական եզրահանգման համաձայն՝ ամուսնական տարաձայնությունները հաճախ արմատավորված են սերնդային փոխանցման կապերի մեջ և պահանջում են համակարգային մոտեցում: Հետազոտությունն ընդգծում է ընտանեկան խորհրդատվության դերը՝ օգնելու զույգերին ճանաչել ժառանգված վարքի մոդելները, վերաիմաստավորել դերերը և ձևավորել հուզական կայուն հարաբերություններ: Առաջարկ-

վում է հետագա ուսումնասիրություններում ուշադրություն դարձնել մշակութային և սոցիալական փոփոխությունների ազդեցությանը ընտանեկան փոխհարաբերությունների դինամիկայի վրա:

Բանալի բառեր՝ երիտասարդ ամուսիններ, ընտանեկան կոնֆլիկտներ, սերնդային փոխանցում, ծնողական վարք, դերային սպասումներ, դաստիարակություն:

Introduction

The study of marital conflicts remains a relevant issue in the psychology of the modern family. Particularly among young couples, conflictual relationships and the factors contributing to their formation require in-depth analysis. The family, as a social system, faces significant challenges, reflecting the impact of societal changes. Modern young families, in a transitional phase, often face a clash between traditional and contemporary values, resulting in role discrepancies.

In our society, the family is considered the main bearer of national and cultural values. From this perspective, young couples, while trying to consider the traditional models of their parental families, simultaneously strive to adopt modern approaches such as gender equality and individual self-expression. This process is often accompanied by internal and external tensions, which aggravate marital conflicts.

Theoretical and Methodological Bases

From the perspective of family systems theory, the influence of parental behaviour models and their transmission across generations plays a decisive role in the formation of marital relationships (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

According to attachment theory, inconsistencies in the parent-child bond shape “internal working models,” which affect trust and perceptions of conflict in marital relationships (Bowlby, 1969).

Social learning theory emphasises that young individuals model their parents’ conflictual behaviours, reproducing communication styles and conflict resolution strategies (Bandura, 1977).

According to the emotional security theory, the impact of parental conflicts is linked to children’s emotional regulation, which later manifests in their relationships through passive-aggressive reactions (Davies & Cummings, 1994).

John Gottman’s model of relationship dynamics reveals that the “Four Horsemen” of marital conflict (criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling) often reflect the pathological patterns of parental interactions (Gottman, 1999).

According to the theory of generational differentiation, unresolved emotional ties with parents hinder young individuals’ autonomy, increasing the frequency of conflicts (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003).

Family structural theory focuses on the clarity of boundaries and roles, asserting that dysfunction in the parental system leads to “multigenerational enmeshment” (Minuchin, 1974).

Social exchange theory links conflict management to the evaluation of “profitability” inherited from parental models (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Symbolic interactionism explains how parental conflict scenarios become “significant symbols” for young spouses, influencing forms of mutual understanding (Blumer, 1969).

According to feminist family theory, inherited gender stereotypes exacerbate conflicts due to role disagreements (Hochschild, 1989).

The eco-systems approach highlights the role of macro-cultural factors in the interaction between parental attitudes and conflict dynamics (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In systemic family therapy approaches, Varga and Drabkina (2001) emphasize the reproduction of parental attitudes in families formed by the younger generation.

Among Armenian psychologists, S. Sedrakyan (2019) examines family relationships from the perspective of role distribution and implementation, providing deeper insights into the dynamics of interaction within families and the mechanisms of family system formation.

Recent studies offer new perspectives on exploring generational transmission mechanisms. Chiang et al (2020) demonstrate that the quality of parental relationships significantly determines the level of conflict in their children’s future marital relationships. Donato and Crosno (2022) reveal that young spouses’ communication patterns, particularly in conflict resolution, often reflect the interactions observed between their parents,

Research by Karimi and colleagues (2021) on intergenerational trauma and its impact indicates that unresolved family conflicts can be transmitted across generations, affecting relationships. Zhang et al. (2024) meta-analysis confirms that parental conflict management styles significantly predict young spouses’ conflictual behavior, regardless of cultural and social factors.

The literature review highlights a research gap in understanding the mechanisms connecting young spouses’ conflictual interactions with their parents’ attitudes. Therefore, the innovative approach of this study lies in attempting to uncover not only the connections in marital interactions but also their specific manifestations.

Methodology and Methods

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between the conflictual interactions of young spouses and their parents’ attitudes toward family life.

The hypothesis of the study is that the nature of young spouses' conflictual interactions is significantly correlated with their parents' attitudes toward family life and roles.

The methodological foundation of the study is based on a systemic approach to family relationships, viewing conflicts not only as outcomes of interactions but also as broader manifestations of the family system, including intergenerational influences.

The research was conducted during 2022–2024 and involved four groups of participants:

1. 30 young couples (20–30 years old, married for 3–5 years) in conflictual relationships, all of whom had children.
2. The parents of these couples—30 pairs (aged 52–65).
3. A control group of 30 young couples with no recorded conflicts, all of whom also had children.
4. The fathers of the men and the mothers of the women in the control group—30 men and 30 women (a total of 60 participants).

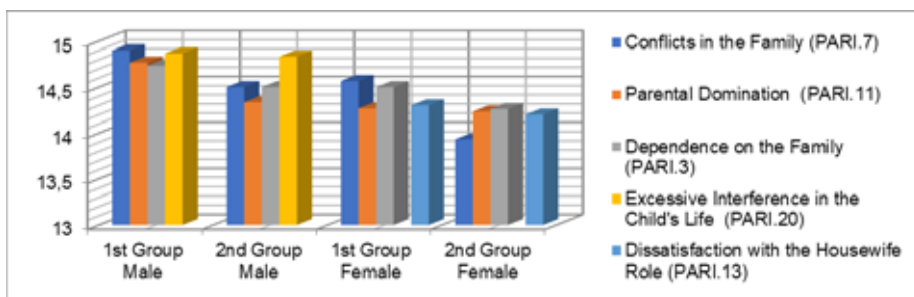
A total of 180 individuals participated in the study.

To conduct the research, the following methods were applied:

1. E. Schaefer and R. Bell's "Parental Attitude Research Instrument" (PARI). The PARI methodology is designed to study parents' attitudes toward various aspects of family life (family roles) (Raigorodsky, 2001).
2. The "Nature of Spousal Interaction in Conflict Situations" (NSICS) questionnaire, developed by Yu. E. Aleshina and L. Ya. Gozman. This questionnaire includes descriptions of 32 marital interaction scenarios, all of which have a conflictual nature (Leaders, 2006).

Results

The study results reveal the specific characteristics of attitudes toward family roles and parent–child relationships across the four groups, as assessed using the PARI methodology.



Histogram 1. Averaged PARI results for Groups 1 and 2

In Groups 1 and 2 (young couples with conflictual relationships and their parents), high scores were recorded for the following factors: dependency on the family (3), family conflicts (7), parental dominance (11), excessive interference in the child’s life (20), and, among women, dissatisfaction with the housewife role (13).

The obtained data indicate heightened levels of tension related to family roles, conflicts, and control over the child, which may hinder the formation of healthy emotional bonds.

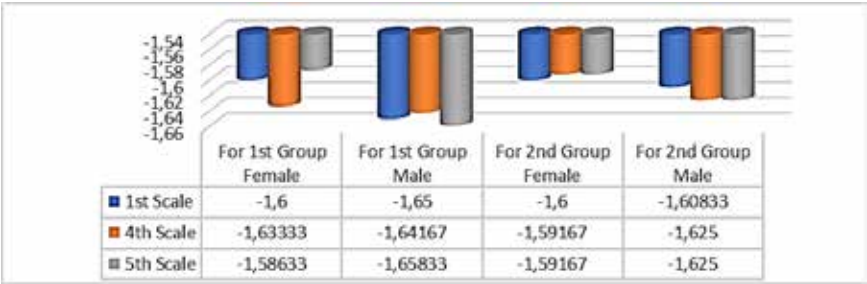
In contrast, high scores were not recorded in Groups 3 and 4 (non-conflictual couples and their parents), indicating a more balanced attitude toward family roles and child-rearing.

The differences between men and women in Groups 1 and 2 highlight the influence of gender roles—women more frequently express dissatisfaction with domestic roles, while men tend to focus more on control.

As can be seen from the histogram, conflictual relationships are observed in the same scales among both young spouses and their parents. Due to role identification, behavioural patterns are repeated. This indicates that young spouses have not developed individual behavioural models for marital life. We can say that, as a result of deep identification with their parents’ behavioural patterns, we are dealing with a repetition of old models. Until a personal model of marital relationships is formed, young spouses tend to replicate the acquired behavioural norms.

The picture is different in the third and fourth groups. The process of identification with non-conflictual parental families forms similar marital relationships. Although this model is socially regarded as acceptable, even in this case, we are reluctant to consider such relationships psychologically complete, as they are based on a behavioural model formed through identification.

Dealing with the reproduction of social models, we can assert that marital conflicts should be defined as repetitions of internalised models.



Histogram 2. Averaged data for Groups 1 and 2 according to the NSICS methodology

The histogram presents the results of the “Nature of Spousal Interaction in Conflict Situations” methodology across the four groups, focusing on three main scales (child-rearing, disruption of role expectations, and disagreements in behavioural norms).

In **Group 1** (young couples in conflictual relationships), high scores were recorded across all three scales: -1.56 (role expectations), -1.54 (child-rearing), and -1.54 (behavioural norms). These results indicate significant disagreements, with couples facing differences in child-rearing, role mismatches, and divergent perceptions of behavioural norms, which escalate conflicts. In **Group 2** (parents of Group 1 couples), similarly high scores were observed: -1.54 (child-rearing), -1.56 (role expectations), and -1.55 (behavioural norms). This highlights the intergenerational transmission of conflictual patterns.

In **Groups 3 and 4** (non-conflictual couples and their parents), the scores were notably lower, ranging from -1.58 to -1.62. This suggests more harmonious relationships. In these groups, there is greater agreement on child-rearing, role expectations, and behavioural norms, contributing to the formation of a stable family environment.

The high scores in **Group 1** indicate that young couples have unrealistic expectations regarding roles, leading to frustration and tension. In **Group 2**, the intergenerational transmission of conflicts reflects the influence of parental models, where traditional roles and strict control intensify disagreements.

The lower scores in **Group 3** demonstrate mutual understanding and flexibility among couples regarding child-rearing and role expectations, which contributes to emotional stability. Similarly, **Group 4** exhibits a balanced approach, highlighting the role of these parents in fostering healthy family values.

Overall, the data emphasise the intergenerational nature of conflictual behaviour.

Since the Aemp1 and Eemp1 values from the NSICS methodology exceed the critical values (Acr and Ecr), confirming that the data do not follow a Gaussian normal distribution, Spearman’s non-parametric method was used instead of Pearson’s correlation.

Table 1.

Correlation between PARI Scale 7 and NSICS Scales 1, 4, and 5

NSICS Scales	Acr	Ecr	Aemp1	Eemp1	rs	p
Nº1	0,671	1,342	5,194	41,983	0,661	0,01
Nº4	0,671	1,342	4,696	36,701	0,665	0,01
Nº5	0,671	1,342	5,095	40,946	0,605	0,01

Table 1 presents Spearman's rank correlation between PARI.7 (family conflicts) and NSICS.1 (issues related to child-rearing), NSICS.4 (role expectation disruptions), and NSICS.5 (behavioural norm disagreements).

- For NSICS.1, the correlation is **rs=0.661**
- For NSICS.4, it is **rs=0.665**
- For NSICS.5, it is **rs=0.605**

All correlations are significant at the **p=0.01** level.

The positive correlation indicates that an increase in disagreements regarding child-rearing, role expectations, and behavioural norms is associated with a rise in family conflict levels. This suggests that these three aspects play a critical role in shaping family tension.

The high correlation for NSICS.4 (**rs=0.665**) highlights that disruptions in role expectations significantly influence conflicts. This may be related to the mismatch between traditional and modern roles among couples, which often leads to frustration and disputes.

The correlation for NSICS.1 (**rs=0.661**) indicates that disagreements over child-rearing also substantially exacerbate family conflicts. This reflects that value differences between couples regarding parenting can become a persistent source of arguments.

The correlation coefficient for NSICS.5 (**rs=0.605**) shows that while disagreements over behavioural norms are important, they have a relatively lesser impact on conflicts compared to role expectations. This could be explained by the fact that disagreements about behavioural norms are often easier to resolve than deeper issues related to role expectations.

The results indicate that family conflicts are closely tied to the absence of shared values and expectations between couples. Disruptions in role expectations, as the strongest factor influencing conflicts, reveal that couples often struggle to redefine their roles.

Disagreements related to child-rearing are also significant, as they are frequently associated with deep-seated values and parenting models.

The high significance of all three scales (**p=0.01**) underscores that these factors are not coincidental. The level of family conflict is shaped by the dynamics of the couple's relationships. Being systemic in nature, conflicts may also result from intergenerational transmission.

Conclusion

The results obtained during the study highlight that the conflictual dynamics of young couples are closely tied to their parents' perspectives on family life. A mechanism of intergenerational transmission was identified: couples experiencing conflict tended to replicate their parents' conflict-prone models, encompassing role expectations, child-rearing practices, and

behavioural norms. Conversely, harmonious couples reflected their parents' consistent and cooperative behaviours.

Consequently, marital disagreements are often shaped not only by the couple's individual interactions but also by relational patterns inherited from the parental family.

The findings indicate that family conflicts should be understood as a systemic issue, with intergenerational factors exerting a profound influence on the dynamics of a couple's relationship.

The study provides a basis for suggesting that conflict prevention requires addressing not only the couple's issues but also those of the parental family to foster harmonious family interaction models.

It is noteworthy that the exchange of cultural and traditional values between generations can either impede or enhance the flexible understanding of marital roles.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF COPING STRATEGIES AMONG WAR PARTICIPANTS

HAYK AVAGIMYAN

Vanadzor State University, Chair of Pedagogy and Psychology,
PhD in Psychology, Associate Professor

avagym@mail.ru

LILIT STEPANYAN

Vanadzor State University, Chair of Pedagogy and Psychology, Lecturer
Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan
Chair of Psychology named after Academician M. Mazmanyan

lilit.stepanyan.1989@mail.ru

ANAHIT PETROSYAN

Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan
Chair of Psychology named after Academician M. Mazmanyan, Applicant

panahit1997@gmail.com

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Abstract

This article analyses the coping strategies of 200 combatants who participated in military operations in Armenia and Artsakh during different periods (1990s, 2016, 2020, 2021–2023). Using multivariate statistical analysis (MANCOVA) and validated psychometric tools, the study reveals significant differences in adaptive mechanisms depending on the nature of the war and the socio-political context.

One of the key findings is that veterans of the First Artsakh War and the short-term April War exhibit high stress resilience, predominantly employing active strategies such as self-regulation and planning. In contrast, individuals subjected to repeated trauma demonstrate reduced adaptability. Participants in more recent conflicts are inclined toward positive reappraisal, determined by social cohesion and post-traumatic growth.

At the value level, there is a prominent demand for universalism and security among groups that participated in recent military operations, reflecting a re-evaluation of uncertainty and losses. The escape-avoidance strategy significantly reduces stress resilience, particularly in cases of multiple traumas.

The study highlights the cumulative negative impact of repeated trauma and the necessity of developing differentiated rehabilitation programs that consider the time period of the war, individual resources, and the role of social support within the cultural context.

Keywords: Coping strategies, war, value orientations, stress resilience, PTSD, PTG.

ՊԱՏԵՐԱԶՄԻ ՄԱՍՆԱԿԻՑՆԵՐԻ ՔՈՓԻՆԳ ՌԱԶՄԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՍՈՑԻԱԼ– ՀՈԳԵԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԱՌԱՆՁՆԱՀԱՏԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՀԱՄԵՄԱՏԱԿԱՆ ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

ՀԱՅԿ ԱՎԱԳԻՄՅԱՆ

ՎՊՀ մանկավարժության և հոգեբանության ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
հոգեբանական գիտությունների թեկնածու

avagym@mail.ru

ԼԻԼԻԹ ՍՏԵՓԱՆՅԱՆ

ՎՊՀ մանկավարժության և հոգեբանության ամբիոնի դասախոս,
ՀՊՄՀ ակադեմիկոս Մ. Մազմանյանի անվան հոգեբանության ամբիոն
հայցորդ

lilit.stepanyan.1989@mail.ru

ԱՆԱՀԻՏ ՊԵՏՐՈՍՅԱՆ

Խ. Աբովյանի անվան ՀՊՄՀ ակադեմիկոս,
Մ. Մազմանյանի անվան հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ

panahit1997@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում վերլուծվում է Հայաստանի և Արցախի տարբեր ժամանակաշրջանների (1990–ականներ, 2016, 2020, 2021–2023 թթ.) մարտական գործողություններին մասնակցած 200 կոմբատանտների քոփինգ ռազմավարությունները: Օգտագործելով բազմաչափ վիճակագրական վերլուծություն (MANCOVA) և վավերացված հոգեչափական գործիքներ՝ աշխատանքը բացահայտում է զգալի տարբերություններ հարմարվողական մեխանիզմներում՝ կապված պատերազմի բնույթի և սոցիալ-քաղաքական համատեքստի հետ:

Հիմնական բացահայտումներից է, որ Արցախյան առաջին և Ապրիլյան կարճատև պատերազմների վերաբերյալ շրջանում բարձր սթրեսակայունության պատճառով գերակշռում են ակտիվ ռազմավարություններ (ինքնատիրապետում, պլանավորում), մինչդեռ կրկնակի տրավմայի ենթարկված մասնակիցները դրսևորում են հարմարվողականության նվազեցված արդյունավետություն: Վերջին տարիների մարտերին մասնակցած անհատները հակված են դրական վերագնահատման՝ պայմանավորված սոցիալական համախմբվածությամբ և հետտրավմատիկ աճով:

Արժեքային մակարդակում ակնառու է ունիվերսալիզմի և անվտանգության բարձր պահանջմունքը վերջին տարիների մարտական գործողություններին մասնակցածների խմբերում՝ կապված անորոշության և կորուստների վերախմբավորման հետ: Փախուստ-խուսափման ռազմավարությունը զգալիորեն նվազեցնում է սթրեսակայունությունը՝ հատկապես բազմակի տրավմայի դեպքում:

Ուսումնասիրությունն ընդգծում է կրկնակի տրավմայի կուտակային բացասական ազդեցությունը և անհրաժեշտությունը տարբերակված ռեաբիլիտացիոն ծրագրերի մշակման՝ հաշվի առնելով պատերազմի ժամանակաշրջանը, անհատի ռեսուրսներն ու մշակութային համատեքստում սոցիալական աջակցության դերը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ քոֆինգ ռազմավարություններ, պատերազմ, արժեքային կողմնորոշումներ, սթրեսակայունություն, ՀՏԽ, ՀՏԱ:

Introduction

The study of coping strategies among combatants is highly relevant due to the frequent clashes along Armenia's borders, the Artsakh wars, and the prolonged psychological impact of warfare. War disrupts emotional well-being, complicates social adaptation, and hinders stress management. Most veterans face rehabilitation challenges, emphasising the importance of examining coping and self-regulatory behaviours.

Combat stress depletes the body's defences, causes psychological trauma, and reconstructs the motivational sphere (Kosickij, G.I., Smirnov, V.M., 2010). Extreme conditions can lead to psychogenic disorders, reduced self-confidence, and a disrupted worldview (Zhuravleva A.L., Sergienko E.A., 2011). S. Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources Theory suggests that health and adaptation depend on the effective allocation of resources (Hobfoll, S. E., 1988). R. Gabriel highlights that prolonged combat inevitably results in psychological disorders (Karayani A. G., Syromyatnikov I. V., 2016).

Coping strategies are multifaceted, encompassing problem-focused approaches (e.g., planning) and emotion-focused approaches (e.g., avoidance). The theory of R. Lazarus and S. Folkman explains that the choice of strategies

depends on stress appraisal (Lazarus, R.S., Folkman, S., 1984). Individuals with high stress resilience tend to prefer active strategies, whereas those with low levels of support are more inclined toward avoidance. Social support (from family or community) fosters constructive strategies (Pietrzak, R. H., 2018).

S. Southwick and D. Charney emphasise that positive reappraisal contributes to stable recovery (Southwick, S. M., & Charney, D. S., 2012). J. Gross's cognitive reappraisal theory demonstrates that reframing trauma reduces stress (Gross, J. J., 2015). B. McEwen's theory focuses on the biopsychological effects of chronic stress, highlighting the importance of active strategies (McEwen, B. S., 2017).

The post-traumatic growth theory, proposed by R. Tedeschi and L. Calhoun, suggests that the search for meaning promotes positive personal changes (Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G., 2014). S. Folkman's meaning-centred coping is essential for combatants, helping restore a sense of purpose in life (Folkman, S., 1997).

Proactive coping, which involves the prevention of stressors and the accumulation of resources, reduces the risk of PTSD (Starchenkova E. S., 2008). It is based on internal control and a sense of responsibility. The choice of coping strategies also depends on factors such as anxiety levels, experience, ethnicity, and cultural norms. In collectivist societies, group support predominates, whereas in individualistic.

Thus, the coping strategies of combatants are characterised by a collective-individual interaction, the multilayered processing of trauma, and cultural influences that shape their socio-psychological behaviour.

Research Objective: To conduct a comparative analysis of the socio-psychological features of the coping strategies employed by individuals who participated in military operations during various periods (1990, 2016, 2020, 2021–2023) in Armenia's border regions and Artsakh.

Research Hypothesis: The coping strategies of individuals who participated in military operations during different periods vary based on the nature of combat experience (intensity, duration, repeated trauma), changes in the socio-political context, the influence of value orientations (universalism, security), and psychological factors (stress resilience, PTSD, PTG).

Research Objectives:

1. To analyse the classification of coping strategies and their relationship with combat stress, PTSD, and PTG (based on the models of Lazarus, Hobfoll, and Tedeschi).
2. To identify the impact of the duration, intensity, and socio-political context of war on adaptive mechanisms.

3. To evaluate the role of covariates (value orientations, stress resilience, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), post-traumatic growth (PTG)) in shaping coping strategies.
4. To compare the differences in coping strategies across groups.

Research Methods and Sample

1. Mississippi Scale for Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (USA, 1985) (Mkrtowmyan M.P., 2008).
2. Post-Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI – Tedeschi & Calhoun) (Magomed-Ehminov M.Sh., 2009).
3. Coping Strategies Methodology by R. Lazarus (Lazarus, R.S., 1993).
4. Basic Value Orientations by S. Schwartz (Serobyany A.K., Grigoryan A.K., Xachatryan N.G., 2021).
5. Stress Resilience Methodology by V. V. Boyko.

The study involved 200 war participants, divided into the following groups:

- R1: First Artsakh War (n = 40)
- R2: Four-Day April War (n = 40)
- R3: 44-Day War (n = 40)
- R4: Combat Actions from 2021 to 2023 (n = 40)
- R5: Participants in Multiple Combat Actions (n = 40)

The reliability of the study's results was ensured through the application of mathematical statistical methods, specifically multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA).

Analysis of Research Results

To test the main hypothesis of the study, we applied multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) to compare the coping strategies employed by different groups of war participants, while controlling for covariates (PTSD, PTG, stress resilience, and value orientations).

MANCOVA was used to examine how participation in different wars and related psychological factors influenced coping strategies, while accounting for the effects of covariates. This method was chosen because it enables to conduct simultaneous analysis of multiple dependent variables (coping strategies) while considering the impact of covariates, reducing the likelihood of Type I errors and uncovering complex relationships.

The study aimed to identify whether differences in coping strategies existed among the groups of war participants (R1-R5), taking into account value orientations, stress resilience, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and post-traumatic growth (PTG).

The independent variable is the groups of war participants: R1 (First Artsakh War, n = 40), R2 (Four-Day April War, n = 40), R3 (44-Day War, n =

40), R4 (2021–2023 Combat Actions, n = 40), and R5 (Participants in Multiple Combat Actions, n = 40). This selection is justified by the premise that the intensity, duration, socio-political context, and time elapsed since each war may differently influence the coping strategies employed in response to stress.

The dependent variables are the eight coping strategies identified by Lazarus, which are stable yet modifiable constructs reflecting an individual's behaviour and psychological state. The traumatic experience of war may affect the manifestation of these coping strategies.

The covariates include value orientations, stress resilience, PTSD, and PTG. Value orientations were controlled as covariates to eliminate the influence of pre-existing individual differences (e.g., a high level of universalism or security might have preceded the war, affecting both participation and its outcomes). This approach isolates the pure impact of war experience, ensuring that group differences are attributed to combat experience rather than pre-existing value structures. Stress resilience was controlled as it could either mitigate or amplify the impact of war on values. Individuals with high stress resilience display specific coping strategies more strongly. PTSD and PTG were selected because they can negatively or positively influence coping strategies. The covariates control the impact of these factors, allowing for the isolation of the groups' pure effects.

To test the hypothesis regarding differences between groups across multiple dependent variables, we initially applied Pillai's trace and Wilks' lambda statistical criteria, both of which are commonly used in multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). When both criteria yield similar results (p-values), the conclusions become more reliable. From the data presented below, it is evident that the results of Pillai's trace and Wilks' lambda are almost identical, indicating a high-quality analysis.

Table 1.

Results of Multivariate Covariance Analysis Among War Participant Groups: Multivariate Tests

Factor	Criteria	Value	F	df 1	df 2	p
R1, R2, R3, R4, R5	Pillai's Trace	0.10558	0.480	40	890	0.998
	Wilks' Lambda	0.898	0.475	40	761	0.998
Covariate	-	Value	F	df 1	df 2	p
Conformity	Pillai's Trace	0.06123	1.419	8	174	0.192
	Wilks' Lambda	0.939	1.419	8	174	0.192
Tradition	Pillai's Trace	0.02143	0.476	8	174	0.872
	Wilks' Lambda	0.979	0.476	8	174	0.872
Benevolence	Pillai's Trace	0.01578	0.349	8	174	0.945
	Wilks' Lambda	0.984	0.349	8	174	0.945

Universalism	Pillai's Trace	0.08521	2.026	8	174	0.046
	Wilks' Lambda	0.915	2.026	8	174	0.046
Self-Direction	Pillai's Trace	0.01783	0.395	8	174	0.922
	Wilks' Lambda	0.982	0.395	8	174	0.922
Hedonism	Pillai's Trace	0.03518	0.793	8	174	0.609
	Wilks' Lambda	0.965	0.793	8	174	0.609
Achievements	Pillai's Trace	0.04033	0.914	8	174	0.506
	Wilks' Lambda	0.960	0.914	8	174	0.506
Power	Pillai's Trace	0.02975	0.667	8	174	0.720
	Wilks' Lambda	0.970	0.667	8	174	0.720
Security	Pillai's Trace	0.08233	1.951	8	174	0.048
	Wilks' Lambda	0.918	1.951	8	174	0.048
Stimulation	Pillai's Trace	0.06188	1.435	8	174	0.185
	Wilks' Lambda	0.938	1.435	8	174	0.185
Stress Resilience	Pillai's Trace	0.03571	0.805	8	174	0.029
	Wilks' Lambda	0.964	0.805	8	174	0.029
PTSD	Pillai's Trace	0.00935	0.205	8	174	0.037
	Wilks' Lambda	0.991	0.205	8	174	0.037
PTG	Pillai's Trace	0.01979	0.439	8	174	0.047
	Wilks' Lambda	0.980	0.439	8	174	0.047

The overall results of the MANCOVA presented in Table 1 (Pillai's Trace = 0.10558, $F = 0.480$, $p = 0.998$) indicate that the general differences in Schwartz's value orientations among the groups of war participants (R1-R5) are not statistically significant. This means that participation in wars during different periods, taking the covariates into account, does not significantly alter the overall structure of coping strategies.

However, the analysis of individual value orientations reveals significant and near-significant differences that reflect the psychological impact of combat experience.

Universalism demonstrated a statistically significant difference (Pillai's Trace = 0.08521, $F = 2.026$, $p = 0.046$), indicating variations among the groups of war participants in their perception of human well-being and tolerance. Groups R3 (44-Day War) and R4 (2021–2023) scored higher on universalism. The effects of losses and social support influence it.

The lower universalism observed in Group R1 (First Artsakh War) may reflect a decline in social tolerance over time, with a greater focus on personal stability.

Security also demonstrated a statistically significant difference (Pillai's Trace = 0.08233, $F = 1.951$, $p = 0.048$), indicating differences among the groups regarding the importance of stability and safety. Groups R3 (44-Day War) and R4 (2021–2023) place greater emphasis on security due to recent

years' instability and threats. The lower prioritisation of security in Groups R1 (First Artsakh War) and R2 (April War) may reflect a diminished perception of threat over time.

Stress resilience, as a covariate, showed a statistically significant effect (Pillai's Trace = 0.03571, $F = 0.805$, $p = 0.029$), indicating that it significantly influences coping strategies. Individuals with high stress resilience (e.g., R1, mean = 34.55) may demonstrate autonomy or conformity more strongly due to their ability to remain calm when facing stressors.

PTSD also had a significant effect (Pillai's Trace = 0.00935, $F = 0.205$, $p = 0.037$), suggesting that post-traumatic stress can alter coping strategies. The low stress resilience (mean = 27.54) and potentially high PTSD levels in Group R5 (repeated participants) may explain their lower value orientations, such as decreased emphasis on achievement or power.

PTG showed a significant effect (Pillai's Trace = 0.01979, $F = 0.439$, $p = 0.047$), indicating that post-traumatic growth can promote certain coping strategies, such as positive reappraisal and problem-focused planning. The high universalism observed in Group R3 may be partially explained by PTG, as participants of the 44-Day War may reinterpret their experiences by focusing on universal human values.

Stimulation (Pillai's Trace = 0.06188, $F = 1.435$, $p = 0.185$) and conformity (Pillai's Trace = 0.06123, $F = 1.419$, $p = 0.192$) showed non-significant but noticeable differences. The high stimulation observed in Group R2 (April Four-Day War) may reflect a search for novelty as a short-term mechanism for coping with stress.

The high conformity observed in Group R3 may be associated with a greater tendency to adapt to social norms.

Hedonism ($p = 0.609$), achievement ($p = 0.506$), power ($p = 0.720$), tradition ($p = 0.872$), benevolence ($p = 0.945$), and self-direction ($p = 0.922$) did not demonstrate statistically significant differences. This suggests that the different periods of combat experience do not substantially alter these values if the effects of covariates are taken into account.

The lower levels of achievement and power in Group R5 may be linked to multiple traumas, although the influence of PTSD and stress resilience may explain these differences.

The higher stress resilience in Group R1 (mean = 34.55) accounts for their relatively stable value orientations, such as the preservation of tradition or self-direction.

The high hedonism observed in Group R4 is likely a stress-relief mechanism in conditions of ongoing uncertainty.

The heightened emphasis on security in Group R3 may reflect the socio-political consequences of the 44-Day War, which intensified the need for stability.

The low stress resilience and potentially high levels of PTSD in Group R4 may exacerbate their vulnerability, reflected in lower scores on value orientations. The significant impact of PTG ($p = 0.047$) indicates that positive reinterpretation of trauma can promote social values, such as universalism, in Group R3. The significant impact of stress resilience ($p = 0.029$) highlights its role as an important mediator in the formation of coping strategies. The effect of PTSD ($p = 0.037$) suggests that traumatic stress can limit the expression of specific values, such as hedonism or achievement.

These findings indicate that while value orientations are generally stable, certain changes occur depending on the nature of combat experience.

Table 2.

Results of Multivariate Covariance Analysis (MANCOVA) in Groups of War Participants: Univariate Tests

-	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df (Degrees of Freedom)	Mean Square	F	p
War Participants	Confrontation	0.51648	5	0.10330	0.29614	0.915
	Distancing	0.12661	5	0.02532	0.08129	0.995
	Self-Control	0.70311	5	0.14062	0.63079	0.026
	Seeking Social Support	0.92073	5	0.18415	0.45169	0.812
	Assuming Responsibility	0.85280	5	0.17056	0.40458	0.845
	Escape-Avoidance	0.09030	5	0.01806	0.08613	0.994
	Problem-focused Planning/Coping	0.56521	5	0.11304	0.34681	0.034
	Positive Reappraisal	0.13021	5	0.02604	0.17420	0.042

The results of univariate tests presented in Table 2, derived from multivariate covariance analysis (MANCOVA) among groups of war participants ($n=200$), analyze the impact of war participation and stress coping strategies (confrontation, distancing, self-control, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, problem-solving, positive reappraisal) on Schwartz's value orientations, stress resilience, PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and PTG (post-traumatic growth). This analysis reveals how different strategies influence value orientations and psychological states, considering the nature of combat experience.

The overall differences among the groups of war participants in several

value orientations and psychological indicators are statistically significant, particularly for universalism, security, stress resilience, PTSD, and PTG. However, the impact of stress-coping strategies varies depending on the value orientation.

Self-control has a statistically significant effect ($F = 0.63079$, $p = 0.026$), indicating differences among the groups in their ability to regulate emotions and behaviour. Groups R1 (First Artsakh War) and R2 (April Four-Day War), characterised by high stress resilience (mean = 34.55 and 31.28, respectively), more frequently employ self-control due to their long-term or short but intense experiences. The lower stress resilience of Group R5 (repeated war participants, mean = 27.54) corresponds to a lower level of self-control.

Problem-focused planning is also significant ($F = 0.34681$, $p = 0.034$), indicating that the groups of war participants apply rational strategies for problem-solving in different ways. Groups R1 (First Artsakh War) and R2 (Four-Day April War), due to their high stress resilience, may actively engage in planning of problem-solving. In contrast, individuals in Group R5 (repeated war participants) may use this strategy less frequently due to the cumulative effects of multiple traumas.

Positive reappraisal has a significant effect ($F = 0.17420$, $p = 0.042$), demonstrating that the groups of war participants reinterpret stressful situations differently. Individuals in Group R3 (44-Day War), who place a higher value on universalism ($p = 0.046$), more frequently use positive reappraisal through social support and the reframing of losses.

Positive reappraisal has a significant impact on universalism ($F = 9.39545$, $p = 0.003$), indicating that reframing stressful situations positively enhances the appreciation of human well-being and tolerance. Groups R3 and R4, which have faced the complex socio-political context of recent wars, may use this strategy more frequently, reinforcing universalism.

Positive reappraisal also significantly affects security ($F = 3.00268$, $p = 0.025$), suggesting that reinterpreting stressful situations positively increases the importance placed on stability and safety. The high emphasis on security observed in Groups R3 and R4 ($p = 0.048$) may be linked to their use of positive reappraisal during periods of uncertainty.

Confrontation has a significant effect on stimulation ($F = 2.93475$, $p = 0.028$), indicating that certain groups of war participants, such as R2, actively face stressors, thereby promoting a desire for novelty and change. This may reflect the impact of a short but intense combat experience.

Escape-avoidance significantly affects stress resilience ($F = 4.29426$, $p = 0.040$), showing that the use of this strategy reduces stress resistance. The low stress resilience in Group R5 may be partially explained by more frequent use of escape-avoidance due to multiple traumas.

Accepting responsibility significantly influences conformity ($F = 3.93207$, $p = 0.049$), suggesting that taking responsibility for one's actions promotes a tendency to adapt to social norms. The high conformity observed in Group R3 may be associated with cohesion and acceptance of responsibility.

The impact of stress-coping strategies on PTSD and PTG is generally not significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating that these strategies do not substantially alter post-traumatic conditions. This may be explained by the fact that PTSD and PTG are more closely related to the overall impact of the war rather than specific coping strategies.

Distancing as a coping strategy has a significant effect on universalism ($F = 3.02657$, $p = 0.084$), suggesting that the strategy of avoiding stressors may reduce the appreciation of universal human values. The lower universalism observed in Group R1 may be associated with the more frequent use of distancing.

The high universalism and security observed in Groups R3 and R4, associated with positive reappraisal, reflect the socio-psychological impact of recent wars, including public support. The low stress resilience and use of escape-avoidance in Group R5 indicate the cumulative adverse effect of multiple traumas. The high stress resilience and use of self-control in Groups R1 and R2 highlight the positive influence of time or short-term experiences.

The low value scores (e.g., achievement, power) in Group R5 may be linked to psychological traumas, which deepen vulnerability.

The results demonstrate that stress-coping strategies, particularly positive reappraisal, self-control, and confrontation, significantly influence universalism, security, and stimulation. Escape-avoidance negatively impacts stress resilience, especially in Group R5. These findings underscore that value orientations are generally stable but can undergo specific changes depending on the coping strategies and the nature of combat experience.

Individuals in Group R5 may require specialised psychological support to mitigate the effects of multiple traumas.

Thus, our proposed hypothesis that coping strategies of participants in different military operations differ significantly is partially confirmed in the case of three strategies: self-control, problem-focused planning, and positive reappraisal.

Self-control varies because participants of earlier or short-term wars (R1 and R2) are more likely to regulate their emotions and behaviour due to their resilience to stress, unlike repeated participants (R5), who are vulnerable due to multiple traumas. Problem-focused planning also differs, as some groups, particularly those with high stress resilience (e.g., R1), actively develop rational solutions, whereas repeated participants tend to adopt less active approaches.

Positive reappraisal shows differences because participants in recent wars

(e.g., R3) are inclined to reinterpret their experiences, focusing on universal values under the influence of social cohesion.

Other strategies, such as confrontation or seeking social support, did not show significant differences, as they are less related to the specific type of war and more influenced by individual or social factors.

Thus, the hypothesis is confirmed only for the mentioned constructive strategies, reflecting the impact of trauma and the socio-political context.

Conclusion

The study confirms that the coping strategies of combatants who participated in wars from different periods exhibit statistically significant differences influenced by the nature of combat experience, changes in the socio-political context, and the dynamics of psychological factors.

The most notable differences are observed in the strategies of self-control, problem-focused coping, and positive reappraisal. Participants of earlier or short-term wars (e.g., the First Artsakh War, the April War) tend to adopt active strategies due to their high stress resilience. In contrast, individuals who have experienced repeated trauma display reduced adaptability.

Participants in more recent military operations (e.g., the 44-Day War, 2021–2023 clashes) are more likely to employ positive reappraisal, influenced by social cohesion and post-traumatic growth.

Significant differences in the value domain are observed in universalism and security, which are linked to the wartime context. The high level of universalism among participants of the 44-Day War and the 2021–2023 military operations reflects processes of reinterpreting losses and reevaluating universal human values. The increased demand for security in the latter groups is driven by ongoing uncertainty and threats.

At the level of psychological mechanisms, stress resilience is confirmed as a central mediator in the formation of coping strategies, while the escape-avoidance strategy affects it negatively. The results highlight the cumulative negative impact of multiple traumas on individuals who have repeatedly participated in war.

These findings provide an opportunity to develop differentiated psychological interventions tailored to the specific characteristics of the wartime period and the individual's resources.

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THE INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL STEREOTYPES AMONG EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

LILIT LACHINYAN

Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan,
PhD in Psychology, Associate Professor
lachinyanlilit54@aspu.am

DAYANA MAJDALANY

Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
PHD in Educational Sciences
dmajdalany@gmail.com

MARY GHAZARIAN

Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan
Chair of Psychology named after Academician M. Mazmanyany, PhD
marygurunlian@gmail.com

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Abstract

The article presents the results of a psychological study conducted with professionals working in the Lebanese educational system, with a particular emphasis on the interaction between social stereotypes and emotional intelligence. It sheds light on the importance of social skills in building relationships within classrooms and improving the quality of the teaching and learning process. The study highlights the negative impact of social stereotypes encountered in pedagogical institutions, which adversely affect the quality, equity, and effectiveness of education. The connection between emotional intelligence and social stereotypes has been identified among both educators working in educational institutions and students.

This study explores in depth how stereotypes—particularly those related to age and professional roles—undermine educational equity and quality. Findings reveal a significant inverse correlation between emotional intelligence and the tendency to rely on such stereotypes. Educators with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to recognise individual differences, manage their own biases, and foster inclusive, empathetic classroom environments. The research underscores the critical role of emotional intelligence in reducing stereotype-based thinking and enhancing pedagogical effectiveness.

Based on a thorough analysis of the research findings, the article provides practical recommendations and guidelines for educational institutions and educators to combat social stereotypes within pedagogical environments. These recommendations focus on teacher training and institutional reforms aimed at cultivating emotionally intelligent educators, thereby promoting more equitable and socially just educational practices.

Keywords: Social stereotypes, social skills, emotional intelligence, pedagogue, educational system.

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ԼԻԼԻԹ ԼԱՉԻՆՅԱՆ

Խ. Աբովյանի անվան հայկական պետական
մանկավարժական համալսարանի դոցենտ,
հոգեբանական գիտությունների թեկնածու

lachinyanlilit54@aspu.am

ԴԱՅԱՆԱ ՄԱՋԴԱԼԱՆԻ

Քաալիքի Սուրբ հոգի համալսարան,
մանկավարժական գիտությունների դոկտոր, դոցենտ

dmajdalany@gmail.com

ՄԱՐԻ ՂԱԶԱՐԵԱՆ

Խ. Աբովյանի անվան ՀՊՄՀ Մ. Մազմանյանի անվան
հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ

marygurunlian@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում ներկայացվում է Լիբանանի կրթական համակարգում գործող մասնագետների հետ իրականացրած հոգեբանական հետազոտության արդյունքները, որտեղ մասնավորապես շեշտադրվում է սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի և հուզական ինտելեկտի փոխազդեցության խնդիրը: Վերջինս լուսաբանում է մանկավարժական հաստատություններում հանդիպող սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի բացասական ազդեցությունը, որոնք ազդում են կրթության որակի և արդյունավետության վրա: Հուզական ինտելեկտի և սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի միջև կա-

պը բացահայտվել է ինչպես կրթական հաստատություններում գործող մանկավարժների, այնպես էլ սովորողների շրջանում: Հետազոտության արդյունքները բացահայտում են հուզական ինտելեկտի և սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի միջև նշանակալի հակադարձ կապ: Ավելի բարձր հուզական ինտելեկտ ունեցող մանկավարժներն ավելի հակված են ճանաչելու անհատական տարբերությունները, կառավարելու իրենց սեփական կողմնակալությունները և խթանելու ներառական, կարեկցող դասարանային միջավայրեր: Հետազոտությունն ընդգծում է հուզական ինտելեկտի կարևոր դերը կարծրատիպերի վրա հիմնված մտածողության նվազեցման և մանկավարժական արդյունավետության բարձրացման գործում: Հետազոտության արդյունքների վերլուծության հիման վրա հողվածում ներկայացվում են առաջարկություններ և ուղեցույցներ կրթական հաստատությունների և մանկավարժների համար, որոնք նպատակ են հետապնդում պայքարել սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի դեմ մանկավարժական հաստատություններում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ սոցիալական կարծրատիպեր, հուզական ինտելեկտ, սոցիալական հմտություններ, մանկավարժ, կրթական համակարգ:

Introduction

The world pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic won't be the same. People around the world fought the challenge in different ways, some with perseverance and survival mode, while others in hopelessness and demotivation. The United Nations has set 17 sustainable development goals to make the world a better place in the coming decade, until 2030. It placed high importance on improving the quality of current lives of societies and communities, whether through various approaches such as removing poverty and eliminating hunger, offering health services, clean water and a better life on land and in seas, and offering equal chances to all underprivileged members of the society. It placed great importance on the quality of education, hand in hand with eradicating inequalities between genders, in such a way that all societies can offer a better quality of life to their members and make the world a better place.

Stereotypes are one of the social problems that may come to the surface when investigating lives inside communities and relations among members. Oxford English Dictionary defines a stereotype as “a widely held, but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing”. Stereotypes can be generalisations about racial groups, political groups, genders, demographic groups, activities or even subgroups among broad populations.

To date, the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that stereotypes

influence the manner in which information is sought, perceived, remembered, and judged (Fiske, S. T., 1998). When we talk about stereotypes, it is the common belief that categorises people, in exaggerated matters that may also not be true. This categorisation, which identifies people based on physical, social, or cultural characteristics, assumes that all people in a given category or subgroup will manifest all the given traits. Stereotyping always focuses on differences and offers an extra edge to a group of people, as if giving less rights to another (Pickering, M., 2015). When people endorse stereotypes, it leads to prejudice and discrimination towards members of minority groups.

Frederic Bartlett (1932) examined what happened to information as it was repeatedly passed from person to person down a chain of individuals in a lab (a method akin to the children's game often called 'telephone' or 'Chinese whispers') (Bartlett, F. C., 1932).

Schools represent a model of community; they are a miniature version of a group of people living together with diverse ages and backgrounds, governed by a set of rules, policies, and procedures. The same stereotypes can be observed on school grounds and within classrooms. Schools, in general, and Armenian schools in particular, were founded in Lebanon with a common goal of transferring knowledge and experience, history and legacy, passing on values, and preparing the youth for the future with core values that are important to the Armenian nation and the identity of every Armenian. The Armenian community in Lebanon, in its turn, established social pedagogical organisations that represented the mission of the founders and are still working to transmit knowledge and experience to the new generations.

Social stereotypes were present in the lives of the first Armenians who reached the lands of Lebanon a century or more ago. These stereotypes continue to affect the lives of Armenians, even in the 21st century. In Lebanon, Armenians are sometimes accepted as equal nationals in the country, whereas in other cases, they form groups that support each other and choose Armenian schools, products, and services, and sometimes opt for options with an Armenian touch. The mission and the vision of the Armenian parties and organisations in Lebanon may differ, yet they all have a similar mission: improving the lives of the Armenians in the community, preparing citizens who serve the motherland as well as the nation they are born in. An interview with five Armenian school principals set the basis for some common stereotypes observed inside schools in Lebanon. Racial, gender and religious stereotypes are the most discriminating and harmful discrimination, and even violence may result in frequent cases in society.

Stereotypes are mostly simple and superficial overgeneralizations in terms of cultural stereotypes: people from this specific area are lazy, individuals from villages are warm and welcoming, and different social

stereotypes in terms of specific group characteristics, economic class, age, skills, etc. Reasons may change, yet according to these principles, stereotypes give rise to creating an unwelcoming atmosphere for some groups and give ownership of school facilities or specific “rights” to some chosen, privileged groups. While stereotypes are rarely correct and certainly not always accurate, they are not always negative. In fact, some cast a positive light on a certain group or type of people. However, they are still over-generalisations and ultimately not helpful because individuals and groups cannot be limited to a few stereotypical traits.

Stereotypes, therefore, in teaching are the fixed images or ideas, whether behavioural, cognitive or affective criteria, to which a teacher views the self or is seen by others, since they are in the professional educational activities. The same definition applies to stereotypes for learners. It is how different learners see themselves and others because they belong to a specific group and thus are placed in a specific category.

When the question “what are some stereotypes related to teachers and learners” was asked to 50 teachers in Armenian schools in Lebanon, here are a few answers from educators. The different members of the educational system have different sets of definitions, for example, in relation to teachers, “teachers are mainly females”, “teachers are talkative”, “female teachers are emotionally more intelligent than male teachers.” “Males manage stress better than females” When the questions in relation to learners were gathered, some were “boys are better in math”, “boys don’t cry”, or “girls choose humanities and linguistic majors while boys choose scientific”.

In these educational institutions, the stakeholders, including students and their parents, employees, teachers, the principal and administration, and owners such as board members, national parties, or church entities, organise the work and relationships based on their internal bylaws.

Group dynamics and behaviour are important points to examine to better understand the relationships and the expression of stereotypes between staff members. Commitment and compliance with group norms foster positive relationships among members and create a shared vision essential for the success of the institution. (Gencer, H., 2019).

Organisations that are built on the culture of globalisation, accepting cross-cultural differences and demographic diversities, minimise intergroup conflicts. Intergroup interactions are present in every moment of life, especially in schools, where the primary focus of work is on human-human relationships. The quality of relationships between members depends on the minimal conflicts present. The personal characteristics and intergroup relationships need to be examined to understand groups within organisations.

Individuals define and label themselves based on which groups they

belong to and what are accepted behaviours, as well as reward and punishment systems placed. Common shared goal setting of individuals in a team format allows individuals to accept each other based on the spirit of the organisation and encourages group work. When organisations focus on the importance of groups among the institutions and the quality of relationships, workload performance increases, creativity and open communication are channelled. Effective decision-making opportunities are offered to all teams and team members, enabling individuals to experience higher job satisfaction and reduced problems.

Individuals contribute to group wellness, and the group's progress is reflected in the organisation. This mood is translated into the relationships and conflicts among members, whether in terms of constant competitiveness or cooperation. When organisations are aware of individual characteristics and group dynamics, using correct methods and techniques, effective communication, collaboration, job satisfaction and motivation are created (Gencer, H., 2019).

The environment that encourages acceptance, minimises conflicts and between-group stereotypes. These organisations that invest in the individual and the team profile gain improvement in the quality of relationships. Gender biased workforce catches attention in terms of equal pay, equal opportunities, and the debate continues, yet in educational institutions, stereotypes impair the professional performance of educators and the academic performance of learners.

When stereotypes remain unattended, they alter the potential and chance of educators and female learners at schools. Educational psychology can be the area to investigate which kind of policies should be implemented to alleviate the effects of gender stereotypes and in general stereotypes, to yield fair and just venues for all learners to feel safe, develop, grow and learn and reach their maximum potential (Carlana, M., 2019).

Gender stereotypes affect learners' classroom experiences, academic performance and even subject choice. The assumptions learners make, whether consciously or unconsciously, affect their future forever, regardless of whether they are boys or girls. Unconscious bias may be the case in some instances where the society's images and occurrences communicate in terms of body language or even choice of words. It may also be evident in classrooms where teachers praise girls for being well-behaved, while boys are praised for their hard work and ideas. Some actions that are "accepted" behaviour for boys may be major disruptions for girls.

Challenging gender stereotypes: a whole school approach, Optimus Education published a list of recommendations and guidelines for schools that would actively combat gender stereotypes. Their recommendation started with

the curriculum. Auditing books allows teachers to maintain a balance between male and female authors, paying attention to illustrations of roles and careers in relation to gender, which is vital in offering learners opportunities to see male nurses and female firefighters. They explained that even non-human characters need to maintain a balance in terms of gender. The next guide was for teachers to consider the language they use, as it had a huge effect on young children. Examples such as, dad will be picking up, my husband cooked dinner, my dad's favourite colour is pink, may create a general mood of acceptance for certain roles (Dickinson, O., 2021).

As children grow, they continue to observe biases in their everyday lives. Therefore, it is crucial to address this issue in schools and tackle it through both direct and indirect approaches to combat stereotypes through Education. “Teachers have a duty to have a gender-transformative approach so that we can explain to learners all of their capabilities and enable them all to fulfil their potential as people and not as boys or girls separately”, Amelia Fernandez, Advisor of the Government of Navarre, and laureate of the 2019 UNESCO Prize for Girls’ and Women’s Education, summarised. Alvarez Teresa, commission of citizenship and gender equality, presented at the Helsinki conference “Combating gender stereotypes in the education system”, the present obstacles to combating gender stereotypes in schools and proposed a few guidelines to address such stereotypes through the education system and schools (Alvarez, T., 2014).

Social stereotypes are everywhere in society, and targeting schools alone as a means of solution may not be sufficient. The relationships that children build and maintain with their parents, relatives, neighbours, community, and friends have a significant impact on the definition they form about men and women. The structural gender stereotypes envision the role of education for girls as preparing them to be caring individuals for others and proper mothers. While the same education system is planned to help boys become dominant figures, non-affective individuals and competitive elements are also considered in building self-identity. The differing expectations within the same education system create an imbalance that is evident in classrooms. The teachers who manage these classrooms need to be aware of these presumptions, neutralise them and move forward to rebuild new images and meanings for children.

This study examines the complex relationship between teachers’ awareness of stereotypes and their actual classroom behaviour. While many educators may consciously recognise the existence of stereotypes—such as beliefs about boys being naturally better at math or girls being more suited for caregiving roles—this awareness does not always translate into bias-free interactions. In fact, the research reveals a paradox: even when teachers are aware of these stereotypes and intend to avoid them, they can unintentionally

reinforce them through subtle, often unconscious behaviours (Gajda, A., Bójko, A., & Stoecker, E., 2022).

Bingler (2000) emphasises the multifaceted role of schools as central hubs in fostering healthy communities. Beyond their primary function of education, schools serve as accessible venues for public health initiatives, community engagement, and social cohesion. He elaborates on how schools can collaborate with various sectors to strengthen community ties, address public health challenges, and support the overall well-being of residents. This perspective underscores the importance of viewing schools not just as educational institutions but as integral components of community development and resilience (Bingler, S., 2000).

Nurturing cultural diversity, tolerance, and accepting others are the promised hopes to target social stereotypes and aim to elevate acceptance of the other. Intersubjectivity refers to the shared understanding or mutual awareness that people develop when they engage with one another. It's the process through which individuals connect, align, and make sense of each other's thoughts, emotions, and perspectives. (Sheng, F., & Han, S., 2012).

In a social context, it involves recognising that others have their own subjective experiences and viewpoints, and being able to relate to or understand them. Intersubjectivity facilitates empathy, communication, and cooperation by creating a shared understanding between individuals. When learners start to hear the other person, communicate, co-create and build bridges together, putting themselves in other people's shoes, then empathy and social skills are revealed.

Empathy is 'the ability to experience affective and cognitive states of another person, whilst maintaining a distinct self, to understand the other'. This is consistent with the understanding that empathy includes at least two key dimensions: cognition and affect (Decety, J., 2011).

If cognitive empathy can be conceptualised as 'I understand how you feel', affective empathy is conceptualised as 'I feel what you feel' (Hein, G., & Singer, T., 2008).

In research like that of, intersubjectivity is often used to describe situations where group members, despite differences in race, gender, or background, begin to see each other as part of a shared experience or goal. This mutual understanding can reduce biases and enhance empathic responses to others (Sheng, F., & Han, S., 2012).

Empathy is not a cure for all stereotypes in the social content, yet it allows individuals to put themselves in others' shoes, feel with them and understand their feelings, thus leading to less prejudice and discrimination (Guthridge, M., Penovic, T., Kirkman, M., et al., 2023).

Empathy is a promise to create more sustainable communities based

on equality, tolerance and acceptance, thus minimising the manifestation of stereotypes in these societies.

A converging education system, with trained teachers, can help minimise the gap, crystallise the capabilities and opportunities of both genders and consequently, allow further integration, teaming up to solve problems, offering the same experiences and subject content and methods to both genders. Alvarez offers strategies to combat gender stereotypes through education. Curriculum, including content and knowledge, school training and professional development for teachers and all other staff, school culture and administrative leaders, as well as overall community relationships. He places the highest value on knowledge, emphasising the importance of creative, active citizenship and democracy through education. Initial training of teachers in pedagogical and scientific curriculum focusing on work and gender studies, followed by continuous training and support, making resources ready to raise teacher awareness of gender issues and allowing them to confront and speak up any issues inside their classroom as a podium for learners to express, learn, grow and then move to society (Alvarez, T., 2014).

Research Significance

Teachers influence their learners through content knowledge and pedagogical means; yet, their impact is much greater when they address class interaction, issues with understanding, and concerns with compassion. It is vital to shed light on the culture and environment that teachers create in classrooms. A climate that reinforces past presumptions and prevents understanding and equality, or welcomes diversity and celebrates both genders. Educators play a crucial role in creating a learning climate and implementing strategies that aim to foster equity within classrooms.

The twenty-first century focuses on self-aware teachers who are aware of their own thoughts and preconceptions, yet seek to manage them. They enter classrooms with patience and compassion, creating stress-free and productive environments that motivate learners and encourage collaboration, cooperation, and effective communication. Emotionally intelligent teachers spend time and effort training learners on these social-emotional skills that can contribute to life success. They utilise both their personal and professional experiences, as well as their curricula and teaching methodologies, to spread the spirit of acceptance and justice. These teachers teach with their minds and hearts, transforming communities into more compassionate and empathetic societies.

The current research focuses on the emotional intelligence of teachers and empathy levels, seeking a correlation between these social competencies and social stereotypes related to age and profession of teachers.

Research Methodology

The current study, involving 134 educators from Armenian schools in Lebanon, utilised N. Hall's tool that's used for assessing "emotional intelligence" (EQ questionnaire) 09.02.2017Irina Andreeva 9 N. Hall's method for assessing "emotional intelligence" (EQ questionnaire) // E.I. Ilyin. Emotions and feelings. – St. Petersburg: Peter, 2001. – S. 633–634. N. Hall's technique is proposed to identify the ability to understand the relationship of the individual, represented in emotions and manage the emotional sphere on the basis of decision-making. It consists of 30 statements and contains 5 scales: 1) emotional awareness, 2) management of emotions (rather it is emotional outgoing, emotional non-rigidity), 3) self-motivation (rather, it is just arbitrary control of one's emotions, excluding paragraph 14), 4) empathy, 5) recognition of emotions of other people (rather – the ability to influence the emotional state of others).

The second tool used in the Social Skills section was Boyko's test-questionnaire (Boyko's empathy test: Methodology for diagnosing the level of empathic abilities). It allowed them to identify the type and presence of empathy, whether low, medium, or high, in various domains.

The diagnostic methodology of "Empathic ability level" proposed by V. Boyko aims to assess an individual's empathic abilities. Empathy refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, playing a crucial role in human social interactions and relationships.

Boyko's diagnostic methodology involves a comprehensive assessment process that combines self-report measures, behavioural observations, and physiological measurements. The goal is to provide a holistic understanding of an individual's empathic abilities across different dimensions.

It broke down the empathy into more measurable terms, such as rational, emotional, and intuitive. It elaborated on the source, such as the availability of settings that promote empathy, as well as the penetrating power or identification in empathy.

The third tool used in the social skills assessment was D. Lucine's Emotional Intelligence.

The questionnaire of emotional intelligence, Lucine, is a psychodiagnostics technique based on self-report, designed to measure emotional intelligence (EQ) in accordance with the theoretical concepts of the author. To assess the reliability of EmIn, Cronbach's internal consistency indicators were calculated for all scales and subscales. The internal consistency of the main scales is 0.80 and above, which is quite high for questionnaires. The internal consistency of the subscales is somewhat lower (around 0.7), but it can also be considered satisfactory, except for the VE subscale (0.51).

These components, used in parallel, were investigated in relation to an authored tool created for this research. The research created and administered

tools to analyse the social stereotypes in the given population.

To investigate the psychological factors associated with the manifestation of social stereotypes in educational settings, this study tested a series of hypotheses examining the relationship between empathy, emotional intelligence, and stereotype endorsement. Specifically, it was hypothesised that (1) higher levels of empathy, as measured by Boyko’s questionnaire, would be negatively associated with social stereotypes related to teachers’ age, and (2) negatively associated with social stereotypes related to the teaching profession. Additionally, it was hypothesised that (3) higher emotional intelligence, as measured by Hall’s and Lucine’s instruments, would be negatively associated with social stereotypes related to teachers’ age, and (4) negatively associated with stereotypes related to the teaching profession. These hypotheses were tested using Pearson’s correlation analysis to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the psychological constructs and stereotype measures.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ASSESSMENT OF EXPRESSION OF AGE STEREOTYPES. The participants assessed the presence or absence of the mentioned characteristics in young, experienced and old teachers.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ASSESSMENT OF EXPRESSION OF TEACHING PROFESSION STEREOTYPES. The participants assessed their levels of agreement with statements that presented social stereotypes related to the teaching profession.

Pearson’s correlation test revealed that there was a significant, negative, and small to medium correlation between Boyko’s empathy and social stereotypes related to teachers’ age; $r = -.20$, $p = .042$ (one-tailed). As such, the hypothesis that states that there is a negative association between Boyko’s empathy and social stereotypes related to teachers’ age was supported.

Pearson’s correlation test also revealed a significant, negative, and medium to large correlation between Boyko’s empathy and social stereotypes related to the teachers’ profession; $r = -.46$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed). As such, the hypothesis that there is a negative association between Boyko’s empathy and social stereotypes related to the teaching profession was supported.

Table 1.

Pearson Correlation between Empathy Boyko’s questionnaire and social stereotypes

	Social stereotype age-related	Social stereotype teacher related
Pearson Correlation	-.195	-.456
Empathy Boykos Sig. (1-tailed)	.042	.000
N	134	134

Pearson’s correlation test also revealed that there were significant, negative, and medium to large correlations between emotional intelligence as measured by Hall and social stereotypes related to teachers’ profession; $r = -.41$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed) and $r = -.50$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed), respectively. As such, the hypothesis that there is a negative association between emotional intelligence and social stereotypes related to the teaching profession was supported.

Pearson’s correlation test revealed, however, that there were significant and negative correlations between emotional intelligence as measured by Hall (large effect size) and by Lucine (medium to significant effect) and social stereotypes related to teacher’s age; $r = -.52$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed) and $r = -.35$, $p = .001$ (one-tailed), respectively. As such, the hypothesis that states there is a negative association between emotional intelligence and social stereotypes related to teachers’ age was supported.

Table 2.

Pearson Correlation between Hall’s Emotional Intelligence, Lucine’s Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and social stereotypes

		Social stereotypes are age-related.	Social stereotype teacher-related
Emotional Intelligence Hall	Pearson Correlation	-.516	-.405
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	134	134
Emotional Intelligence Lucine	Pearson Correlation	-.354	-.495
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	.000
	N	134	134

Analysis

The findings of this study indicate a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and the presence of social stereotypes, particularly in the contexts of age and the teaching profession. As emotional intelligence increases among teachers, there is a noticeable reduction in the reliance on or endorsement of age-related or profession-based stereotypes. Emotional intelligence involves the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one’s own emotions, as well as to empathise with the feelings of others.

Teachers with higher EI are likely better equipped to overcome biases and engage with students and colleagues in a more open-minded and

empathetic manner, reducing the tendency to categorise or stereotype based on superficial characteristics, such as age or professional role.

This relationship suggests that emotional intelligence may play a key role in mitigating the harmful effects of stereotypes in educational environments. Teachers with higher EI may be more attuned to the individuality of their students and peers, thus fostering a more inclusive and less judgmental atmosphere. Moreover, the ability to regulate emotions and recognise emotional cues could lead to a heightened awareness of how stereotypes influence behaviour, prompting teachers to act with greater fairness and objectivity. The negative correlation between emotional intelligence and social stereotypes underscores the potential of EI training programs for educators as a means of addressing and reducing biases, promoting more equitable teaching practices.

Conclusion

The results of this research indicate a significant inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and the presence of social stereotypes, particularly those related to age and the teaching profession. As teachers' emotional intelligence increases, the frequency of relying on or supporting stereotypes based on age or professional role decreases.

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognise and manage one's emotions, as well as to empathise with others. Teachers with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to challenge their biases and connect with students and colleagues in an open and empathetic manner, thereby reducing the inclination to stereotype based on superficial traits such as age or job title.

These findings suggest that emotional intelligence could be a key factor in reducing the impact of stereotypes in educational environments. Teachers with greater emotional intelligence are more likely to recognise the individuality of those around them, which helps create a more inclusive and less biased atmosphere. Additionally, the ability to regulate emotions and recognise emotional cues can help teachers understand how stereotypes shape behaviour, prompting more objective and fair decision-making. The negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stereotypes highlights the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence training for educators to combat biases and foster more equitable teaching practices.

Brown and Dearing (2019) emphasise the critical role of school leaders in recognising and actively challenging social stereotypes and implicit biases within educational settings. They recommend implementing professional development programs that focus on cultural competence and emotional intelligence, fostering inclusive school climates, and promoting policies that reduce bias and encourage equity. The study underscores that school leaders

must model equitable practices and support teachers through ongoing training and reflective practices to dismantle stereotypes and create fair learning environments for all students (Brown, E. F., & Dearing, E., 2019).

The future can be changed through education, and as classrooms and education systems improve, the future will also be transformed, helping to create leaders who are kinder, more compassionate, and empathetic. Combatting social stereotypes within classrooms starts through teacher training and offering them support and resources that can help create a slightly fairer future.

To leverage social skills and empathy in combating stereotypes and promoting equity, the paper suggests the following strategies:

- Professional Development: Implement training programs that enhance educators' emotional intelligence, focusing on social skills and empathy.
- Inclusive Policies: Develop and enforce policies that promote diversity and inclusion within the school community.
- Supportive Environment: Create a school culture that encourages open dialogue, mutual respect, and understanding among students and staff.

Research suggests that social stereotypes and cultural biases impact teaching and learning in diverse classrooms. It is important to acknowledge the importance of multicultural pedagogy as a strategy to challenge stereotypes and promote equity in education. Ample research exists that provides educators with frameworks and practical approaches to develop culturally responsive teaching practices that recognise and value students' diverse backgrounds, thereby reducing stereotype-driven biases and fostering inclusive learning environments. (Banks, J. A., 2015).

Schools have the power to transform communities by creating an inclusive safe haven, implementing teaching strategies that cultivate self-awareness, effective emotional regulation, empathy, and strong social skills. These approaches serve as proactive measures in building inclusive, respectful, and connected communities where all stakeholders feel heard and safe.

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WAYS OF ACTIVATING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT SKILLS IN THE CONTEXT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY

MARINE AYVAZYAN

Armenian State Pedagogical University named after Khachatur Abovyan
Department of Applied Psychology, Lecturer

marine.ayvazyan@edu.isec.am

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Abstract

The article examines the possibilities of activating and developing psychological resources within the framework of the theoretical approach of positive psychotherapy. The focus of the analysis is on the primary (innate) and secondary (acquired) abilities of the individual, which are considered as the main mechanisms for ensuring self-realisation, adaptability and mental stability. The theoretical analysis presented in the article is based on a combination of ideas from various psychological perspectives, focusing on the manifestation of a person's potential, activation of internal resources, and their interconnection. Positive psychotherapy as a method offers tools for identifying and reinterpreting resources. Today, when the uncertainty of the external world, socio-cultural changes and various stressors deeply affect the psyche of the individual, the problem of psychological resources becomes an urgent and purposeful subject of discussion. In this regard, the conscious development and use of resources can significantly contribute not only to maintaining mental stability, but also to effective social adaptation, professional stability and improvement of the quality of life.

Keywords: Psychological resources, primary and secondary abilities, personal growth, self-awareness, value system.

ՀՈԳԵԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ ՌԵՍՈՒՐՍՆԵՐԻ ԱԿՏԻՎԱՅՄԱՆ ՈՒՂԻՆԵՐԸ ԵՎ ԶԱՐԳԱՅՄԱՆ ՀՆԱՐԱՎՈՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ՊՈԶԻՏԻՎ ՀՈԳԵԹԵՐԱՊԻԱՅԻ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏՈՒՄ

ՄԱՐԻՆԵ ԱՅՎԱԶՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական մանկավարժական համալսարանի
կիրառական հոգեբանության ամբիոնի դասախոս

marine.ayvazyan@edu.isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվել են հոգեբանական ռեսուրսների ակտիվացման և զարգացման հնարավորությունները՝ պոզիտիվ հոգեթերապիայի տեսական մոտեցման համատեքստում: Վերլուծության առանցքում են անհատի առաջնային (բնածին) և երկրորդային (ձեռքբերովի) ունակությունները, որոնք դիտարկվում են որպես ինքնաիրացման, հարմարվողականության և հոգեկան կայունության ապահովման հիմնական մեխանիզմներ: Հոդվածում ներկայացված տեսական վերլուծությունը հիմնված է տարբեր հոգեբանական ուղղությունների գաղափարների համադրման վրա՝ ուշադրություն դարձնելով անձի ներուժի դրսևորման, ներքին ռեսուրսների ակտիվացման և դրանց փոխկապակցվածության հարցերին: Պոզիտիվ հոգեթերապիան, որպես մեթոդ, առաջարկում է ռեսուրսների բացահայտման և վերափոխակերպման գործիքներ: Այսօր, երբ արտաքին աշխարհի անորոշությունը, սոցիալ-մշակութային փոփոխությունները և տարաբնույթ սթրեսորները խորապես անդրադառնում են անհատի հոգեկանի վրա, հոգեբանական ռեսուրսների հիմնախնդիրը դառնում է հրատապ և նպատակային քննարկման առարկա: Այս առումով, ռեսուրսների գիտակցված զարգացումն ու գործարկումը կարող են էապես նպաստել ոչ միայն հոգեկան կայունության պահպանմանը, այլև արդյունավետ սոցիալական ադապտացիային, մասնագիտական կայունությանը և կյանքի որակի բարելավմանը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ հոգեբանական ռեսուրսներ, առաջնային և երկրորդային ունակություններ, անձնային աճ, ինքնաճանաչում, արժեքահավաստում:

Introduction

In recent years, significant activity has been observed in the psychological discipline surrounding this topic, indicating an increase in its theoretical and practical value. Within the framework of various approaches, an attempt has been made to define, assess, and promote the mechanisms responsible for the effective use of an individual's potential. Psychological resources are

considered the internal abilities and mechanisms that enable an individual to withstand life's difficulties, overcome crises, and continue their personal and social development. These issues become especially important in the context of theories that focus not on eliminating disorders, but on revealing potential. One of them is positive psychotherapy, which enables you to focus on a person's strengths and build development and coping strategies based on that foundation. Positive psychotherapy, as a culturally sensitive and person-centred approach, allows you to consider psychological resources as internal forces that contribute to sustainable development. Within the framework of this theory, the harmonious development of two-layer abilities determines self-regulation, emotional balance, social adaptation and the implementation of life goals. However, when these abilities remain undeveloped or are suppressed by internal and external factors, emotional tension, obstacles to self-realisation, and a decrease in the effectiveness of vital activity arise. In this context, it is necessary to clarify the mechanisms by which these resources can be activated and developed. The article discusses the problem of promoting the interconnected development of an individual's primary and secondary abilities from the perspective of positive psychotherapy, considering them as factors that activate psychological resources and facilitate self-realisation.

Literature Review

The concept of “personal resources” emerged in scientific psychology relatively recently and was borrowed from economic theory and management. In recent decades, it has begun to occupy an increasingly important place in the psychology of the individual. Despite the use of the term in modern scientific theories, psychological research, and approaches to understanding its definition, classification, structure and functions are highly heterogeneous. It is considered, starting from psychological defence and behavioural coping mechanisms, and ending with concepts such as individual adaptive potential, stress resistance, and resilience.

Psychological resources are now viewed as multidimensional internal capacities of an individual that not only protect against stressful situations, but also contribute to the individual's personal growth and development of self-awareness. In this context, the three main psychological requirements of Self-Determination Theory (SDT)—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—are the key foundation for resource building; their provision is associated with the long-term activation of resources and the emotional and social stability of the individual (Liu & Huang, 2021). On the other hand, according to Broaden and Build Theory, positive emotions (regular examples: smiling, gratitude) expand the field of thought (“broaden”) and contribute to the accumulation (“build”) of resources, not only at the physiological, but also at the social and

psychological levels. This theory presents how pleasant emotions trigger upward spirals, promoting creativity, self-expression, and the development of resilience (Fredrickson, 2004; Fredrickson et al., 2021).

Earlier in 1971, Maslow said that all psychic resources of a person, according to their origin, are conditionally divided into external and internal. A person's external resources, which include forms of social or social-psychological support, presuppose the presence of their ability to utilise this support. Internal resources represent a person's personal potential, which is actualised with the help of some psychological tools.

In many approaches, such as Nalchajyan (1988), mental resources are considered in terms of their potential for human adaptation. Adaptive mechanisms allow us to cope with constantly changing environmental conditions. Due to the adaptive process. According to Berezin (1988), the optimisation of body systems' work and balance in the "human-environment" system is achieved.

D.A. Leontiev (2002) presents the main individual characteristic, the core of personality. The effects of personal potential in psychology are characterised by concepts such as will, ego strength, internal support, centre of control, and orientation of actions, among others. More precisely, according to D.A. Leontiev, the content of the concept of "personal potential" corresponds to the concept of "vitality" introduced by S. Madi (2005), which is defined not as a personal quality, but as a system of attitudes and beliefs. The author considers the concept of "vitality" as a basic component of the personality, which he considers an incomplete system with three components: involvement, control, and risk-taking.

Ya.V presents another approach to understanding the resource. In the research of Malikhina (2004). In her opinion, the individual (individual) preventive resource should be considered as a complex of individual abilities, the implementation of which allows maintaining the balance of adaptive-compensatory mechanisms, which ensures the mental, somatic and social well-being of a person, which, in accordance with the orientation of the individual, creates conditions for him to discover his unique identity and further self-realization. Belinskaya (2009) proposes that the situational characteristics themselves, as well as the interaction between the individual characteristics of the subject, play a decisive role. The latter consists of the formation of a complex cognitive assessment, including both the subject's interpretation of the situation and his ideas about it.

A. Antonovsky's (1984) observation that stress can be a salutogenic factor that can serve as the basis for new adaptive reactions is interesting. He proposed a salutogenic paradigm of psychological resources, which is focused on the study of cases of people who have successfully overcome stressful

situations. As a result, a person gains new experience through conscious strategic overcoming: personal growth, creative adaptation, effective use of energy, as opposed to sadness, pain, and unconscious defence mechanisms.

In the concept of Hobfoll (2004), loss of resources is considered the main mechanism that triggers stress reactions.

N. E. Vodopianova (2009) defines resources as the following structural components: emotional, motivational-volitional, cognitive and behavioural, which are used by a person to interact with a stressful situation, considering them as internal and external variables.

Moreover, Ivanitsky mentions the ability to “create integrated behaviour” and emphasises that the higher the ability to integrate behaviour, the more successfully stressful situations are overcome. We know that stress is a non-specific response of the organism to internal and external influences. A person’s stress resistance is a personal quality that consists of psychophysiological components. In the case of the latter, personal resources will play a largely decisive role in overcoming them (2015).

In our analysis and observation, the positive psychotherapeutic direction is central, which, with its dynamic approach, emphasises the issue of actualising the person’s internal resources.

The emphasis of this therapeutic direction is the principle of intercultural sensitivity, where it is proposed to focus on both differences and similarities. The well-known balance model focuses on the correct equal distribution of the four areas that ensure an individual’s mental health: health, activity, communication, and meaning-making. It is stated that the goal is to satisfy approximately 25% of psychic energy for each area, which allows for the construction of a developed center of self-confidence, where primary abilities (e.g., hope, trust, patience, love) serve as a basis for psychological harmony, and secondary abilities (e.g., discipline, punctuality) act as practical adaptive tools without violating the structure of these pillars (Peseschkian & Remmers, 2020; Peseschkian Foundation, 2024).

This theoretical approach allows positive psychotherapy specialists to develop specific interventions: in particular, therapeutic techniques that simultaneously support the strengthening of primary abilities and the targeted use of secondary ones, contributing to the dynamic growth of resources and the stable self-knowledge of the individual (Peseschkian & Remmers, 2020; Cesco, 2023).

In the context of gender differences, Peseschkian (2023) emphasises that primary and secondary capacities, as a bipolar system, contribute to self-regulation related to the socio-cultural environment. The author notes that achieving balance depends on the harmony of the emotional and structural capacities of both sides, which applies to the construction of psychological

resilience of both men and women.

In terms of age-specific features, recent works (Peseschkian & Remmers, 2020) emphasise that the use of resources and the maintenance of internal balance are subject to change at different stages of life. In adolescents and young people, the dynamics of searching for meaning prevail, while in older age groups, the reinterpretation and stability of values are dominant. This contributes to the introduction of a positive psychotherapy approach in the context of psychoeducational developments.

In the context of professional activity (Peseschkian, Messias & Cagande 2020), the use and consumption of resources should be viewed from the perspective of conflict transformation. The goal of therapeutic intervention is not to prevent conflict, but to transform it into an opportunity for development. This approach is important in the process of professional self-realisation and the restructuring of internal resources. At the level of personal factors (Peseschkian, 2023), it is noted that positive psychotherapy encourages the stabilisation of the value system as a central node of resources. Particular importance is given to self-awareness, self-esteem and the process of internal meaning-making. According to the author, these personal resources possess a profound therapeutic potential that contributes to the restoration and development of mental health.

Methods

In order to present the role of psychological resources within the framework of positive psychotherapy and to study their interrelationships in different contexts, we conducted a comparative qualitative analysis. Through the analysis, the features of the manifestation of psychological resources were compared, depending on social and individual factors. Based on the results of the analysis, a comparison was made with the theoretical basis of positive psychotherapy, paying special attention to the main concepts of this direction, such as primary and secondary abilities, the structure of value systems, and the mechanisms for maintaining the person's internal balance and development opportunities.

Results

The study of scientific justifications for the nature and characteristics of psychological resources reveals that they are considered not only as stable mental qualities of an individual, but also as a variable and developing potential, influenced by many factors. As a result of this analysis, we can characterise some features of the manifestation of psychological resources according to structural foundations:

1. Gender characteristics: N. (Peseschkian (1987) notes that women often demonstrate more pronounced primary abilities, such as love, patience,

hope, forgiveness, which in positive psychotherapy are considered as natural, spontaneous and emotional resources. These abilities contribute to communication, strengthen emotional ties and serve as the basis for the role of interpersonal support. In contrast, men usually use secondary abilities more often, such as discipline, responsibility, punctuality and organisation, which are considered socialised and more consciously formed resources. These types of resources are associated with purposeful actions, professional stability and solving practical problems.

2. Age characteristics: Age plays a significant role in the process of perception, application and development of psychological resources, and psychological resources develop in stages, depending on the person's life activity, social environment and level of intrapersonal maturity. According to Pezeshkian (1996), the intensity and availability of the manifestation of primary abilities (love, faith, hope, patience) at different stages of life change depending on internal needs and expectations of the external environment. This process forms the basis of the individual's adaptive and self-management mechanisms, contributing to the activation of psychological resources and the realisation of the potential for self-development.

3. The influence of professional activity: The professional environment and work activity can have a significant impact on both the activation of psychological resources and their limitation. Within the framework of positive psychotherapy, the professional sphere is considered a key field for self-expression and the development of psychological structure. When a person tries to surpass or adapt to external demands at the expense of internal needs (Peseschkian, 2000), a loss of strength, depletion of resources, and sometimes emotional dryness begins. However, if this conflict is recognised and used as an opportunity for growth, it turns into a development resource, contributing to both self-analysis and mental stability.

4. Individual-personal factors: The formation of psychological resources cannot be considered without the personal characteristics of the individual: value system, emotional stability, volitional structure and level of self-awareness. In positive psychotherapy, these factors are considered not only as prerequisites but also as internal forces that are being restored and developed. N. Peseschkian emphasises that the internal adequacy of an individual largely depends on the extent to which he sees meaning, faith, hope and constructive purpose in himself. If Peseschkian (1992) is correct, the value system becomes the basis for resistance and autonomy for the individual. Instead, value crises, internal contradictions and low emotional self-regulation impede the full use of resources.

5. The cross-cultural factor: The cross-cultural factor is of essential importance in the process of perception, analysis and application of

psychological resources, since value systems, communication norms and social expectations shape the adaptive behaviour of an individual and the structure of internal resources differently in different cultures;

This factor strongly influences the perception, meaning and application of resources: what is considered a resource in one culture (for example, individual self-expression) may be perceived as unregulated behavior in another culture (Akhtar & Pezeshkian, 2021).

In the context of studying psychological resources, one of the main questions is what factors contribute to the activation of these resources, and how it is possible to stimulate the restoration or discovery of resources through therapeutic intervention. Both theoretical and applied approaches emphasise that the development of resources does not only imply favourable conditions; It often depends on the individual's subjective perceptions, internal structures, and awareness of cultural roles. That is, even in a favourable external environment, an individual may not use his or her resources due to misinterpretations and personal survival schemes.

Hamid Pezeshkian (2021) suggests using three key dimensions in resource work: temporal (what past events can serve as a source of resources), interpersonal (what relationships have contributed to the formation of resources), and ontological (what semantic structure does the person's experience of existence have). These interventions contribute to the restructuring of resources and their active influence in the therapeutic process.

Within the framework of Nosrat Pezeshkian's (2020) positive psychotherapy, resources are viewed as internally existing, but sometimes inactive or unnoticed abilities. The main ways to activate resources are the activation of positive past experiences, emphasising the person's internal abilities, such as patience, discipline, creativity, and sense-making skills.

Research and clinical experience show a number of effective methods that can be used to activate psychological resources in the therapeutic process:

- Reorientation – helps an individual change their attitude towards their internal difficulties by identifying the resource elements present in them.
- Sublimation – allows them to transform negative emotions into socially acceptable and positive activities. This stimulates the revival of creative resources.
- Correction of Idealisation – therapeutic work is aimed at revising the individual's unrealistic ideas about themselves and others, strengthening realistic self-assessment and inspiration resources.
- Compromise decisions – can contribute to “internal coexistence” within the person, revealing balancing self-regulation resources.
- Constructive forms of avoidance – in some cases, it is appropriate to

create distance from the harmful environment in order to discover or activate new resources.

- Self-regulation and psychological flexibility – by developing adaptive abilities, the individual regenerates coping resources, especially in stressful conditions.

Peseschkian's model also considers humour and stories as emotional resources, using metaphors in the therapeutic process that activate the potential for subconscious transformation. These methods are considered not only as an intervention, but as a way to activate the person's internal resources, restore self-regulation, and positive self-concept.

Discussion

Modern approaches demonstrate that psychological resources are multi-component potentials, including cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social factors, which are also formed and manifested depending on the cultural context (Reppold et al., 2020).

Moreover, activation becomes an effective basis for the development of a person's emotional stability, self-esteem and resilience. This process is considered within the framework of positive psychotherapy not only as a tool for restoring well-being, but also as a tool for growth and self-realization, when resources are viewed as developing potential, not just existing conditions (Furchtlehner et al., 2024). According to positive psychotherapy, therapeutic activation of resources is possible only when the individual's cultural affiliation, family scenarios and the meaning of the main conflicts in life are taken into account. This approach is especially effective in multicultural societies and when working with migrants (Pezeshkian, N., 2020).

Accordingly, recent research (Russo Netzer & Israel Atad, 2024) and (Klonek et al., 2024) highlight the main factors contributing to resource activation, which include the following:

1. Clarification of value orientation and meaning in life, which allows for the stabilisation of identity-based choices and a sense of purpose.
2. Promotion of self-knowledge and development of self-efficacy, which strengthens the person's sense of control (Engelhardt et al., 2024).
3. Strengthening of social support systems, which act as external resources in restoring internal balance.
4. Creative activities or expressive methods, which stimulate the activation of non-verbal resources (symbolic, emotional) (Klonek et al., 2024).
5. Inclusion of cultural and intercultural context, which increases the possibilities of identification and stimulates adaptive resources (Russo Netzer & Israel Atad, 2024).

The combination of these factors creates an intrasystemic state in which an individual can not only survive and adapt, but also develop and self-actualise as a subject who actively shapes the structure of his or her psychological resources.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the studied scientific literature, it can be concluded that psychological resources represent those components of a person's internal potential that contribute to the psychosocial stability and effective life activity of an individual. They include the value system, self-esteem, emotional self-regulation, the ability to search for meaning, and practical adaptive behaviour. The activation of resources is considered a preventive and restorative process that can have a positive impact on both an individual's emotional health and intrapersonal relationships. The analysis of the factors contributing to the activation of these resources reveals that their targeted development through therapeutic interventions enables the reduction of neurotic symptoms, enhances self-direction, and fosters a more meaningful orientation in life.

The research data confirm that gender, age, professional, and cultural factors significantly affect the structure and forms of resource manifestation. These observations emphasise that therapeutic interventions should be based not only on problem analysis, but also on the principles of resource identification, activation, and valuation.

In today's rapidly changing and information-saturated world, the activation of psychological resources is a crucial condition for an individual's stability. It is in this transformational world that the ability of an individual to recognise, maintain, and develop his or her internal resources contributes to cultural flexibility, adaptability, and the formation of psychological resilience, while also ensuring social harmony in a multicultural environment.

In general, it can be stated that psychological resources are not only a means of maintaining the individual's internal balance, but also a driving force for development and self-realisation, and their targeted activation can be considered an important strategy of modern psychological practical work.

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VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF A PERSON IN THE CONTEXT OF PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER

TATEVIK VATYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences
of the Republic of Armenia
Department of Psychology, PhD student
vatyantatevik@gmail.com

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Abstract

The rapid development of modern societies, the multi-layered nature of intercultural relations, as well as immigration and emigration processes, demonstrate the need to study and shed new light on the perception of the other in psychological science. Over time, the ideas about the other have changed; therefore, a multifaceted analysis of perceptions of the other in modern society is essential. This article examines the value orientations of individuals in the contemporary Armenian environment, which are shaped by their perception of others. Theoretical models of value orientations have been analysed, and modern manifestations of orientations have been subjected to comparative analysis with the ideas about the psychological sovereignty of a person. As a result of qualitative and quantitative analysis, it has become possible to reveal the complex of dichotomous notions of “self-the other”, which has been studied among modern Armenian youth.

Keywords: Perception of the other, value orientation, sovereignty, stability, hierarchy of values.

ԱՆՁԻ ԱՐԺԵՔԱՅԻՆ ԿՈՂՄՆՈՐՈՇՈՒՄՆԵՐԸ ԱՅԼՈՅ ԸՆԿԱԼՄԱՆ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՈՒՄ

ՏԱԹԵՎԻԿ ՎԱԹՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ
vatyantatevik@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից հասարակությունների արագ զարգացումը, միջմշակութային հարաբերությունների բազմաշերտ բնույթը, ինչպես նաև ներգաղթի և արտագաղթի գործընթացները ցույց են տալիս այլոց

ընկալմանն առնչվող հարցերի ուսումնասիրության և հոգեբանական գիտության մեջ նոր մոտեցումներ ներկայացնելու անհրաժեշտությունը: Ժամանակի ընթացքում այլոց պատկերացումներն որոշակի փոփոխություններ են կրել, այդ պատճառով արդի հասարակության մեջ այլոց ընկալման բազմակողմանի վերլուծությունն առանձնակի կարևորություն ունի: Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվել են ժամանակակից հայաստանյան միջավայրում ձևավորվող անձի արժեքային կողմնորոշումները, որոնք արտահայտվում են այլոց ընկալման համատեքստում: Վերլուծության են ենթարկվել արժեքային կողմնորոշումների տեսական մոդելները, ինչպես նաև ժամանակակից կողմնորոշումների դրսևորումները համեմատվել են անձի հոգեբանական սուվերենության գաղափարների հետ: Որակական և քանակական վերլուծության արդյունքում հնարավոր է դարձել բացահայտել «ես-այլք» դիփտոմիկ ընկալումների համալիրը, որը ուսումնասիրվել է ժամանակակից հայ երիտասարդության շրջանում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ այլոց ընկալում, արժեքային կողմնորոշում, ինքնիշխանություն, կայունություն, արժեքների հիերարխիա:

Introduction

Value orientation is a psychological phenomenon that expresses the basic principles and positions of a person's life activity and self-expression in society. Value orientation creates an individual ideology of a person's lifestyle. It is formed when assimilating social experience and is expressed in goals, ideals, beliefs, interests, aspirations, and is realised in behaviour.

Value orientations guide the process of assimilation of social norms, the specifics of the manifestation of which have become an essential object of study in the psychological discipline. Value orientations are essential for clarifying the framework of the concepts of “self”–“alien”, “us”–“them” in modern societies, integration and adaptive processes in social interactions, as well as the semantic-value, demand-based, and, in general, socio-psychological context of migration processes.

It is no secret that values underlie any interpersonal relationship; therefore, they also play a decisive role in the formation of relationships with others. The analysis of value orientations provides an opportunity to understand and interpret in a new way not only modern ideas about the other, but also to outline the psychological boundaries of the psychological sovereignty of the individual within society and the differentiation of the Self from the Others. Due to such manifestations, perceptions of one's people are formed in society, and the world of the others is perceived through value orientations that differ from one's own environment, often opposing them.

Literature review

Scientific studies of value orientations are aimed at the classification and systematic presentation of values. In studies conducted at the beginning of the 20th century, attempts were made to present value orientations according to specific types and theoretical approaches. The authors of the diagnostic approach to value orientation are G. Allport, P. Vernon and G. Lindzey (1970). This approach is based on the theoretical typology proposed by the German philosopher and psychologist E. Spranger. According to E. Spranger's typology, dominant values are distinguished in value orientations, which play a decisive role throughout life and shape an individual as a person (Klüver, 1925; Pedroza, 2016). For this reason, the authors have distinguished dominant value types that follow the theoretical ideal, pursue economic interests, correspond to aesthetic (external), social (interpersonal), political (governmental), and religious (spiritual) needs.

M. Rokeach characterises value orientations as beliefs that determine a preferred behavioural pattern. The value system, according to M. Rokeach, is a stable system of these beliefs, which is best expressed by the use of words such as “should”, “must,” or “desirable”. According to M. Rokeach, human values can be characterised by five main characteristics (Rokeach, 1968; Rokeach, 1973).

- Each person has a small number of basic values.
- There are universal values that all people share to one degree or another.
- Values form a system.
- The origins of values are in culture and social institutions.
- A person's value system influences various spheres of their life.

The universal and stable characteristics of value orientations seem to be the necessary components that contribute to the formation of perceptions of a stranger and the integration of a stranger into one's own value system. However, even though values are stable beliefs, M. Rokeach nevertheless considers values as a dynamic concept. He was convinced that individual and social changes would not be possible if values were unchanging. However, on the other hand, if values did not have a certain stability, then the continuity of the human personality and society would also be impossible. Therefore, we can say that values are stable-changing quantities that exist for each individual in a unique value hierarchy system.

In the context of the perception of the other, several authors emphasise value orientations from the point of view of the formation and maintenance of one's own psychological space. The other is a person who poses a threat to the value orientations rooted in society, which the transformation of the psychological space can accompany.

Shalom Schwartz (2012) proposes a new model of an individual's value

orientation, which consists of ten basic values. Schwartz’s value system offers a universal solution to value orientation, which includes all levels of previously existing value orientation theories and all values that are accepted in all cultures of the world. Speaking about values, Schwartz distinguishes five characteristics that complete all previously existing ideas about values.

- Values are beliefs. However, these beliefs are inextricably linked with feelings and do not represent objective, cold thoughts.
- Values are motivational structures. They refer to desirable goals that people strive for.
- Values lie beyond the scope of concrete actions and events. They are abstract goals. The abstract nature of values distinguishes them from concepts such as norms and relationships, which usually refer to concrete actions, objects, and situations.
- Values play a decisive role in the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. That is, values serve as standards or criteria.
- Values are organised according to their relative importance. This hierarchical system of values also distinguishes them from norms and attitudes.

The classification of values put forward by D.A. Leontiev (2012) relates to the stages of a person’s activity, which follow one another. First, a person assimilates public ideals; then, these ideals motivate him to action, during which they are realised and become material. Later, the realised values, in turn, become the basis for the formation of new public ideals, and this cycle is constantly repeated.

Based on the above, value orientations are formed and manifested according to a particular structure, express socially significant behavioural norms, and socio-cultural stereotypes. To clarify the socio-psychological significance of value orientations in the perceptions of the other, let us first try to present several examples of the classification of value systems (Table 1).

Table 1.

Value types classification

	<i>E. Spranger</i>	<i>M. Rokeach</i>	<i>S. Schwartz</i>	<i>D.A. Leontiev</i>
Value types	Theoretical Economic Aesthetic Social Political Religious	Terminal Instrumental	Self-Direction Stimulation Hedonism Achievement Power Security Conformity Tradition Benevolence Universalism	Public Ideals Materialisation of Ideals Motivational Structure

As we can see from Table 1, classifications of value orientations are mainly built according to types of values. One type of typology is mostly descriptive and is formed by enumerating values or groups of values. This type includes, for example, the classifications developed by E. Spranger and S. Schwartz. The other type of typology is built at the meta-level of the value system, when some characteristic unites groups of values and has methodological significance. Such classifications include M. Rokeach and D.A. Leontiev's interpretations of value systems.

However, it should be noted that any classification of value orientations is aimed at defining socially significant meanings, behavioural norms, and positions within a given society. Value orientations, thus, contribute to the ability of a person to perceive the privacy of his own culture and distinguish his own culture from other cultures. Therefore, value orientations outline the boundaries of a person's value sovereignty and the distinguishing features of "own" and "alien" or "self" and "the other" (Simmel, 1950; Alexander, 2014; Park, 1950).

In the context of the other's perception, assessments of psychological sovereignty in value orientations are of particular importance. Moreover, the phenomenon of psychological sovereignty is gradually becoming a key term in the perception of the other, which has been expressed by several authors. Thus, S. Nartova-Bochaver (2017) emphasises the component of value sovereignty in the system of psychological sovereignty, which is presented as a semantic feature of separating one's environment from strangers.

Several scientists (Inness, 1992; Menges, 2021; Frener & Trepte, 2022) have studied the phenomenon of psychological sovereignty from the perspective of privacy manifestation. These studies indicate that the value feature of privacy appears with certain age-gender differences. In women, psychological sovereignty is primarily expressed through rituals of privacy, which reveal the distinct characteristics of their value system. Among men, psychological sovereignty is mainly expressed in the value orientations of autonomy and freedom of behaviour. From this standpoint, the perception of the other is formed outside the psychologically assimilated sovereign value system.

In the context of psychological sovereignty or privacy, one can make assumptions not only about the value orientations of locals or aliens in society, but also about the value system of other people with the status of the others: immigrants, refugees, representatives of national, religious, and other minorities. As several studies show, the perception of the other can also "spread" to those members of society who are part of the local population, but who demonstrate value orientations that differ from socially significant norms and positions. Thus, several authors have expressed the opinion that in case of unsatisfied privacy needs, a person tends to exhibit behaviour that differs from the values and social norms accepted in society. Therefore, in case of

violation of privacy or psychological sovereignty, a person may exhibit a low level of socialisation, and with the increase in maladaptation to social norms, gradually transform from the status of “one’s own” to “another’s” (Guntrip, 2018; Jackson et al., 2017).

Methods

In order to find out the perceptions of foreigners in modern society and the peculiarities of value orientations in these perceptions, we conducted an empirical study. The study was conducted in Yerevan, Republic of Armenia, from May 2024 to May 2025. The study involved young Armenians aged 20–35 (N=560), of whom the number of female (N=280) and male (N=280) respondents was selected in equal distribution, as well as foreign immigrants (N=560), also in equal distribution by gender – women (N=280) and men (N=280). The sample of immigrants was formed according to the following principles:

- Immigrants temporarily settled in the Republic of Armenia within 1 month at the time of conducting the study,
- Immigrants temporarily settled to carry out work activities.

The study aimed to examine and reveal the differences in the perceptions of others’ value orientations and their characteristics.

Research methods are:

- M. Rokeach, “The Value Survey”. It contains two lists of terminal and instrumental values, each of which consists of 18 values. Rokeach’s test is a rating and assessment of a list of values according to the importance attribute.
- S. Nartova-Bochaver’s “Sovereignty of Psychological Space” test. The test consists of 80 questions. The test contains questions that cover all six zones of psychological space proposed in S. Nartova-Bochaver’s theory. These are the sovereignty of the physical body, the sovereignty of space, the sovereignty of things, the sovereignty of habits, the sovereignty of social ties, and the sovereignty of values.

The results of the study were analysed using the JASP 0.17.3.0 statistical program. The test results were compared in groups of Armenian and foreign youth and analysed using the Principal Component Analysis factor method. Statistically significant results were recorded with scores of 0.8 and higher. The choice of the factor method was determined by the study’s purpose, which was to identify the value manifestations of others’ perceptions in both Armenian and foreign respondent groups. This method allowed to reveal the value orientations of primary importance to be revealed, which are important in modern Armenian society. During the study, respondents assessed the values that are most important to them. Then, the perceptions of the others were identified by cross-checking the value orientations among the Armenian and foreign samples. Respondents assessed the values that, in their subjective

opinion, can be attributed to others. For this reason, the above-mentioned tests were cross-checked. Armenian and foreign youth appreciated each other's value orientations, which were emphasised in the context of the perception of the others.

Results

The results of this study present a new perspective on the interpretation of value orientations, specifically identifying key values and value orientations that retain priority and significance in the context of temporary immigration. The results of the experimental study are summarised below.

Table 2.

Principal Component Analysis Results

Sample of Armenian respondents					Sample of foreign respondents				
Component Loadings					Component Loadings				
	RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness		RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness
An exciting life	0.924			0.121	An exciting life	0.892			0.090
A comfortable life	0.889			0.202	A comfortable life	0.876			0.159
Independent	0.762			0.271	Imaginative	0.790	-0.439		0.127
Imaginative	0.702	-0.556		0.152	Inner harmony	0.648		0.447	0.138
Inner harmony	0.551		0.515	0.157	Ambitious		0.894		0.218
Ambitious		0.891		0.190	Independent		-0.812		0.254
Self-respect		0.759		0.460	Self-respect		0.668		0.570
Honest			0.963	0.079	Honest			0.953	0.081
<i>Note.</i> Applied rotation method is promax.					<i>Note.</i> Applied rotation method is promax.				

As we can see from Table 2, the following value orientations turned out to be statistically the most significant. In the immigrant group, the importance of sovereignty of things, habits, social connections and territory was emphasised. In other words, these are the value orientations that were best preserved in the conditions of immigration and those values, the preservation or sovereignty of which is most significant for the studied sample. The most alarming result was the one showing the low degree of expression of the sovereignty of values. Apparently, this is a consequence of the adaptation processes of immigrants in a new place of residence. In comparison with the group of immigrants, this parameter of value orientation in the studied Armenian group retained its high degree of expression.

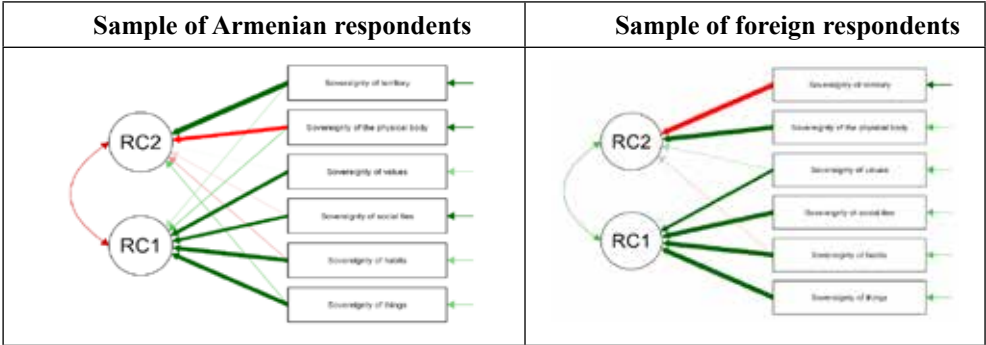


Diagram 1. Principal Component Analysis Results

These results empirically demonstrated that the value sovereignty component appears more sensitively in the perceptions of the foreign respondents, which served as the basis for separately examining value orientations in the two sample groups.

Table 3.

Rokeach Value Study Results

Sample of Armenian respondents					Sample of foreign respondents				
Component Loadings					Component Loadings				
	RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness		RC1	RC2	RC3	Uniqueness
An exciting life	0.924			0.121	An exciting life	0.892			0.090
A comfortable life	0.889			0.202	A comfortable life	0.876			0.159
Independent	0.762			0.271	Imaginative	0.790	-0.439		0.127
Imaginative	0.702	-0.556		0.152	Inner harmony	0.648		0.447	0.138
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Ambitious		0.891		0.190	Independent		-0.812		0.254
Self-respect		0.759		0.460	Self-respect		0.668		0.570
Honest			0.963	0.079	Honest			0.953	0.081
Note. Applied rotation method is promax.					Note. Applied rotation method is promax.				

Based on the results presented in Table 3, it can be concluded that in the immigrant group the most significant values were of a comfortable life and an exciting life. It should be noted that the same picture of value assessment was observed in the group of Armenian respondents. It can be assumed that in the conditions of temporary immigration in the studied sample, a picture of transformation of value orientations is observed; however, this transformation

does not affect the assessment of terminal values, which are a priority in the value system.

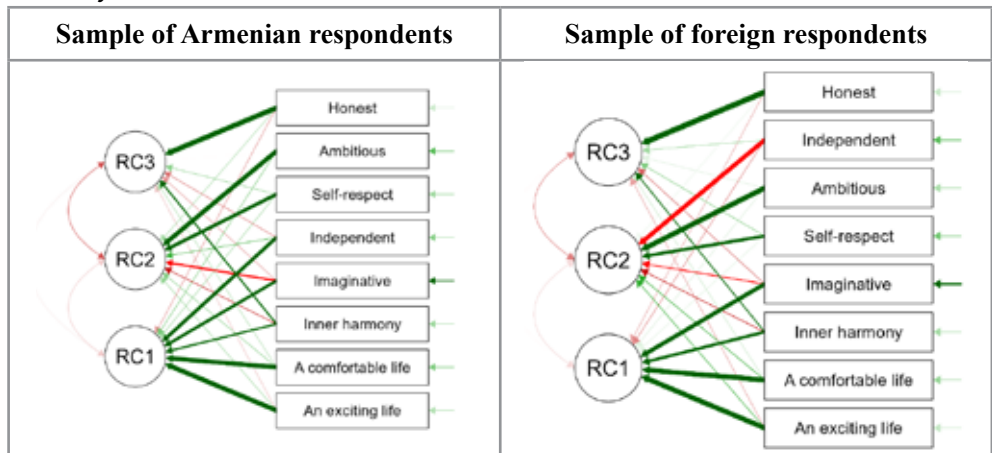


Diagram 2. Rokeach Value Study Results

In the Armenian sample group, the following values were most important: “an exciting life” and “a comfortable life”. The terminal value of independence, instrumental values of ambitious and honest were also highly rated. In the foreign group of the others, the terminal and instrumental value components remained almost unchanged. However, the value of independence underwent a certain transformation, emphasised by high negative scores. In addition, if the independence component appeared in the Armenian group alongside the “inner harmony”, “a comfortable life”, and “an exciting life” components, then in the group of foreign respondents, it appeared together with the “self-respect” and “ambitious” components.

Discussion

As we can see from Table 2 and Figure 1, the results of Principal Component Analysis among Armenians are presented in two groups of sovereignty components. One group represents the assessment of a person’s spatial sovereignty, in which the territorial sovereignty component is statistically significant. In other words, the higher a person assesses the degree of sovereignty of “one’s” territory, the more emphasised is the person’s identification with “one’s own.” In the group of social interaction sovereignty components, except for the sovereignty component of social ties, all other components showed significant relationships. In this group of components, the assessments of the sovereignty of habits, objects, and values were thus given importance.

Along with the group of Armenians, the assessments of foreign respondents were analysed. Taking into account the fact that these assessments

were recorded from foreigners temporarily residing in the Republic of Armenia, who were far from their native land and environment at the time of the survey, it is logical that in the group of territorial sovereignty components, the assessments of the sovereignty of the two spatial components – territory and physical body – were recorded with opposite meanings. Having appeared in an unfamiliar and foreign environment, spatial identification with one's own is no longer relevant. Instead, the assessment of the sovereignty of the physical body is strengthened; foreign respondents often note that in the process of identifying with one's own and distinguishing themselves from an environment that is foreign to them, they pay great attention to the appearance of the body and the style of clothing. The assessments of the sovereignty of the components of social interaction suffer most from the assessment of the sovereignty of values.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed certain transformation tendencies in value orientations and the perceptions of others. In particular, it became clear that the level of sovereignty of values was most sensitively manifested in the assessments of the self and the other environments. In the group of strangers, it ceases to be statistically significant, and the sovereignty of values is “replaced” by high assessments of the sovereignty of social ties and habits. Of the terminal and instrumental value orientations, the value assessment of independence was most sensitively manifested in the environment of strangers, and showed a decreasing trend. The results of the study present empirical evidence for value transformation in temporary migration.

The conducted research revealed the main value components of the own-foreign perceptions. It became clear that in a foreign environment, the value orientations of personal values and territorial sovereignty suffer the most, and the terminal value of independence ceases to play a decisive role in the system of value orientations. The data obtained empirically show that the key findings of the study may have not only theoretical and methodological significance for a new understanding of the phenomenon, but also for a deeper understanding of the other. The results of the study also have practical significance in the field of applied social sciences, since the identified trends in value orientations can be considered when developing a migration policy strategy, sociological monitoring studies, and psychological counselling for migrants. However, it is also worth noting some of the limitations of the conducted research. The limitations of the study, first of all, relate to the following principles of sample formation:

Depending on the national and religious affiliation of foreign respondents, the assessments of the aforementioned value orientations may vary slightly.

The value orientations of the perception of foreigners also depend on the gender and age composition, as well as the educational qualifications, of the sample.

Among the possible limitations of the study, it is also necessary to note the limitations of data regarding the cross-sectional or longitudinal design of the study, the inclusion in the sample of parameters of migrants' employment, sphere of activity, as well as their communication links in the studied society.

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METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSING THE SEMANTIC ORIENTATION OF VICTIMHOOD

MERI YEGHIAZARYAN

Public Relations Specialist at “Anania Shirakatsi” International University of Relations,
News website editor,
International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences
of the Republic of Armenia, PhD student
meri.yeghiazaryan@edu.isec.am

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Abstract

The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of victimology theory and its semantic transformation, tracing its development from philosophical and criminological foundations to the complex psychological and socio-cultural domains. It highlights a paradigmatic shift in the perception of the victim—from being defined by objective external factors to being understood as a multidimensional psychological phenomenon shaped by the interaction between unconscious intrapersonal processes and prevailing social norms.

A study conducted within the Armenian societal context aims to explore the psychological components underlying the perception of victimhood. Particular attention is given to deeply rooted stereotypes and defence mechanisms that influence victim perception, underscoring the significance of both social and individual factors in shaping victim-related attitudes.

The article places particular emphasis on the interaction between the victim's psychological state, self-perception, and external environmental responses—an interplay that deepens the contextual understanding of victimhood. The findings suggest that perceptions of victim vulnerability are shaped through the dynamic interplay of socio-cultural norms and individuals' internal psychological processes. Moreover, the data reveal distinct gender-based patterns in responses to victimhood, underscoring the role of gender as a significant variable in shaping attitudes toward victims. Women tend to approach victims with greater empathy and understanding. In contrast, men more frequently exhibit critical or dismissive attitudes toward vulnerability—responses often linked to varying manifestations of psychological defence mechanisms. These differences provide a critical foundation for developing gender-sensitive support strategies that integrate both psychological and social approaches.

Finally, the article emphasises the importance of conducting further research involving participants from diverse age groups, which would enable a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the perception of victimhood. Such an approach could facilitate the optimisation of support mechanisms by considering both societal and psychological characteristics and needs.

This study makes a significant contribution to contemporary scientific exploration of victimhood, as it may inform the development of innovative strategies for understanding and supporting victims. These approaches aim to enhance psychological well-being, grounded in the principle that a mentally healthy individual constitutes the cornerstone of a healthy society and stable social relationships.

The theoretical and practical strategies developed within this research are crucial for helping victims regulate and maintain emotional stability, facilitating their self-expression and social integration. Consequently, these strategies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of social support systems and promote overall mental well-being.

Keywords: Victimhood, semantic orientation, victim perception, gender differences, self-expression, defence mechanisms.

ՎԻԿՏԻՄՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԻՄԱՍՏԱՅԻՆ ԿՈՂՄՆՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ԳՆԱՀԱՏՄԱՆ ՄԵԹՈԴԱԲԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ

ՄԵՐԻ ԵՂԻԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ

«Անանիա Շիրակացի» միջազգային հարաբերությունների
համալսարանի հասարակայնության հետ կապերի մասնագետ,
լրատվական կայքի խմբագիր,

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի հայցորդ

meri.yeghiazaryan@edu.isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում համակողմանիորեն վերլուծվում է վիկտիմության տեսության զարգացումը և նրա իմաստային ձևափոխությունները՝ սկսած փիլիսոփայական ու քրեագիտական հիմքերից մինչև հոգեբանական և սոցիալ-մշակութային բազմաշերտ ոլորտներ: Արտացոլվում է զոհի ընկալման անցումն օբյեկտիվ արտաքին ազդեցություններից դեպի առավել բարդ, բազմաչափ հոգեբանական երևույթ, որը ձևավորվում է անհատի անգիտակցական գործընթացների և սոցիալական նորմերի փոխազդեցությամբ:

Հայ հասարակության շրջանում իրականացված հետազոտությունը միտված է վիկտիմության ընկալման հոգեբանական բաղադրիչների բացահայտմանը: Մասնավորապես, ուշադրության կենտրոնում են գոհի ընկալման վրա ազդող կարծրատիպային արմատացումներն ու պաշտպանական մեխանիզմները, որոնք ընդգծում են ինչպես սոցիալական, այնպես էլ անհատական գործոնների նշանակությունը:

Հոդվածում առանձնահատուկ շեշտադրվում է գոհի հոգեբանական վիճակի, ինքնընկալման և արտաքին միջավայրի արձագանքների փոխազդեցության կարևորությունը, ինչը հնարավորություն է տալիս խորացնել գոհի համատեքստային ընկալման գիտակցումը: Հետազոտության արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ գոհի խոցելիության ընկալումը ձևավորվում է սոցիալ-մշակութային նորմերի և անհատի ներքին հոգեբանական դինամիկայի փոխազդեցության արդյունքում: Բացի այդ, տվյալները վկայում են, որ գոհ լինելու երևույթի նկատմամբ կա սեռային տարբերակված արձագանք: Կանայք հակված են ավելի կարեկցանքով և ըմբռնմամբ մոտենալ գոհին, մինչդեռ տղամարդկանց մոտ հաճախ դիտարկվում է խոցելիությունը ժխտող և քննադատական վերաբերմունք, որը կապված է պաշտպանական մեխանիզմների տարբեր դրսևորումների հետ: Այս տարբերությունները կարևոր հիմք են սեռային զգայուն աջակցման ռազմավարությունների մշակման համար՝ համադրված հոգեբանական և սոցիալական մոտեցումներով:

Վերջապես, հոդվածում առանձնացվում է տարիքային տարբեր խմբերի մասնակցությամբ հետազոտությունների կարևորությունը, ինչը հնարավորություն կտա վիկտիմության ընկալման մասին առավել ամբողջական և բազմաշերտ պատկերացում կազմել: Այս մոտեցումը կօգնի օպտիմալացնել աջակցության մեխանիզմները՝ հաշվի առնելով թե՛ հասարակական, թե՛ հոգեբանական առանձնահատկություններն ու կարիքները:

Այս ուսումնասիրությունը կարևոր ներդրում է վիկտիմության ժամանակակից գիտական ուսումնասիրման ոլորտում, քանի որ այն կարող է նպաստել գոհի ընկալման և աջակցման նոր ռազմավարությունների մշակմանը: Նման մոտեցումները ձգտում են բարձրացնել հոգեբանական առողջության մակարդակը՝ հիմնվելով այն սկզբունքի վրա, որ հոգեպես առողջ անհատը առողջ հասարակության ու կայուն հասարակական հարաբերությունների անկյունաքարն է:

Հետազոտության շրջանակներում մշակված տեսական և կիրառական ռազմավարությունները կարևոր դեր են խաղում գոհի հուզական վիճակի վերահսկողության ու կայունության պահպանման, ինքնաարտահայտման և սոցիալական ինտեգրման գործընթացներում, ինչն, իր

հերթին, կարող է նպաստել սոցիալական աջակցության համակարգերի արդյունավետության բարձրացմանն ու հոգեկան բարեկեցության ամրապնդմանը:

Քանալի բառեր՝ վիկտիմություն, իմաստային կողմնորոշում, զոհի ընկալում, սեռային տարբերություն, ինքնարտահայտում, պաշտպանական մեխանիզմներ:

Introduction

Contemporary societies are transforming multilayered and rapidly unfolding socio-economic, political, and cultural changes. While these shifts open up new avenues for development, they simultaneously give rise to deepening social contradictions. Within this dynamic context, the protection of the individual as a social subject—ensuring their safety and safeguarding their dignity—has become an increasingly urgent concern. As a result, the protection and assurance of human rights have emerged as critical areas of scholarly inquiry. Within this framework, the phenomena of victimhood and victim perception are examined as complex socio-psychological constructs.

Victimhood refers to situations in which an individual becomes the target of physical, psychological, social, or legal harm. Historically, the study of victimhood has been largely confined to the criminological field, focusing primarily on crimes and their legal consequences. However, in recent decades, inquiries into victimhood have considerably expanded to include psychological and sociological approaches. Victimhood is now understood not only as a legal status but also as a subjective experience expressed at perceptual, emotional, and behavioural levels. It may manifest in overt cases of violence as well as in more subtle forms, such as psychological trauma and social marginalisation.

In this context, the societal nuances of victimhood perception, the lack of clear delineation of culpability, and entrenched stereotypes are increasingly emphasised, all of which complicate the protection of victims and undermine the effectiveness of support systems. From a psychological perspective, the interaction between the victim's self-perception and external responses often hinders the recovery process.

Consequently, there arises a need to develop a novel approach grounded in a multilayered and comprehensive understanding of victimhood—one that incorporates psychological, social, and individual factors. Such an approach would enable the reinterpretation of public perceptions and institutional responses, fostering victim-centred and restorative strategies. These strategies have the potential to enhance the efficacy of support systems by addressing the actual needs and lived experiences of victims.

The study aims to analyse the theoretical and applied foundations

of victimology, with particular attention to the multilayered concept of victimhood, gender-specific characteristics of victim perception, societal stereotypes, and their accompanying psychological mechanisms, to develop effective, victim-centred support strategies.

The central research questions guiding this inquiry include:

- What are the core psychological components of victimhood, and how do they shape the victim's self-perception?
- How do gender differences influence attitudes toward victims when psychological and social factors are jointly considered?
- What are the stereotypical foundations of victim perception within contemporary society?
- How do psychological and social factors interact in shaping the perception of victimhood?
- What strategies are essential for the development of victim-centred and restorative support systems?

The article places particular emphasis on the victim's psychological state, self-perception, and the interaction with responses from the external environment, highlighting the importance of a contextual understanding of victimhood.

A new perspective is presented on the psychological understanding of victimhood as an interconnected outcome of social and personal factors, which is essential for developing more comprehensive and informed support strategies.

Theoretical and methodological bases

The term «victimology» etymologically derives from the Latin word *victima*, meaning «victim.» As a scientific discipline, victimology emerged in the mid-twentieth century within the field of criminology. However, as early as the 19th century, the German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach, renowned for his critique of religion and humanistic thought, addressed the phenomenon of sacrifice (Feuerbach, L. 1841), interpreting it as the alienation of man from his own essence. According to Feuerbach, humans become the victims of their own created ideas and systems. This understanding, rooted in the alienation and tension between an individual's identity and their constructed values, can be considered a fundamental philosophical premise of the concept of victimhood.

Initially developed as a subfield of criminology, victimology has over time evolved into an independent scientific discipline, expanding its scope of study to include not only crime victims but also the socio-psychological profile of the victim, as well as manifestations of victimhood in state, political, cultural, and symbolic spheres. A special place in this is occupied by the

psychological component, which, according to Frank (Frank, 1975), genuinely contributes to the deepening and development of the structure of victimology. One of the fundamental terms in victimological science is the concept of “victimisation,” which was introduced into the legal literature by L. W. Frank (Frank, 1975). By “victimisation,” he means the process of transforming a person into a real victim or the outcome of such a process.

Benjamin Mendelsohn is considered one of the founders of victimology. He was among the first to formulate the theoretical principles of “victimology,” developing terminology derived directly from the word “victim.” One of his most significant contributions is the concept of “victimogenic predisposition.” Mendelsohn notes that every individual possesses a particular vulnerability to becoming a victim, which is conditioned by their psychological, physical, and social characteristics. From this perspective, becoming a victim is viewed not only as a random or solely externally influenced legal status but also as an internal predisposition. This predisposition is expressed through behavioural patterns, emotional responses, and social attitudes that may contribute to involvement in harmful relationships or situations (Mendelsohn, 1976, pp. 8–28).

Sigmund Freud’s contribution to victimology is invaluable and central to the study of victim psychology. Although he did not explicitly develop a theory of victimisation, his insights on trauma, intrapsychic conflicts, and defence mechanisms have profoundly shaped victimological research (Freud, 1905; 1920). Freud introduced key concepts such as repetition compulsion—the unconscious reenactment of trauma—and repression, where painful memories are pushed into the unconscious but later resurface as stress or anxiety. This framework underscores the complex interplay between psychological processes and social perceptions, deepening our understanding of victimhood and guiding effective prevention and psychological support strategies.

Thus, the ideas of both Mendelson and Freud are crucial in understanding victimhood not merely as a legal or social phenomenon, but as a psychological process shaped by internal vulnerability, the experience of trauma, and underlying mental mechanisms. These approaches have culturally influenced the development of the idea that being a victim is not merely a social reality but a deeply psychological process involving the experience of trauma, disruption of self-perception, and internal struggle on the path to recovery.

Psychological approaches provide an important foundation for the multilayered understanding of victimhood. However, a comprehensive conceptualisation of the victim’s role remains incomplete without a criminological analysis—one that examines the victim’s behaviour, social roles, and systemic responses within the context of the offence. Therefore, it is essential to return to the field of victimology by examining the theoretical principles formulated during the early stages of its development—principles

that enable a cross-sectional evaluation of both the victim's individual factors and the impact of the legal and socio-political environment.

From the very inception of criminal victimology and the development of victimological science, two opposing approaches have emerged regarding the nature of the crime victim and the assessment of their role in the context of unlawful acts. According to the first approach, "Some individuals attract the criminal like a lamb attracts a wolf" (Tarraukhin, 1974, p. 13). In this case, primary emphasis is placed on the biological aspects of the relationship between the offender or perpetrator and the victim, particularly the victim's specific genetic predisposition. According to the second perspective, the victim's behaviour is considered only one of the factors influencing the emergence and execution of the criminal plan. In this case, behaviour is not linked to genetic code or the biological inheritance of the individual; instead, it is emphasised that biological inheritance does not determine a person's specific behaviour, since personality and behaviour are shaped by the social structure of society and the environment in which the individual is raised.

D. Rivman offers an alternative conceptualization of victimhood, arguing that it should be understood as an individual's inherent predisposition to becoming a victim of crime under certain circumstances, or as the person's inability to resist the offender—accompanied by a range of factors that render this inability either objective (independent of the victim) or leave it at a subjective level of "unwillingness or incapacity" (Rivman, 1988, p.14).

Referring to V. Polubinsky's viewpoint, Rivman states: "They become victims of such criminal attacks not simply because they are individuals, but because of their specific official position, service, or social status, and socially beneficial behaviour" (Rivman, 1988, p. 13).

The relationships linking the offender to the victim, as well as the situations preceding and accompanying the crime, express only personal or role-based victimisation, which either create or, conversely, reduce the prerequisites for the commission of the crime. Thus, we begin to recognise that victimisation must be examined from a broader perspective, involving not only social factors but also psychological ones. This phenomenon represents a transition from criminological and sociological approaches to psychological theories, wherein the victim's or injured party's influence, behaviour, and inner world become critically important.

Andrew Karmen, Professor of Sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, in his studies and analyses, arrives at the assumption that victims are individuals subjected to adverse effects such as harm or hardship resulting from the illegal actions of a person or group of people (Karmen, 2012). Karmen's studies follow the criminological perspective that victimisation is primarily associated with the consequences of offenders' actions. However, Engel's

theory (Engel, 1977), which increasingly integrates psychological knowledge, introduces a new trend that views victims as individuals affected by major catastrophic events, such as crimes or natural disasters. Thus, we observe that victimology's focus progressively adapts to explanations related to the emotional and psychological states of the victim.

Engel's theory had a significant impact on the development of modern psychology and victimology, particularly in shaping the understanding that the victim's condition is determined not only by external events but also by the individual's internal resources—namely, the degree of emotional and psychological resilience. Engel's approach subsequently influenced the development of the view that the impact of victimisation encompasses not only physical but also psychological suffering. This phenomenon began to be understood not merely as a consequence of physical harm but as mental health-related challenges, necessitating prompt psychological support for victims. This shift from criminology to psychology helped clarify that the victim's condition can and should be addressed through comprehensive psychological assistance and treatment.

Thus begins the intersection of victimology and psychiatry. Hans von Hentig, one of the early scholars to study crime victims, addressed not only criminological but also psychological dimensions, proposing that victims, as active subjects, engage in a dynamic interaction with the offender. Hentig identified specific vulnerable groups—such as the elderly and women—whose lower levels of psychological and social preparedness thus increase the likelihood of becoming a victim (Hentig, G., 1948, pp. 303–309).

Furthermore, as Henry Ellenberger notes, the combination of social and psychological factors can lead to situations in which an individual becomes both offender and victim. This theory, which emphasises the harmony between both social environment and internal psychological factors, effectively conveys that in such interactions, an individual's identity is shaped not only by external causes but also by internal psychological reasons (Ellenberger, H., 1954). Thus, this development demonstrates that not only external factors shape the offender or the victim, but also internal psychological structures.

The importance of protecting victims' rights at the international level is also emphasised in the development of victimology. The United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, adopted in 1985, places special emphasis on the protection of victims' rights, expressing the notion that the rights to public, property, and personal security are among the most fundamental human rights. This document not only formalizes the role and significance of victimology but also helps to illustrate the process by which victimology transcends criminological science and begins to study broader phenomena, including psychological and socio-psychological resources.

In the 1990s, studies by Wetzels and colleagues (Wetzels, P., Ohlemacher, et al., 1994) sharply emphasised the socio-psychological significance of victimhood, considering it not only a criminal act but also a consequence of psychological and emotional suffering. This emphasis directly pertains to the individual's inner world—his or her fear, sense of vulnerability, and diminished self-esteem. Recent developments have contributed to the emergence of the idea that the victim should be evaluated not only based on objective damages but also on the way the individual perceives their victimhood, regardless of external reality. In other words, it is crucial to pay attention to the individual's subjective perception through which they assess their experienced trauma and suffering. This approach highlights that victimhood encompasses not only physical or material harm but also emotional, psychological, and social suffering, which the individual may experience and interpret in diverse ways.

Thus, over several decades, victimology has gradually evolved from a criminological perspective into a comprehensive system of psychological and socio-psychological approaches. The phenomenon of victimhood has undergone an evolutionary process over time, particularly within the psychological domain, where it has become a more inclusive field of study and application.

Nowadays, numerous studies in this field focus on elucidating the psychological foundations of victimhood, its various manifestations, and the associated social consequences. In “The Language of Victimisation: Toward an Understanding of Deviant Victims,” the author (Jennifer L. Dunn, 2010) explores victimhood as a socially constructed, dynamic process involving existential disruption and identity reconstruction beyond mere harm or violence. As a subsequent development, Symons, Hellemans, and colleagues (Symons, K., Hellemans, et al., 2016) demonstrate that early family abuse increases the risk of later sexual victimisation, mediated by psychological factors like low self-esteem, broken trust, and trauma. Expanding the conceptual scope, Pratt and Turanovic (2021) in “Revitalising Victimisation Theory” propose a multidimensional framework that includes psychological, emotional, and social harms, such as discrimination, thereby deepening our understanding of the impact of victimhood on identity and social status. Finally, in the article “Victimisation as a Transformative Experience” (Pemberton, Mulder, et al., 2024), through a phenomenological lens, victimhood is interpreted as an existential rupture and a transformative meaning-making process, highlighting how victims can develop resilience and renewed self-awareness beyond their suffering.

In “Evolution, Cognitive Sciences, and Victimology,” identify self-mastery as a core function of victimhood and stress the need to explore related cognitive skills like intelligence and reasoning, linked to education, work, and age (Gajos and Butwell, 2024). In “A Systematic Review of Risk Factors for Intimate

Partner Violence,” the authors examine social, developmental, psychological, and relational factors, finding that age, gender, socioeconomic status, and family dynamics influence the risk of domestic violence victimisation and perpetration (Kim, Joo, et al., 2025).

Research methods

This study employed a combined methodological approach, incorporating both theoretical analysis and empirical data collection through a structured survey method. The sample consisted of individuals aged 26 to 64, classified within the “middle adulthood” stage according to Erik Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development. The total sample included 100 participants (n = 100), evenly divided by gender—50 males and 50 females.

The survey was conducted anonymously and in a self-administered format to ensure participants’ freedom and to collect unbiased data. The primary aim of the study was to identify the specific characteristics of victim perception, taking into account gender differences and the psychosocial traits of the target group. Additionally, the study aimed to analyse the role of psychological defence mechanisms associated with these perceptions.

Results

Numerous psychological studies highlight that analysing the perception of victimhood and the associated public attitudes is essential for both preventing victimisation and designing effective psychological support systems. How victimhood is perceived profoundly shapes societal responses, which can range from empathy and readiness to offer assistance to blame, denial, or indifference.

In light of the significance of these issues, the present study was designed to examine the characteristics of victim perception as influenced by gender within specific age groups. The target population comprised individuals in the middle adulthood stage of psychosocial development, as defined by Erik Erikson, encompassing ages 26 to 64 and including both women and men.

Erik Erikson’s theory posits that individual development unfolds across the entire lifespan in distinct stages. Each stage is marked by a psychosocial crisis, the successful resolution of which facilitates the stabilization of identity, the awareness of one’s social role, and the establishment of interpersonal relationships (Erikson, 1996, p. 92).

Within this framework, the present study focuses specifically on the stage of middle adulthood (ages 26–64), as this phase is critical for the formation of social maturity, moral-psychological responsibility, and an individual’s system of attitudes toward others. These characteristics provide a substantive foundation for a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying victim perception.

Attitudes toward victims often reflect an individual’s psychological state, revealing the extent to which they are willing to support or protect those facing difficult circumstances. At the core of this research lies the analysis of public perceptions, which plays a crucial role both in the prevention of victimhood and in the development of effective psychological support systems.

Perceptions of victims within society influence social responses—including positive or negative attitudes, caregiving behaviours, and the formulation of support strategies—and frequently mirror the individual’s psychological defence mechanisms. These mechanisms enable the reorganization of internal psychological conflicts and facilitate the individual’s integration within the social environment. Consequently, they shape behavioral patterns and interpersonal relationships related to victim identity.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the distinctive features of victim perception across different genders within society and to explore the role of psychological defence mechanisms associated with these perceptions in the formation and development of social responses, attitudes, care, and support strategies. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial, as they may contribute—albeit subtly yet significantly—to shifting public attitudes and enhancing the effectiveness of interventions aimed at preventing and supporting victimhood.

The selected characteristics function as a reflective mirror of societal attitudes. Descriptors such as “kind,” “forgiving,” or “educated” carry positive connotations and represent traits highly valued and encouraged within cultural contexts. Conversely, terms like “cowardly,” “weak-willed,” or “dissatisfied” convey negative undertones, reflecting behavioural models regarded as undesirable or unsuccessful socially. Additionally, attributes indicating perceived physical or social vulnerability—such as “weak” or “insecure”—highlight facets of victim perception grounded in vulnerability. The choice of these descriptors reflects not only individual viewpoints but also broader cultural norms, social expectations, and value orientations.

The indicators illustrate the relationship between various characteristics associated with victim perception and gender, expressed as percentages (Table).

Table.

Victim Perceptions among Women and Men Aged 26–64

Age group: 26–64	Cowardly	Dissatisfied	Modest	Kind	Insecure	Non- confrontational	Weak (physically)	Forgiving	Weak-willed	Educated
Women	9 %	10%	8 %	11%	12%	11%	12%	9%	13%	5%
Men	4%	14%	12%	15%	10%	11%	8%	13%	10%	3%

The research findings revealed several interesting patterns and differences. Below are some of these, presented in the context of gender and characteristics attributed to the victim.

Cowardice– Women (9%) significantly more often attribute the trait “cowardly” to the victim profile compared to men (4%). This finding may suggest that women are more willing to acknowledge and recognize fear—whether their own or others’—as a legitimate human vulnerability or difficulty inherent in the victim identity. Women appear more inclined to accept the “vulnerable” persona, which can manifest as cowardice, and may be more open to the understanding that a victim characterized by cowardice might struggle to resist or recover, as such fear reflects their emotional states and internal psychological fluctuations.

Conversely, men (4%) are less likely to perceive cowardice as part of the victim’s profile. This tendency may be explained by prevailing perceptions within male viewpoints that victims are expected to demonstrate resilience and strength. Within this framework, fear is not only deemed undesirable for a “strong” individual but is also interpreted as a sign of weakness, reflecting dominant societal stereotypes.

Kindness– Men (15%) are more likely than women (11%) to attribute “kindness” to the victim. This may stem from men’s perception of the victim as obedient and emotionally open, where kindness is linked to submissiveness and passivity. This aligns with cultural norms that portray the victim as passive, non-reactive, and ethically positive but lacking self-protection. Women also associate kindness with the victim, but often view it as a sign of vulnerability, seeing it as a feminine trait that reflects fragility. These gender differences in interpreting kindness reflect the impact of gender role socialisation, shaping cultural views of kindness and its connection to vulnerability and social value.

Insecurity– The analysis revealed that women (12%) are more likely to label the victim as “insecure” than men (10%). This may reflect women’s greater sensitivity to vulnerability, possibly due to social or psychological factors. Women might identify with the victim’s lack of self-confidence based on personal experiences. In contrast, men, influenced by societal norms linking self-confidence with masculinity, are less likely to attribute “insecurity” to the victim. These gender differences highlight how social roles and gender socialisation shape perceptions of vulnerability and influence trait attributions.

Physical Weakness– Women (12%) are more likely than men (8%) to attribute “physically weak” to the victim, suggesting that women are more attuned to perceiving the victim as physically vulnerable or unable to protect themselves. This perception may reflect women’s heightened sensitivity to vulnerability, particularly in terms of physical safety. On the other hand,

men (8%) are less likely to associate physical weakness with the victim, likely due to societal expectations that emphasise physical strength and self-defence as masculine traits. These cultural norms limit the acceptance of physical weakness in men's perceptions, leading to fewer attributions of this characteristic to victims.

Forgiving– Men (13%) more often associate the trait “forgiving” with the victim than women (9%), viewing it as a sign of submission and compliance. Women (9%) also see the victim as forgiving, but with an emphasis on the victim's active role in fighting for their rights and seeking change.

Educated– Women (5%) are more likely than men (3%) to attribute the trait “educated” to the victim. This may suggest that women are more inclined to view the victim as an informed, autonomous individual actively seeking to change their circumstances. Such perceptions reflect women's greater focus on cognitive resources and personal strengths to overcome challenges. In contrast, men (3%) are less likely to attribute “educated” to the victim, potentially due to societal expectations that prioritise physical strength, experience, and action over intellectual traits like education. This reflects different cultural value priorities in how knowledge and autonomy are assigned to the victim.

Discussion

The results of our study partially corroborate previous investigations into the conceptual orientations of victimhood, while revealing a notable association between victim perception and Freudian defence mechanisms. Specifically, our findings suggest that unconscious processes such as projection, denial, repression, and other defence mechanisms frequently operate as psychological tools through which individuals externalise and manage their own vulnerabilities and internal conflicts within the framework of victim representation. Women more regularly attribute the trait of “cowardice” to the victim, which may reflect an identification with the victim or an acceptance of vulnerability. In contrast, men tend to reject this perception, perceiving fear as contradictory to their masculine identity. They may view fear or vulnerability as unacceptable and avoid associating with such characteristics. Women also more often attribute “physical weakness” or “insecurity” to the victim, which may be related to the mechanism of projection. As the gender generally considered more sensitive, women may project their own fears and insecurities onto the victim, perceiving these traits as a form of limitation that amplifies collective vulnerability. Men, who are socially expected to be “strong,” may resort to reactive formation by exhibiting behaviours of strength and confidence to counterbalance their inner vulnerabilities. This defence mechanism may lead men to deny the “cowardly” trait, as it conflicts with societal norms tied to their masculine roles. The traits attributed to victims

by men and women—such as “insecurity,” “weakness,” “forgiveness,” and “weak-willed”—often highlight fears and emotions that are suppressed or overlooked through repression as a way to deny their own vulnerability or anxiety. These defence mechanisms contribute to the differentiation of the victim’s image, clarifying the social and psychological realities that underlie gender-based distinctions in perception. Consequently, men’s perceptions tend to be dominated by critical, submissive, and sombre characteristics, often expressed through projection and repression. In contrast, women’s perceptions are characterized more by empathetic and accepting attitudes, reflecting a higher degree of social restraint and internal emotional regulation.

Such mechanisms warrant further exploration—by analysing each attributed trait separately, especially within the gender context, it becomes possible to uncover multilayered defence mechanisms and subconscious psychological factors that are not immediately visible but profoundly influence perceptions and reactions. All these psychological adjustments and gender differences are crucial for understanding how sexual discourses and internal psychological mechanisms shape the perception of the victim’s image. They not only reflect the traits ascribed to the victim but also reveal how an individual’s gender identity intervenes in their subjective and social evaluations. These realities suggest that attitudes toward victims often serve as expressions of deeper fears, suppressed emotions, and the structure of identity. Therefore, it is essential to develop approaches that engage victims with psychological sensitivity and inclusiveness—avoiding the reproduction of gender stereotypes and transforming support into a more compassionate and human-centred process. These reflections open new avenues for research, proposing that many important layers can still be revealed through a deeper analysis of the interaction between gender, identity, and vulnerability.

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of victimhood demonstrates that the concept has undergone a profound transformation, evolving from predominantly objective and social frameworks to incorporate a more nuanced psychological dimension. While earlier understandings framed victimhood primarily as a condition shaped by external circumstances, contemporary perspectives emphasise the role of subconscious processes, psychological defence mechanisms, and both individual and collective perceptions. This evolution has broadened the study of victimhood into an interdisciplinary and comprehensive scientific domain, integrating insights from both sociology and psychology.

Our study continued the exploration of the psychological components of victimhood perceptions, focusing specifically on the gender-specific

features of victim perception and prevailing social stereotypes, with particular attention to defence mechanisms. It was revealed that the perception of the victim's vulnerability is shaped not only by social norms and cultural representations but also through unconscious psychological processes within the individual. These psychological factors elucidate the framework within which society perceives the victim as a multifaceted social and psychological phenomenon. The findings demonstrate that gender characteristics have a significant influence both on the formation of victim perceptions and on the varying manifestations of responses. Women tend to exhibit a more open and patient attitude toward vulnerability, reflected in their capacity to view the victim as a complex, nuanced, and empathetic figure. In contrast, men's perceptions incline toward a harsher, more passive, and less change-accepting approach, grounded in images of strength, resilience, and stability. The results of the study indicate that men and women attribute different characteristics to the image of the victim, employing distinct defence mechanisms shaped by socio-cultural norms and societal expectations. In this process, one's own vulnerabilities, fears, or desired behaviours are often denied, concealed, or projected onto the victim through these defence mechanisms.

Considering these factors, the findings underscore the need for further research that includes diverse age groups and other sociodemographic categories to enrich the understanding of perceptions and to reveal new psychological mechanisms. This is especially important in the context of contemporary social changes and multifaceted influences, as they significantly shape both societal and individual attitudes toward victims. The study's results demonstrate that social and psychological perceptions of victimhood encompass a variety of factors; however, they are based solely on data from specific groups. The generalizability of these findings to other populations requires further research that considers age, gender, and sociodemographic differences.

Nevertheless, the results hold substantial potential, though their universal applicability will demand further studies that provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological and social dimensions of victimhood.

By embracing this multilayered perspective, it becomes feasible to develop targeted interventions that facilitate the reduction of victimhood at both individual and community levels, while simultaneously enhancing the formulation of effective strategies for assistance and psychological support.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF ADDICTIVE SOCIALIZATION

KRISTINE PETROSYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the
National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
Department of Psychology, Applicant
kristine.petrosyan@edi.isec.am

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Abstract

The socio-psychological processes of personality development and socialisation have been widely studied in various psychological studies. The problem of socialisation is the focus of attention of psychologists, both from the perspective of the age and psychophysiological development of a person, as well as from the perspective of the person's communication skills and the assimilation of social norms and values in society. However, in the psychological discipline, the interest of specialists in the negative transformations and destructive manifestations of cognitive, behavioural, and emotional components that occur during a person's socialisation is increasing. The growing interest in the problem in the psychological discipline is perhaps due to the need to study various socio-psychological processes occurring at both the personal and societal levels. In the context of the rapid development of modern societies, numerous destructive phenomena emerge that pose a threat to a person's mental health and distort their consciousness and perceptions. It is no coincidence that modern psychological science pays special attention to the study of the problems of the formation and development of addictive behavioural models of a person. Now we can talk about the addictive form of socialisation, when a person assimilates social values and social norms, which are perceived with specific distortions, as a result of which addictive behavioural models and strategies are deepened and strengthened, which harms the processes of self-expression and self-realisation of a person. Taking into account the relevance and importance of the problem, we have carried out an analysis of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the psychological assessment of addictive socialisation. Various psychological approaches have been studied, which interpret the essence and features of addictive socialisation in their own way. As a result of the research, the author presents their methodology for the psychological assessment of addictive socialisation, which aims to shed new light on the phenomenon of personal socialisation in modern society, providing a basis for the practical application

of the addictive socialisation methodology.

Keywords: Addictive socialisation, self-concept, intrapersonal conflict, development, self-realisation.

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ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ

kristine.petrosyan@edi.isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Անձի զարգացման և սոցիալականացման սոցիալ-հոգեբանական գործընթացները լայնորեն հետազոտվել են հոգեբանական տարբեր ուսումնասիրություններում: Սոցիալականացման հիմնախնդիրը հոգեբանների ուշադրության կենտրոնում է ինչպես անձի տարիքային և հոգեֆիզիոլոգիական զարգացման, այնպես էլ հասարակությունում անձի հաղորդակցական հմտությունների և սոցիալական նորմերի ու արժեքների յուրացման տեսանկյուններից: Այդուհանդերձ, հոգեբանական գիտակարգում մեծանում է մասնագետների հետաքրքրությունը անձի սոցիալականացման գործընթացում տեղի ունեցող իմացական, վարքային և հուզական բաղադրիչների բացասական վերափոխումների և դեստրուկտիվ դրսևորումների հանդեպ: Հոգեբանական գիտակարգում հիմնախնդրի վերաբերյալ աճող հետաքրքրությունը թերևս պայմանավորված է թե՛ անձնային, թե՛ հասարակական մակարդակներում տեղի ունեցող սոցիալ-հոգեբանական տարաբնույթ գործընթացների ուսումնասիրման անհրաժեշտությամբ: Ժամանակակից հասարակությունների արագընթաց զարգացման պայմաններում ի հայտ են գալիս անձի հոգեկան առողջությանը վտանգ ներկայացնող բազմաթիվ դեստրուկտիվ երևույթներ և անձի գիտակցության և ընկալումների աղձատումներ: Պատահական չէ, որ ժամանակակից հոգեբանական գիտությունը առանձնահատուկ ուշադրություն է դարձնում անձի աղդիկտիվ վարքային մոդելների ձևավորման և զարգացման հիմնախնդիրների ուսումնասիրություններին: Այժմ կարելի է խոսել արդեն սոցիալականացման աղդիկտիվ ձևի մասին, երբ անձը յուրացնում է հասարակական արժեքներ ու սոցիալական նորմեր, որոնք ընկալվում են որոշակի աղավաղումներով և աղձատումներով, ինչի արդյունքում խորանում և ամրապնդվում են աղդիկտիվ վարքային մոդելներն ու ռազմավարությունները: Այն իր հերթին բացասական

հետևանք է թողնում անձի ինքնադրսևորվման և ինքնառեալիզացիայի գործընթացի վրա: Հաշվի առնելով հիմնախնդրի արդիականությունը և կարևորությունը՝ մեր կողմից իրականացվել է ադդիկտիվ սոցիալականացման հոգեբանական գնահատման տեսամեթոդաբանական հիմքերի վերլուծություն: Ուսումնասիրվել են հոգեբանական տարբեր մոտեցումներ, որոնք յուրովի մեկնաբանում են ադդիկտիվ սոցիալականացման էությունն ու առանձնահատկությունները: Հետազոտության արդյունքում ներկայացվում է ադդիկտիվ սոցիալականացման հոգեբանական գնահատման հեղինակային մեթոդաբանություն, որը նպատակ ունի նորովի լուսաբանելու անձի սոցիալականացման ֆենոմենը ժամանակակից հասարակությունում, ինչը կարող է հիմք հանդիսանալ ադդիկտիվ սոցիալականացման մեթոդաբանության գործնական կիրառության համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ադդիկտիվ սոցիալականացում, Ես-կոնցեպցիա, ներանձնային կոնֆլիկտ, զարգացում, ինքնառեալիզացիա:

Introduction

Theoretical and methodological studies on the process of socialisation of a person and addictive tendencies in it are not only extensive, but also multifaceted. Several authors have considered the problem of socialisation of a person from the perspective of self-concept and self-formation. Thus, Splender (2021) believes that the formulations of the “Self” are diverse and sometimes contradict each other. A person has an innate tendency to self-expression and self-realisation with all his inner potential. And on this path, a person assimilates socially significant norms and values, and self-realises in the role of a bearer of these values.

However, sometimes a person assimilates not the norms that have value, weight, and role in society, but their distortions and destructive manifestations. When destructiveness prevails in the process of socialisation of a person, the self-concept formed in him is also distorted. And since the distorted self-concept is much more fragile than the healthy one, it begins to selectively internalise the facts of external reality, fearing that the facts of reality opposite to the transformed self-concept will undermine the entire psyche. In other words, in the process of socialisation of a person, both constructive models and types of behaviour can be mastered, as well as destructive ones. Moreover, the addictive nature of socialisation is observed and assessed by some authors as more characteristic of certain age stages of personality development. One of them is adolescence, when in the process of socialisation of a teenager, addictive behaviours and rules of behaviour can be encountered more often than socially important constructive rules and types of behaviour (Sankar and Reddy, 2012; Abel et al., 2013).

Theoretical-Methodological Bases

The earliest period of addictive socialisation is considered to be the

period of formation of the child's self-concept. As Pine and Mahler (2004) note, the concept of self-formation discusses the hypothesis that the foundations of the characteristics of the child's self-concept are laid from the earliest childhood, even from the prenatal period. And after birth, according to Mahler, especially during the period of emotional symbiosis, the mother's emotions and experiences are transmitted to the child in a diffuse manner, which then crystallise, manifesting themselves as an emotional-evaluative attitude towards oneself. The environment in which the child is formed plays a decisive role in this process (Lodi-Smith & DeMarree, 2017). The interdependence of the self-concept, the child's behaviour, and the surrounding environment has been emphasised by many authors. D. B. Elkonin (1971) considers the beginning of the path to self-knowledge, self-awareness, to be the separation of one's self from others. According to other authors, this prerequisite for the formation of the Self is characteristic only of the Judeo-Christian culture (Nalchadjyan, 2001). Even after the end of the period of emotional symbiosis of the child with the mother and the separation of the emotional field, the influence of the environment on the Self-concept and its features does not cease, based on which various authors distinguish the component of the Self-concept related to the environment, which appears under more than a dozen different names in different sources: "attributable Self", "Self-environment", "social Self", "mirror Self", etc. This is an important component that shows how a person evaluates the perceptions of others about them. S. L. Rubinstein (1973) notes: "Mediated by relationships with other people, a person also forms his attitude towards himself... inflated or lowered self-esteem,... complacency, pride... etc." According to some authors (Cohn, 1978; James, 1890), from early childhood, a child learns to enter the role of other people and also perceive himself as an object of other people's expectations.

H. S. Sullivan also conditions all the components of the I-system with relationships with other people. "The self-system is built from the responses given to us by other people, from the reflected assessments. Other people act with a mirror effect, informing us about the images of ourselves through their reactions" (Steven & Bacigalupe, 2001), that is, we form an idea of ourselves only based on the reactions given to us by others. K. Rogers and D. W. Winnicott also explain the problems of the self by the influence of the environment, considering that their cause is the person's desire to justify the expectations of others: "a person often discovers that he exists only as a response to the demands of others, it seems to him that he does not have his self, he only tries to think, feel and behave as he should think, feel and behave according to the opinion of others" (Rojers, 1994).

D. V. Winnicott even puts forward the concept of the "false self", considering that due to the symbiosis with the mother, the child from the moment of birth begins to obey the mother's wishes, sacrificing even the

possibility of the existence of his real self (Taison and Taison, 1998). The above-mentioned opinions suggest that, despite being a stable system, the self-concept can undergo significant changes as a result of the influence of especially important people, such as parents, particularly during preschool and primary school age. The words of parents, warnings, the way they address the child, and non-verbal manifestations of the psyche have a formative and even programming effect on the self. Thus, our surveys and observations have shown that many people begin to notice this or that feature of their personality and pay attention to it only after one of the parents says about it, when the child is compared with this or that person, especially one of their relatives, when there is a coincidence of gender, age, names (name can be considered one of the symbols of self-concept), and all this can become the basis for a person's identification with another person and inspiration. Therefore, inspiration plays a significant role in the process of addictive socialisation (Lestaluhu & Lukman, 2019). Back in the 19th century, B. Sidis defined inspiration as the introduction of a thought that brings another thought after itself, leading to another idea, noting that the inspired thought may encounter more or less resistance, may be uncritically accepted, but "is realised unconsciously, even automatically". Today, however, some authors argue that the conscious or unconscious nature of the information has no significance in the effectiveness of inspiration (Sidis, 1899). What is important is what we call "false inspiration". After all, any inspired thought implies a lack of connection with the existing reality, its objective side, or its more or less distortion, otherwise it would be considered a "transmission of a fact, information". For us, the starting point was the chronology of the content of the inspired information. Altered or distorted versions of past events can be considered false, as well as those inspirations related to the present and future, the content of which can under no circumstances become reality. The idea of working with this method arose while studying the "syndrome of false memories". Suppose false memories of events that did not happen can have a disruptive and destructive effect on the psyche. Why is it not possible to have their polar opposite, a therapeutic effect on a person? Unlike M. In the context of Erikson's "imaginary experience" (the visitor was offered stories with different plots and the visitor himself chose the plot about the future that he preferred from the set of ready-made plots), "false inspirations" can be proposed, which are directed towards the past and create imaginary events that occurred in the past, changing the process of developing the self-concept, directing it towards the formation of addictive behavioral models. Accordingly, the components of the self-concept are distinguished: "Present Self", "Past Self", and "Future Self". In the context of the "false memory syndrome", the "Past Self" is of particular importance for the analysis of the presence of inspirations about one's self (Erikson, 1995).

As mentioned above, the characteristics of addictive socialisation of a person are closely related to the definitions of the self-concept. Destructive manifestations that dominate the structure of the self-concept are often rooted in early childhood, then develop into dependent behavioural models and ways of thinking, and the person is socialised, gradually losing the possibilities of self-realisation of his own Self and finding himself in the “trap” of dependence on the outside world. As a rule, as a result of addictive socialisation, intrapersonal conflicts develop, which are a unique indicator for assessing the degree and nature of the interdependence of the person’s self-images and negative influences of the external environment in the process of formation and manifestation of the self-concept.

Intrapersonal conflicts, unlike other types of conflict, are special. This is because in the process of his development and self-realisation, a person comes into conflict with himself, between his two contradictory desires, or ideas that are inherently opposite to each other. This is what makes the phenomenon unbearable and painful for the person. Not having the appropriate level of mental maturity and mental stability, the person is unable to fight them, and they grow more and more, eventually leading to addictive socialisation (Spurrett, 2016; Sukhov, 2021).

Intrapersonal conflicts are expressed in both psychophysiological and socio-psychological fields and can be assessed by

1. hypersensitivity to strong stimuli,
2. decreased work capacity,
3. bad dreams, headaches,
4. inadequate laughter,
5. Return to primitive forms of behaviour
6. constant attribution of negative characteristics to other people,
7. frequent changes in family status, workplace, residence,
8. self-justification of one’s actions.

These symptoms enable the prompt identification of intrapersonal conflicts (Mukola et al., 2019).

The basis of intrapersonal conflict is contradictions that develop

- in conditions of psychological imbalance,
- in conditions of the external environment “dictating” and excluding alternative behavioural patterns,
- in conditions of the predominance of the person’s addictive goal-orientedness.

Although the causes of intrapersonal conflicts are diverse in terms of their socio-psychological origin, including the addictive socialisation of the individual, some authors emphasise the following:

- stereotyping of acquired skills,

- impossibility of applying acquired skills in a new situation, at the same time,
- impossibility of applying new opportunities and skills,
- difficulty in decision-making due to a tendency towards addictive habits,
- distortions in the perception of information,
- dissatisfaction with social role and status, and, at the same time, the impossibility of changing one's status,
- limitation of communication skills,
- destructive transformation of the functionality of self-images, which is distinguished by an addictive emphasis.

As a result of studying these reasons, we can create a theoretical model of the psychological assessment of an individual's addictive socialisation, which will be based on the identification of addictive transformations in a person's self-concept and the development of an addictive socialisation methodology.

In the process of addictive socialisation, intrapersonal conflicts are expressed in the vital activity of a person

- motivational
- moral
- role
- adaptive areas.

According to the listed areas, intrapersonal conflicts can have different manifestations of addiction and have unique development dynamics. Manifestations of addictive socialisation are often increasing negative experiences, such as:

- the presence of a psychotraumatic situation,
- the impossibility of a constructive solution to this situation,
- a clash of opposing desires, which causes internal anxiety, frustration
- a low level of self-realisation and self-satisfaction,
- instability of self-esteem, pessimistic expectations of abilities,
- lack of confidence in decisions, which is often expressed in decisions that reinforce addiction,
- increased sensitivity.

It should also be noted that research on both addictive manifestations of a person's socialisation and intrapersonal conflicts is interrelated. Addictions, as well as intrapersonal conflicts in the process of a person's socialisation, have been addressed by Z. Freud, K. Jung, K. Horney, K. Rogers, A. Maslow, K. Lewin, D. Miller, L. Festinger, A. Adler, and others. There are also quite a few Armenian researchers who have studied the issue, including A. Nalchajyan, A. Atoyan, V. Margaryan, Z. Asatryan, and others.

Below, we briefly present the interpretation of addictive socialisation according to different psychological directions. Representatives of the

psychoanalytic direction (Z. Freud, K. Jung, K. Horney, E. Fromm, E. Erikson, A. Adler, E. Berne) associate the origin of addictions in the process of socialisation with various unconscious contradictory phenomena in the psyche of a person.

The founder of the psychoanalytic direction, Z. Freud, qualified the contradictions that arise in the psyche of a person as a struggle between two poles of opposing instincts. According to Z. Freud, there are only two human instincts: one of them seeks to preserve and unite, and the other to kill and crush. Z. Freud qualified the latter as an aggressive or destructive instinct, which lies at the basis of the emergence of addiction. Z. Freud attributes the destructive process of addictive socialisation to the accentuation of the death instinct. According to the author, the life and death instincts either act in opposition to each other or merge. These simultaneously directed and oppositely oriented actions between the two instincts characterise the entire diversity of life, manifested in the process of socialisation of the individual. Later, based on Z. Freud's theory, L. Berkowitz conducted some studies and came to the conclusion that addictions in the process of socialisation of the individual lead to accentuation of character and, in particular, an increase in the degree of aggressiveness. K. Jung sees the contradictions between the opposite types of personality – introvert and extrovert – as the basis of addictive socialisation. Thus, he notes that each of these types has its positions, which lie at the basis of the orientation of a given type. According to Jung, addictions arise in parallel with intrapersonal conflicts. They are mainly based on the differences in the positions of the two types of introvert and extrovert, since the passive, introverted type present in the psyche of a person constantly strives to manifest itself and enters into a struggle with the dominant type. In the case of both types, addictive connections with objects and subjects of the external environment can arise, which can become the cause of the manifestation of intrapersonal conflict. It should be noted that, unlike Z. Freud, who spoke about weakening the power of intrapersonal conflicts, as well as their addictive manifestations through defence mechanisms, K. Jung prefers a cognitive option for getting rid of them.

A. Adler considers intrapersonal conflict as one of the types of addictions and attributes it to the nature of the person's socialisation. A. Adler's theory characterises the process of socialisation as a way to achieve perfection and self-acceptance in society, during which a person may fail to overcome inferiority complexes and solve the need for self-formation and socialisation by reinforcing addictive behaviour. The author came to this conclusion based on the idea that getting rid of feelings of inferiority, distrust and inadequacy characterizes the meaning of an individual's existence and socialization, and failures in this process can easily lead to addiction and “solve” the need for socialization with the help of a destructive behavioral model. A. Adler's theory describes the socialization strategy for overcoming addictive socialization. Adler

suggests working on the formation and strengthening of socially adequate feelings, with the help of which a person will be able to establish constructive, regular social ties and fully express themselves in society.

According to Erikson, manifestations of addictive socialisation are associated with the stages of personality development and the adverse changes occurring in them, each of which can develop negatively for the person, pushing them to a serious intrapersonal conflict and the strengthening of an addictive behavioural model. During each stage of development, the person reaches a value quality that is unacceptable to other stages. The person immediately begins to struggle to get rid of such dangers. The most pronounced period of “struggle” with addictive behavioural models is associated with the period of maturity, where the person is in a crisis. In one case, he has a conflict of identity and role orientation; in the other, a conflict of effective activity and, conversely, stagnation, the unfavourable outcome of which can be accompanied by destructive changes and be destructive in the process of further socialisation of the person.

E. Fromm’s approach to the psychological assessment of addictive socialisation is in some ways similar to Z. Freud’s approach to the contradictions formed between the life and death instincts. E. Fromm also observes in the personality its dichotomous, contradictory nature. Speaking about the destructive process of addictive socialisation, he mentions two forms of personality destructiveness: spontaneous or situational and fundamental or structural. In our opinion, during socialisation, the most dangerous manifestations of addictiveness or destructiveness, conditioned by the ego structure of the personality, are those that can undermine the key forms of personality vital activity in society and lead to a distorted perception and assimilation of social norms and values.

K. Horney emphasises the fact that addictive models are unconscious in the process of a person’s socialisation, which does not allow them to find a solution in any problematic situation. Unconscious addictive models can lead to intrapersonal conflict, which, according to K. Horney, is accompanied by the isolation of a person in society or, conversely, manifestations of hyperactivity. The author also notes that such hyperactivity in a person’s society can often manifest in aggressive and destructive ways. K. Horney also touches on the positive nature of conflict. Intrapersonal conflict, which at first glance seems painful and dangerous, also gives the person some advantages. A person is willing to withstand the blows; in such a case, he can control the course of his own life. From the above, it follows that the favourable resolution of intrapersonal conflicts can contribute to the weakening and neutralisation of a person’s addictions, as well as the mastery of constructive mechanisms of socialisation.

Another representative of the psychoanalytic direction, E. Berne, also,

like the neo-Freudians, gave addictive socialisation a social orientation, emphasising the achievement and strengthening of social relations. He based addictive socialisation on the contradictions between the ego-structures of a person. E. Bern suggests conducting a structural analysis for the psychological assessment of a person's addictive socialisation. The goal of structural analysis is to master the person's internal conflict through the structures of the Self, to stabilise situations where the person can not resort to addictive behavioural models in stressful situations, but, on the contrary, maintain self-control (Berns, 2007).

Unlike psychoanalysts, behaviourists, in particular D. Skinner, view addiction from the perspective of the formation of an antisocial behavioural model. Representatives of Gestalt psychology assess the addictive socialisation of a person as a means of solving problems. In any situation, a person needs to have a way out of the situation. This is a choice: either to go back, trying to eliminate the destructive effect of addiction somehow, or to allow something to happen that will strengthen or “socialise” addictive behavioural and cognitive models. Representative of cognitive psychology, L. Festinger, referring to the phenomenon of addictive socialisation, also notes the intrapersonal component of the psychological assessment of addiction. Thus, following the principle of socialisation as the assimilation and internalisation of socially significant norms, the author expresses the opinion that wrong decisions made by a person can lead to the repetition of intrapersonal conflict. Furthermore, this, in turn, contributes to the deepening of addiction and its strengthening in the person's behaviour. In other words, the assimilation and strengthening of distorted or destructive norms and values in the process of socialisation is achieved in the case when, after the person has made their decision to get out of the conflict situation, this decision again returns the person to the previous conflict situation. In this case, it is necessary to make a decision again. Addictive behavioural and cognitive models are formed, that is, in the case when the person makes decisions that do not resolve existing conflict and a person, finding himself in the same situation again, tends to choose addictive strategies, such as, for example, weakening responsibility, blaming others for his failures, interdependence on the conflict situation, etc.

A. Maslow, as is known, puts forward the theory of personality needs and connects the addictive socialisation of a person with their dissatisfaction. According to the author, a person's cognitive and emotional needs sometimes conflict with each other, as a result of which the satisfaction of the first leads to the frustration of the second. A. Maslow emphasises the danger of conflict, noting that conflict does not always lead to pathology or addiction. However, it becomes a serious pathogenic factor in cases where it threatens the satisfaction of basic needs or desires closely related to them.

In existential psychology, V. The approaches of V. Frankl, who based the

phenomenon on the loss of the meaning of life and the lack of the possibility of its rediscovery. For example, V. Frankl notes that in the absence of the meaning of life, an existential vacuum or a feeling of non-belonging and emptiness arises in a person. In such a psychological state, a person is more inclined to assimilate distorted social values and norms, or, conversely, the behavioural rules and social norms acquired in the person's psyche during socialisation are gradually distorted and acquire addictive features.

Methods

The methods of psychological assessment of addictive socialisation reflect the main achievements and results of theoretical approaches. The methodological basis for psychological assessment was the methods of comparison, analysis, and development, which allowed for the development of a methodology for assessing addictive socialisation. Below is presented the theoretical-methodological approach to the psychological assessment of addictive socialisation, developed as a result of the author's modification of the methodological tools from some theoretical approaches.

Results and Discussion

The following terms and provisions underlie the video-methodological model of psychological assessment of addictive socialisation.

The psychological assessment of addictive socialisation is a qualitative study aimed at identifying semantic distortions in a person's self-structure that are interconnected with the socialisation process. The following questions become the subject of study:

- What directs the process of socialisation to addictive development?
- What are these factors, and
- what functions do addictive factors perform in the process of socialisation of a person?

It should be noted that there are no obvious conditions, the presence of which leads to the addictive development of socialisation. Whether there are favourable or unfavourable conditions, objective and subjectively different situations, this process is still individualised. The addictive development of a person's socialisation can occur even in the presence of quite favourable conditions. Along with studying the causes, features and development process of addictive socialisation of a person, it is also necessary to talk about the methods and means of study, since the study of these methods will allow us to assess the presence of addictive traits in a person and carry out preventive work. From the theoretical studies presented above, it becomes clear that the methods of psychological assessment of addictive socialisation are few. The difficulty is that people generally do not realise in themselves the presence of addictive traits. That is, it is not possible to assess the degree of expression of addictive traits and manifestations in the socialisation process with the help

of one method. Therefore, psychological assessment of addictive socialisation can be carried out using complex methods and through the study of several psychological qualities. Below, we present the main components of the author's methodology for psychological assessment of addictive socialisation:

- Intrapersonal conflict assessment component
- Ego structure assessment component
- Value the needs assessment component
- Life meaning assessment component.

These components allow me to find out:

1. The degree of expression of addictive socialisation
2. It is the most common type
3. Its most relevant area (motivational, commitment, self-esteem).

Conclusion

As the theoretical analysis of different psychological directions and approaches has shown, various factors are at the basis of the addictive socialisation of a person. Of these, the most important are

- destructive or uncontrolled instincts of a person,
- unresolved intrapersonal conflicts,
- structural distortions of the self-concept,
- unsatisfied needs of a person,
- existential dangers of losing the meaning of life.

Generalising the theoretical approaches to addictive socialisation, we can conclude that although the bases of addictive socialisation of a person are considered differently in all studies, according to the methodological peculiarities of each theory, nevertheless, representatives of all theories agree that in the event of a deepening of addictive manifestations of socialisation, the mental health of a person may be endangered. Therefore, the psychological assessment of an individual's addictive socialisation can be carried out using complex methods, which aim to identify addictive characteristics in the socialisation process, in the structure of a person's self-concept, in value-demand, intrapersonal, and existential-meaningful domains.

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EMPOWERING DISPLACED YOUTH THROUGH SOFT AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS: A MIXED-METHODS EVALUATION OF A POST-CONFLICT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN ARMENIA

GOHAR GRIGORYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the
National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
Head of the Chair of Foreign Languages
PhD in Philological Sciences, Associate Professor
gohar.grigoryan@isec.am

LILIT MANVELYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the
National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
Instructor of English for Specific Purposes
lilit.manvelyan@isec.am

KAROLINA SAHAKYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the
National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
Turkish Language Instructor
karolina.sahakyan@isec.am

JAN BÖHM

University Professor at the Upper Austria University of Education,
Doctor of Comparative Education and International Education Systems
jan.boehm@ph-ooe.at

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Abstract

This article discusses the design, implementation, and outcomes of a targeted educational intervention based on the project “Soft and Professional Skills Development for the Displaced Armenians,” which aimed to empower conflict-affected young people in Armenia following the war. After the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, large numbers of young Armenians were forced out of education, socially marginalised, and cast out of most career paths, factors that are rarely considered in emergency response strategies. To address this gap, the International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia implemented a project aimed at enhancing the soft and

professional skills of participants, including communication, critical thinking, resume writing, and time management.

The proposed study is relevant because displaced populations, particularly the youth, urgently need scalable, skills-based educational models. The long-term integration and resilience of such populations rely not only on psychosocial support but also on employability training. The program was developed based on the Human Capital Theory, Social Integration Theory, Transformative Learning, and Resilience Framework, and tested using a qualitative feedback analysis and a mixed-methods approach that included quantitative pre- and post-assessments.

The results showed that the participants experienced impressive gains in self-confidence, employability skills and social interaction. Measurements of quantitative data showed a significant improvement of skills in key areas, whereas discussion of the qualitative parts illustrated the emotional and community-building aspect of the training. Furthermore, the project stimulated the development of follow-up activities, which were initiated by project participants themselves and provided evidence of sustainability and local ownership. These findings underscore the importance of learner-centred education in post-conflict settings and the necessity of implementing soft skills-focused responses as part of national recovery plans and policies for displaced youth.

Keywords: Displaced youth, soft skills, professional skills, post-conflict education, Armenia, resilience, employability, transformative learning, social integration, youth empowerment, training evaluation, psychosocial support, sustainable development.

**ՏԵՂԱՀԱՆՎԱԾ ԵՐԻՏԱՍԱՐԴՆԵՐԻ
ԿԱՐՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԶԱՐԳԱՅՈՒՄ՝ ՓԱՓՈՒԿ ԵՎ
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ՄԵԹՈԴԱԲԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՄԲ**

ԳՈՀԱՐ ԳՐԻԳՈՐՅԱՆ

ՀՀ գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
օտար լեզուների ամբիոնի վարիչ,
բանասիրական գիտությունների թեկնածու, դոցենտ

gohar.grigoryan@isec.am

ԼԻԼԻԹ ՄԱՆՎԵԼՅԱՆ

ՀՀ գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
մասնագիտական անգլերեն լեզվի դասախոս

lilit.manvelyan@isec.am

ԿԱՌՈՒԽՆԱ ՍԱՀԱԿՅԱՆ

ՀՀ գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
թուրքերեն լեզվի դասախոս

karolina.sahakyan@isec.am

ՅԱՆ ԲՈՀՄ

Վերին Ավստրիայի Կրթության համալսարանի պրոֆեսոր,
Համեմատական կրթության և միջազգային կրթական համակարգերի
դոկտոր

jan.boehm@ph-ooe.at

Համառոտագիր

Սույն հոդվածում ներկայացվում է «Տեղահանված հայ երիտա-
սարդների փափուկ և մասնագիտական հմտությունների զարգացում»
նախագծի կառուցվածքը, նրա իրականացման ընթացքի և արդյունք-
ների նկարագրությունը: Հատուկ մշակված կրթական այս նախագիծը
նպատակաուղղված էր հետպատերազմյան Հայաստանում կոնֆլիկտից
տուժած երիտասարդների կարողությունների զարգացմանը: 2020 թ. Ար-

ցախյան պատերազմից հետո ընդհատվեց բազմաթիվ երիտասարդ հայերի կրթությունը, նրանք ենթարկվեցին սոցիալական մարգինալացման, նվազեցին նրանց մասնագիտական հմտություններ ձեռք բերելու կամ ունեցած հմտությունները կիրառելու հնարավորությունները. խնդիրներ, որոնք հաճախ անտեսվում են արտակարգ իրավիճակների արձագանքման շրջանակներում: Նախագիծը, որը իրականացրել է ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնը, նպատակ ուներ լրացնել այդ բացը՝ զարգացնելով մասնակիցների փափուկ և մասնագիտական հմտությունները՝ հաղորդակցություն, քննադատական մտածողություն, ինքնակենսագրության կազմում և ժամանակի կառավարում:

Ուսումնասիրության արդիականությունը պայմանավորված է տեղահանված բնակչության, մասնավորապես՝ երիտասարդության համար, որոնց երկարաժամկետ ինտեգրումն ու դիմակայությունը կախված են ինչպես հոգեւոցիալական աջակցությունից, այնպես էլ աշխատունակության հմտությունների զարգացման հնարավորությունից, փափուկ և մասնագիտական հմտություններին ուղղված կրթական մոդելների ձևավորման հրատապ անհրաժեշտությունից: Նախագիծը հիմնված էր մարդկային կապիտալի տեսության, սոցիալական ինտեգրման տեսության, տրանսֆորմատիվ ուսուցման և դիմակայության շրջանակի տեսական հիմքերի վրա: Նախագծի գնահատումը իրականացվել է խառը մեթոդաբանությամբ՝ համատեղելով քանակական և որակական տվյալների վերլուծությունը:

Ուսումնասիրության հիմնական արդյունքները վկայում են մասնակիցների ինքնավստահության, գործնական հմտությունների և սոցիալական ներգրավվածության նկատելի աճի մասին: Մասնակիցների շրջանում անցկացված հարցումներից պարզվեց, որ զգալիորեն զարգացել են նրանց մասնագիտական և փափուկ հմտությունները, իսկ դասընթացի ժամանակ ունեցած ուժեղ հուզական ապրումները նպաստել են ներհամայնքային կապերի ձևավորմանը և ամրապնդմանը: Բացի այդ, նախագիծը ոգեշնչել է մասնակիցներին՝ իրականացնելու հետագա նախաձեռնություններ, ինչը վկայում է նախագծի կայունության և տեղայնացված լինելու մասին: Այս արդյունքներն ընդգծում են հետպատերազմական կրթության մեջ համապարփակ, սովորողակենտրոն մոտեցումների և փափուկ հմտությունների ծրագրերի ներառման կարևորությունը տեղահանված երիտասարդների վերականգնման ազգային ռազմավարությունների մեջ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ տեղահանված երիտասարդություն, փափուկ հմտություններ, մասնագիտական հմտություններ, հետպատերազմյան կրթություն, Հայաստան, դիմակայություն, աշխատունակություն, տրանսֆորմատիվ ուսուցում, սոցիալական ինտեգրում, երիտասարդությո-

յան հզորացում, դասընթացի գնահատում, հոգեւոյժիալական աջակցութիւն, կայուն զարգացում:

Introduction

The problem of displacement is very complex because it touches on the lives of individuals and the community economically, socially, psychologically, and educationally. A report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021) reveals that more than 100 million individuals globally have been displaced through conflict and violence, persecution, or natural disasters. Youth is one of the most vulnerable groups among them. Displacement affects their learning, breaks their peer and community networks, and devastates their psychosocial growth (Dryden–Peterson, 2016). According to research conducted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM, 2021), there is a high probability of displaced youth becoming unemployed and marginalised in the long term unless intervention measures support them.

Displacement of youths is both a humanitarian and a developmental issue. Instead, the World Bank (Independent Evaluation Group, 2012) has prioritised the early interventions in the context of education and vocational development, believing that it might yield long-term benefits in the long term of restoring the possibility of control and socio-economic stability among the youth. Essential lack of so-called soft skills such as effective communication, critical thinking, resilience, and intercultural competence can add to education and employment hindrances. Such skills are not usually taken into consideration in emergency response programs, even though they remain related to employability and social inclusion.

Within the Armenian context, the green-lighted Nagorno–Karabakh conflict in 2020 resulted in a wave of domestic migration, especially among the young Armenian citizens of Stepanakert, Hadrut, Martakert, etc. They have suffered long-term schooling interruptions, mental breakdowns, and upheavals in their lives. Though the state has been trying to offer humanitarian aid in the short term, there is a lack of structured programming aimed at long-term growth of skills and employability. It is interesting to note that there has been minimal effort in soft skills development programming, which has been the means of integration and self-sufficiency.

In this context, the International Scientific–Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (ISEC NAS RA), i.e. the Department of Foreign Languages of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, embarked on the program on the development of soft and professional skills of the displaced Armenians. Targeted at displaced youth aged 16–29, the project aimed to empower participants by first educating

them through a four-day intensive workshop series on career development, communication, time management, and problem-solving. The paper outlines the theoretical background, deployment strategy, and assessed impacts of the program, providing insights into best practices for post-conflict youth integration and resilience-building. This paper presents the design, theoretical framework, and findings of the project, providing an example of a scalable post-conflict youth development approach.

Theoretical Framework

The rationale behind the design and assessment of the Soft and Professional Skills Development program for Displaced Armenians lies in the field of interdisciplinary theoretical approaches, which, in their cumulative manner, reflect upon the developmental, psychological, and socio-economic aspects of displacement. The intervention rationale and structure are based on four major frameworks: Human Capital Theory, Social Integration Theory, Transformative Learning Theory, and the Resilience Framework.

Human Capital Theory suggests that it is economically beneficial to the individuals and the society to invest in education and the acquisition of skills (Becker, 1964). Its theory was initially oriented towards formal education but has since been applied to encompass non-cognitive abilities that address issues such as group work, leadership, and emotional intelligence (Heckman & Kautz, 2012). These investments are significant in conflict-prone environments. Targeted development of soft skills can enhance the employability of displaced youth, who often lack access to continuous formal education. The probability of people who have attended soft skills training to work in post-conflict regions, according to world statistics provided by the World Bank (Independent Evaluation Group) is 24 per cent greater.

Social Integration Theory, proposed by Berry (1997), suggests four patterns of adaptation: assimilation, separation, marginalisation, and integration. Integration is associated with the most favourable psychological and socio-economic impacts and is characterised by a scenario in which people do not lose elements of their initial identity yet communicate with the host community (Berry, 2005). For displaced youth, social integration involves transcending cultural boundaries, establishing new social relationships, and gaining intercultural communication skills. The term “marginal person” refers to the person who finds themselves at the crossroads of cultures but has not yet accepted one of them (Hakobyan, p. 60). In this respect, it becomes especially significant to promote assertive behaviour and social integration among individuals and social groups, particularly in employment, education, and social bridge spheres, and to create a foundation for good integration and develop a framework for its practical implementation (Hakobyan, p. 175).

Transformative Learning Theory is based on the way adults develop their frames of reference by critical thinking and discussion, particularly when they face disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow). The concept of displacement may be observed as one such dilemma that breaks the established norms and expectations. Mezirow views transformative learning as occurring through the course of cognitively and emotionally engaging self-examination processes, rational discussion, and perspective transformation. These principles were implemented through the ISEC training, which utilised experiential forms of work, including simulated interviews and problem-solving activities, to help students reflect on their identity, abilities, and goals. The research by Taylor and Cranton (2013) demonstrate that adult learning facilitated by reflection can lead to a 35% enhancement in self-directed learning outcomes. Transformative learning during post-trauma education is possible only through the provision of relational and affective dimensions (e.g., trust, empathy, collaboration) in education (Taylor, 2008). It has been empirically documented that curricula based on the concepts of transformative learning report post-progress evaluations, stating better retention and reliability of skills (Illeris, 2014).

Resilience Framework: Resilience can be described as an adaptive process which involves coping effectively with significant adversity (Luthar et al., 2000). This is a theoretical construct that has been widely applicable in studies on war-affected children and youth (Betancourt & Khan, 2008). Displacement groups may be strengthened by implementing education programs that enhance goal-setting, self-efficacy and support systems. UNICEF (2020) conducted a meta-analysis and revealed that youth programs that incorporated strategies of goal setting and peer support reduced the symptoms of trauma by 40 per cent. Youth programs that included the elements of goal setting and peer support lessened the symptoms of trauma by 40 per cent. Ungar (2012) emphasises the importance of culturally designed interventions that help an individual develop not only personal strengths but also enabling environments. The ISEC program integrated these principles by designing workshops which facilitate a sense of autonomy, structure and meaning-making, and in so doing, trigger the inherent resilience that can be found in ordinary settings once protective mechanisms have been turned on. Moreover, longitudinal research (Panter-Brick et al., 2018) demonstrates that resiliency-based education yields an extremely high rate of social reintegration among conflict-affected youth.

Literature Review

The existing literature identifies multidimensional problems that the youth face when they are displaced, especially in post-conflict scenarios. As Hakobyan et. al. put it, “In any society, the radical changes implemented

during the post-war period directly affect the social, economic, and moral-psychological atmosphere of the society, as well as the psychological states and behaviour of the population. Phenomena of socio-psychological marginalisation emerge, and psychological defence mechanisms become more active...” (Hakobyan, 2024, p.5). These include unimpeded access to education, societal marginalisation, trauma, and joblessness (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; UNHCR, 2021). To address this, researchers and several international organisations have called for the importance of having integrated educational programs that include academic, emotional, and vocational support (IOM, 2021; Cerna, 2019).

Middle Eastern studies, particularly in Lebanon and Jordan, have demonstrated the effectiveness of hybrid learning models, emphasising both psychosocial counselling and skills-building among the youth in refugee environments. As an illustration, Ager et al. (2011) identified that soft skills and mentorship complemented by experiential learning strengthen the mental health, social interaction, and job readiness of youth-focused programs. Likewise, a World Bank (Independent Evaluation Group) review of youth development projects concluded that soft skills training enhances employment rates by 25–40 per cent in both high-income and low-income countries.

These findings are also supported by region-specific studies, which demonstrate that community-based education programs have raised employment rates and decreased social isolation among internally displaced persons. According to a recent needs assessment conducted in Armenia, the majority of employment barriers of displaced youth are associated with limited professional experience and communication deficiency (Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, 2024). Additionally, a needs assessment conducted by UNDP Armenia (2021) revealed a gap between the actual needs of displaced persons to be career-ready in real life and the current educational services offered. Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine have localised training programs that focus on local career development and engagement options, which have succeeded in Eastern European nations.

Intercultural communication, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking—often referred to as the 21st-century skills—have been recognised as valuable aspects of international education policy (OECD, 2018). Nonetheless, soft skills are still underdeveloped in any formal curriculum in conflict-affected areas, and displaced youth are not ready to live in multicultural and competitive labour markets. In brief, the literature supports the strategic value of ISEC NAS RA’s intervention. The project embodies the best global practices in training displaced youth, as it integrates communication, problem-solving, time management, and self-reflection into concise training modules, offering a scalable and context-sensitive model.

Research Methodology

The research design of this study employed a mixed-methods approach, which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively examine the effectiveness and success of the program's implementation, as well as the development of soft and professional skills among displaced Armenians. The mixed-methods paradigm has gained acceptance among scholars in educational and social scientific disciplines due to its capacity to offer nuanced insights into rich human experiences. In the present case, the dual design made it possible not only to evaluate the acquisition of the desired soft skills but also to assess the psychosocial transformation experienced by displaced Armenian youth as a whole. These young people experience multidimensional issues about socialisation, trauma, and interrupted education routes (UNHCR, 2021; IOM, 2021).

Research Design

The research employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in parallel, analysed separately, and then integrated to form a combined interpretation. This work method provided the ability to triangulate the results and validated results by delivering more equality between numerical data and compelling narrative insights. The mixed-design solution, in particular, was appropriate due to the nature of the project, which involved behavioural and attitudinal change, where the quantitative information alone might not sufficiently capture the nuances of individual development.

Participant Selection

The sampling method was also snowball sampling, which is a non-probabilistic approach and is preferable when the objective is to sample a marginalised, displaced, or stigmatised group. The training enrolled 13 displaced young Armenians aged 16–29 years. The recruitment efforts favoured those who had never been involved in any official training on soft or professional skills. The geographic representation was Stepanakert, Martakert, and Qashatagh, with a gender balance of 9 females and 4 males. Since the demographic in Artsakh changed as a result of the conflict, this strategy also addressed the gender-related issues in finding male participants of the same age group.

In addition to the demographic parameters, the participants also underwent a language proficiency exam to ensure they could attend the training conducted by an English-speaking foreign specialist. The prerequisite for the participants to take part in the training was a minimum B2 level of English proficiency. Nevertheless, some participants with B1-level proficiency were also accepted due to strong motivation to participate and the contextual relevance of the project. Four volunteer interpreters were incorporated into

the program to address their needs and ensure the training material was accessible to all of them equitably. These volunteers provided immediate support during the sessions, enabling participants who are not fluent in English to keep pace with the training and actively participate in discussions and practices. A summary of the language test results of the selected participants is presented in the graph below:

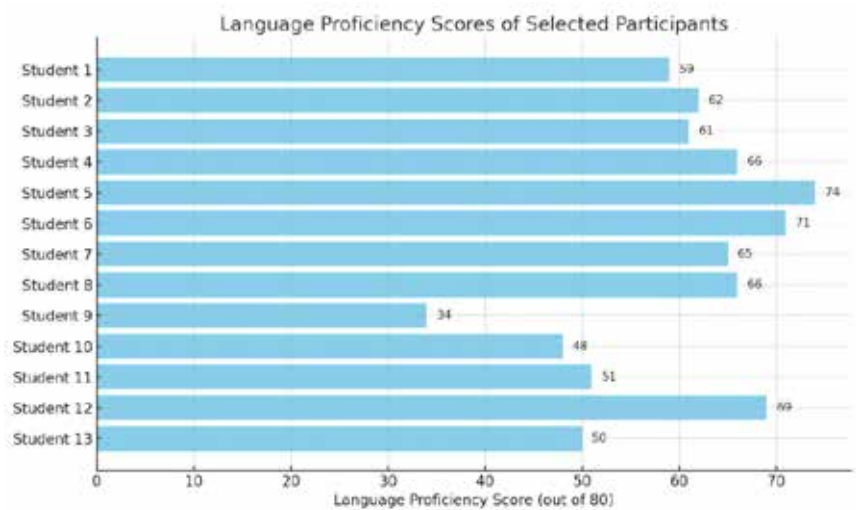


Figure 1. Language Proficiency Scores of Selected Participants

Needs Assessment

Pre-program surveys, informal interviews, and baseline self-evaluations were conducted to inform a systematic needs assessment before the actual training. The idea was to determine the current level of the skills possessed by the participants, as well as those that require improvement. The typical weaknesses included a lack of confidence in public speaking, poor time management, and limited knowledge of job-seeking strategies. Such results align with the global trends identified by organisations addressing the needs of displaced people (OECD, 2018), demonstrating the timeliness and priority of a specific, skills-oriented project.

To further confirm the needs assessment, participants were instructed to self-report their knowledge levels on ten core topics via an online Mentimeter tool. The visual summary of the baseline knowledge levels of the participants in each skill domain is also available in the figure below:

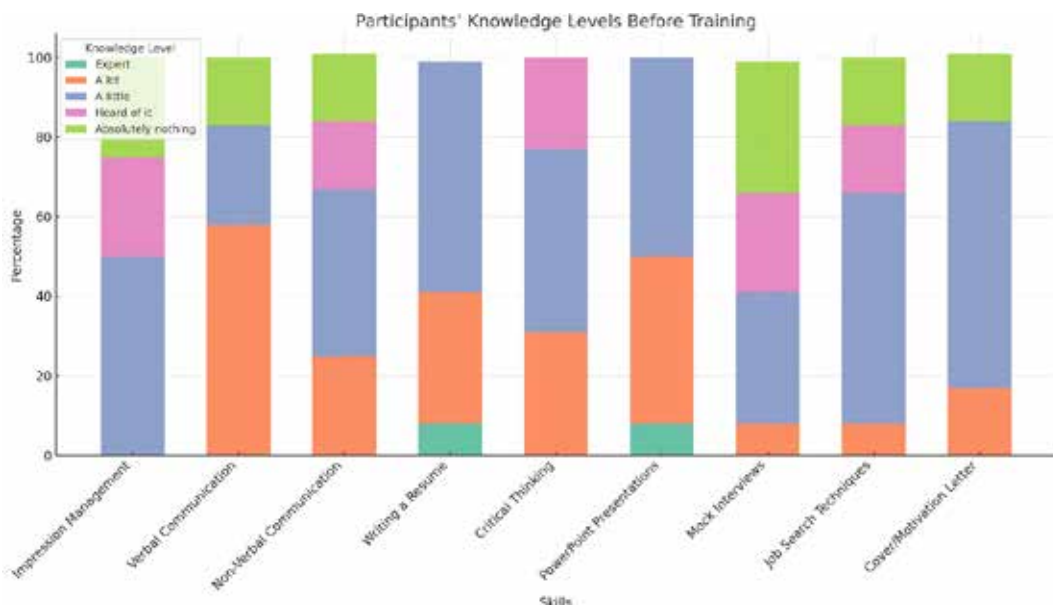


Figure 2. Participants' knowledge levels on core topics before the training

The visual representation reveals critical insights. For example, in the area of *impression management*, none of the participants rated themselves as experts or even very knowledgeable. Half of them reported knowing only a little, while the rest indicated that they had merely heard of it or knew absolutely nothing. This result suggests that there is a significant lack of awareness of core self-presentation techniques that are important in both professional and social contexts of integration.

The situation was better in *verbal communication skills*, where 58 per cent reported they knew a lot, although 42 per cent said they knew little or nothing at all. By contrast, non-verbal communication skills had a more even spread, with 42% claiming a little knowledge, and the remaining 58% either somewhat aware or entirely unfamiliar with the concept.

Resume writing and *cover/motivation letter writing* were additional weak spots. In both categories, more than half of the respondents (58% and 67% respectively) admitted to having only a little knowledge. Furthermore, a considerable proportion of youth reported low confidence in *critical thinking* (with 46% having only a little knowledge), *PowerPoint presentations* (50% knew only a little), *mock interviews*, and *job searching techniques*.

Overall, the Mentimeter analysis underscored the limited prior exposure of participants to formal training in essential soft and professional skills.

Although results were moderate enough in some skill areas, the general trend was an indication that there was a need for a broad and basic training. This needs analysis was used during the compilation of the training curriculum to ensure that the curriculum was learner-based, practical, and focused on the most critical gaps.

Training Design and Delivery: the delivery of content was done via four days of face-to-face training, offering 28 hours of instruction. A qualified international expert from Austria conducted the sessions. It relied on experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), hence was founded on learning through doing, reflecting and interaction with others. The training modules were concentrated in the following areas:

Career counselling (resume writing, preparing for a job interview)

Business etiquette (email etiquette, non-verbal, verbal communication)

Critical thinking and problem-solving (case-based)

Time management and goal setting (prioritisation tools)

Presentation and teamwork (collaborative tasks and speaking before an audience)

The learning design employed an active learning approach, utilising simulations, group projects, peer assessment, and real-world scenarios to illustrate abstract concepts. These educational practices may be referred to as best practices in adult education, particularly with reference to individuals who have had interrupted formal education.

Follow-Up and Sustainability Assessment

A follow-up initiative titled “Soft Skills Laboratory: Youth from Artsakh for Youth in the Regions” was carried out post-training. In this peer-led extension, the project graduates organised workshops enriched with educational games, personal stories, and videos and hosted 25 more displaced youth in Armavir. The intention of this step was not only to measure knowledge retention and the transfer of skills but also to introduce participant agency, leadership, and community resilience as essential attributes of sustainability over the long term (UNDP, 2021).

Feedback from participants in this event supported the relevance of soft skills training and demonstrated knowledge exchange among peers, confirming the long-term effectiveness of the initial program. This successful follow-up project was qualitative evidence of sustainability and community resonance in training.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the quantitative data and evaluate the change in average scores before and after training. A success benchmark was set at an 80% or more increment. Qualitative data from feedback and reflection forms were analysed through a thematic approach.

Ethical Considerations

All research activities were conducted in accordance with international ethical standards for working with vulnerable individuals (ESOMAR, 2016). All participants provided informed consent. Anonymity, confidentiality, and psychological safety were rigorously maintained. The project included a no-harm policy, and all dissemination activities respected the post-conflict reality, with additional efforts made to avoid retraumatizing or exploiting the participants' narratives.

This is a methodologically rigorous and ethically mindful framework, which ensures that findings are valuable, consistent, and significant, providing an upwardly mobile scale of capacity-building among forcibly displaced and marginalised groups.

Results

The project “Soft and Professional Skills Development for the Displaced Armenians” had a truly transformational and layered effect on the project participants, with high levels of engagement and personal development, and evident skills development. The combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative stories allows us to see how the program has not only achieved but also exceeded its goals in empowering displaced youth through comprehensive training on both soft and professional skills.

Participant Experience and Feedback: The participants' retrospectives demonstrated a strong feeling of reliance on the professional design of the training and inclusivity. Many of them characterised it as “all I needed” and the “best days of my life” with the professionalism of the trainer being a particular element, followed by the quality of the fodder, and the warm atmosphere. One sense of connectedness that ran through the feedback was the sense of belonging and emotional guidance the sessions fostered, which solidified a crucial element for anyone who has experienced trauma and displacement.

The interactive and non-formal design of the program is a notable highlight. The role-plays, group discussions, and practical exercises helped the participants not only gain knowledge of new concepts but also apply them in a realistic environment. Communication, teamwork, and time management sessions were especially influential, providing participants with the means to develop personal agency and readiness to work. Some explained that the training provided them with direction for the future, which enabled them to gain confidence in setting targets and making informed decisions.

This is supported by the numerical evidence gathered during the survey regarding the usefulness of specific training topics. According to the survey, the sessions, which were rated as the best, were: (Figure 3):



Figure 3. Most Useful Training Topics as Rated by Participants

The findings provide a case in point of why it is necessary to integrate early-level thinking techniques with practical job skills. These high ratings in practical and reflective areas define the significance and correspondence of the training program to the immediate and long-term needs of the participants.

Along with their topic preferences, the participants also commented on their favourite aspect of the training, highlighting several aspects they enjoyed most.

Many underlined the “professional atmosphere” and the “amazing expertise that we received from our trainer.” Others mentioned the innovative format, saying that “The thing that I valued the most was the non-formal format of the courses,” and several respondents noted that “Everything” with the program was good. The non-formal format of the courses, and several respondents stated that “Everything” with the program was good. The supportive environment was mentioned several times, with one participant saying, “In a single word, I would say Environment,” and another expressing great enjoyment of the learning environment with their peers. Among the most striking observations was the one that highlighted, “What I enjoyed most about the training was the opportunity to enhance both my soft and professional skills in a supportive and inclusive environment.” The individual answers indicate that the subjects were happy with the experience, which was enriching both personally and professionally.

The effects of the training also touched upon formal feedback systems.

The survey evaluations covered essential elements, including the organisation of training, the easy comprehensibility of material, the results of learning, the effectiveness of the trainer, and the general climate of learning. These tools provided the possibility to evaluate the program reception as a whole.

The more compelling scores, as administered by the participants, pertained to the professional nature of the sessions held, their punctuality, and logistics, including the suitability of the location facilities and the availability of support staff. These seemingly incidental factors played significant roles in comfort and a decent level of trust that the participants had in the program. In addition to the logistics, there was an impressive consensus that the materials were useful, the content was relevant, and the learning environment fostered confidence and collaboration.

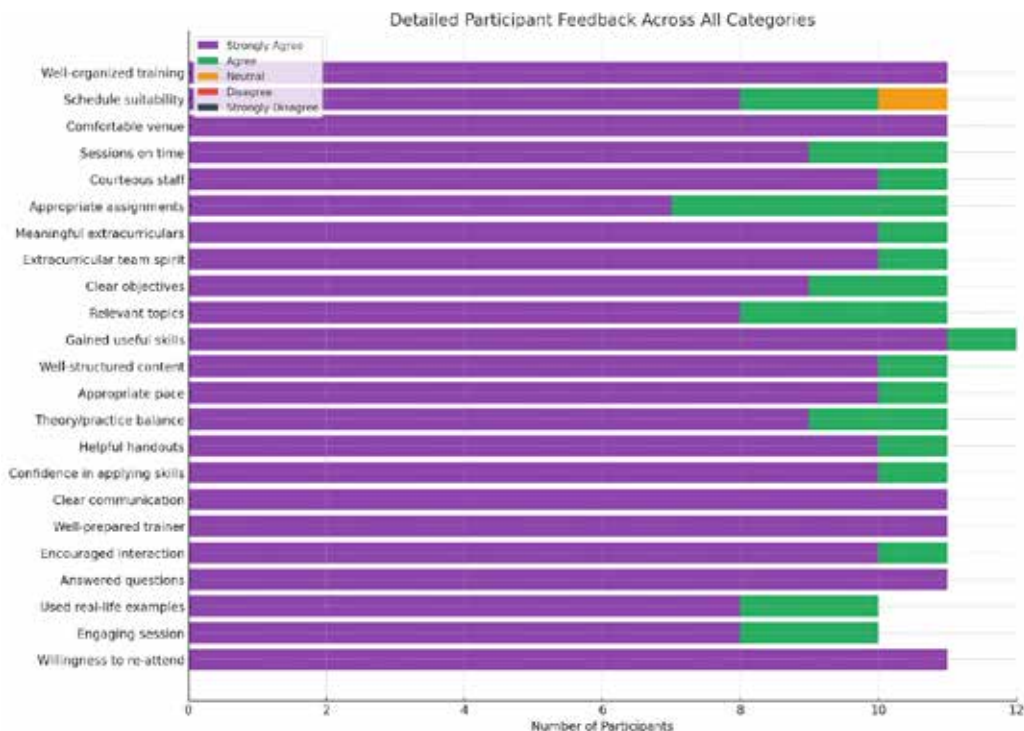


Figure 4. Detailed Participant Feedback Across All Evaluation Points

This holistic chart presents the comprehensive responses of all participants related to several key points, including details of the training logistics, the relevance of the content, and the trainer’s performance. Data analysis show high ratings across the board, particularly in areas such as the training organisation, content structure, development of practical skills, and

communication with the trainer. The prevalence of responses associated with the ‘Strongly Agree’ option, combined with the insufficient proportion of neutral and negative feedback, indicates the program’s superiority in meeting the needs and requirements of the target audience. These findings confirm the success of the training and reveal the high level of enthusiasm and satisfaction of the respondents regarding all the significant parts of the program.

Suggestions for Improvement

Although it was positive in the vast majority of cases, constructive recommendations for future improvement were also given. A significant number of participants expressed a desire to see the training last longer and focus on higher levels of engagement and continuity. There were also requests for follow-up events, mentoring, and further practical case studies to reinforce learning. Such observations support the idea that there is a significant need of longer-term initiatives, which can follow the steps of this training.

Outcomes and Transformational Indicators

Short-Term Impact: All 13 of the selected candidates attended the 4-day, 28-hour training event, exceeding expectations and demonstrating a firm commitment. Pre- and post-measures confirmed significant growth in the following competencies, including writing a resume, writing professional emails, conducting interviews, and using problem-solving strategies. The usefulness of these skills was confirmed directly by the participants, many of whom stated that they now feel confident in applying for jobs or seeking further education.

Long-Term Impact: A compelling example of the program’s effectiveness is that participants have taken it upon themselves to replicate the core lessons of the program. The graduates of the first training, organised as the Soft Skills Laboratory: Youth of Artsakh to the Youth of the Regions, conducted training sessions with 25 young people in Echmiadzin. The fact that they can transfer knowledge and assume leadership roles is a demonstration of sustaining the intervention and its spill-over to the broader communities. The outcomes of this initiative are not only the implementation of a training course but also the establishment of a youth leadership platform, fostering resilience and driving change. The project has laid the groundwork for a replicable and scalable model in post-conflict rehabilitation and youth empowerment.

Conclusion

The project “Soft and Professional Skills Development for the Displaced Armenians” arises as a necessary response to the socio-professional challenges faced by young adults displaced due to conflict. The training empowered participants with a sense of agency, confidence, and community by enabling

them to communicate more effectively, think more critically, emotionally strengthen, and be more job-ready.

Project success is reflected in positive feedback from participants, as evidenced by enthusiastic reviews and their active participation in subsequent programs. Not only did it result in short-term skills training, but it also spurred peer-to-peer, long-term outreach, which has placed displaced youth in both learning and leadership roles.

The thoughtful design of the curriculum, together with inclusive pedagogy, comprehensive assessment, and learner-centred methods, makes a potent model that can be used in the future to conduct another intervention in the same context. The results indicate that even the institutionalisation and scale-up of such projects would be effective in integrating vulnerable groups into the economic and social life of the host community.

To sum up, this project supports the notion that education, combined with empathy, order, and possibilities, is an effective way to overcome and rebuild post-conflict societies.

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ON CERTAIN SEMANTIC AND FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF BUSINESS DISCOURSE

LILIT HAKOBYAN

Armenian State University of Economics, Chair of Languages
PhD in Philology, Associate Professor
lilithakobian@gmail.com

VICTORIA MURADYAN

Armenian State University of Economics, Chair of Languages
PhD in Philology, Associate Professor
muradyan.viktorya@ysu.am

SHUSHANIK GHAZARYAN

Armenian State University of Economics
Chair of Languages, Lecturer
shushanghazaryan1983@gmail.com

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Abstract

Contemporary linguistic literature offers a range of definitions for the term *discourse*. Particularly significant is the cognitive–communicative perspective, which views discourse as a complex phenomenon encompassing both process and product, integrating linguistic and extralinguistic dimensions (Fairclough, 1989).

This study is anchored in the concepts of *discourse*, *business discourse*, and *corporate discourse*. While these terms are often used interchangeably within certain linguistic frameworks, there is a growing tendency to differentiate them more precisely. This article attempts to characterise and explore these notions in greater depth, with a special focus on business discourse as a distinct communicative domain.

Research findings suggest that business discourse differs from corporate discourse in important ways. These differences stem from transformations in the modern business environment, where communication, shaped by a host of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, plays a pivotal role.

The study examines the key types and subtypes of business discourse, their defining characteristics, and the primary verbal and non-verbal tools that contribute to crafting impactful, persuasive, and goal-oriented communication in business contexts. Examples illustrating the structural patterns and rhetorical

strategies of business discourse are drawn from the public speeches of prominent business figures such as Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, and Bill Gates, whose discourse practices provide rich material for analysis.

Keywords: Discourse, communication, business discourse, public speech, verbal communication, extralinguistic factors.

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ԼԻԼԻԹ ՀԱԿՈԲՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի
լեզուների ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
բանասիրական գիտությունների թեկնածու
lilithakobian@gmail.com

ՎԻԿՏՈՐՅԱ ՄՈՒՐԱԴՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի
լեզուների ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
բանասիրական գիտությունների թեկնածու
muradyan.viktorya@ysu.am

ՇՈՒՇԱՆԻԿ ՂԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի
լեզուների ամբիոնի դասախոս
shushanghazaryan1983@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Արդի լեզվաբանական գրականությունը ներկայացնում է «խոսույթ»-ի (discours) տարբեր սահմանումներ: Նշանակալի է խոսույթի բացատրության կոգնիտիվ-հաղորդակցական մոտեցումը, համաձայն որի՝ այն համապարփակ երևույթ է, գործընթացի և արդյունքի ամբողջություն, որը ներառում է ինչպես լեզվական, այնպես էլ արտալեզվական հայեցակետեր (Fairclough, 1989):

Խոսույթ, գործարար խոսույթ, բիզնես խոսույթ. այս հասկացությունների վրա է հենվում սույն ուսումնասիրությունը: Այս հասկացությունները լեզվաբանական որոշակի շրջանակներում նույնացվում են, բայց կա նաև դրանք հստակորեն առանձնացնելու տեսակետ: Նշված հասկացությունները հնարավոր է բնութագրել և ուսումնասիրել առավել համակողմանիորեն:

Հետազոտության արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ բիզնես խոսույթը որոշակիորեն տարբերվում է գործարար խոսույթից: Սա պայմանավորված է ժամանակակից բիզնես աշխարհի զարգացումներով, որտեղ կարևոր դեր է կատարում հաղորդակցումը՝ լեզվական և արտալեզվական մի շարք գործոններով:

Ուսումնասիրության շրջանակում անդրադարձ է կատարված բիզնես խոսույթի հիմնական տեսակներին, ենթատեսակներին, դրանց առանձնահատկություններին, լեզվական և արտալեզվական հիմնական միջոցներին, որոնք նպաստում են բիզնես հարթակում տպավորիչ, ազդեցիկ ու նպատակային խոսք ձևավորելուն:

Բիզնես խոսույթի ենթատեսակները ներկայացնելիս, տարբեր օրինաչափություններ քննարկելիս՝ օրինակները մեջբերվել են գործարար աշխարհում հանրահռչակ Մարկ Ցուկերբերգի, Ջեֆ Բեզոսի և Բիլ Գեյթսի տարբեր ելույթներից, որոնք առատ և հետաքրքիր նյութ են տալիս տվյալ ուսումնասիրության համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ խոսույթ, հաղորդակցություն, բիզնես խոսույթ, բանավոր ելույթ, վերբալ խոսք, արտալեզվական գործոն:

Introduction

In today's complex world, communication manifests in a wide variety of forms. However, language remains the central medium through which meaningful interaction occurs. As such, the strategic use of linguistic resources has become a key area of study in the quest for effective communication. Investigating the characteristics of business discourse is essential for understanding and anticipating developments in the business sector.

For students in professional academic institutions, mastering the nuances and principles of business discourse is both timely and beneficial. Such knowledge equips them with the analytical tools necessary to decode, interpret, and apply communicative strategies effectively within business environments.

This article aims to introduce the target audience to current theoretical approaches to business discourse, providing a comprehensive understanding of its structure and function. The goal is to foster informed use and anticipate future trends.

Over the past few decades, the term *discourse* (from the French *discours*—speech, reasoning) has gained prominence not only in linguistics but also across a range of disciplines that engage with language functions, including literary studies, psychology, sociology, law, and political science. The widespread use of the term has led to multiple interpretations, and no single, universally accepted definition has emerged.

Nevertheless, *discourse* is most frequently associated with language in use. Contemporary linguists tend to view discourse in close relation to *text*. While *text* is typically considered the product of either written or spoken language use, *discourse* encompasses both the process and the outcome of communicative activity.

Literature Review

In the work *On the Concepts of Discourse and Discourse Analysis in Contemporary Linguistics*, the author defines *discourse* as language in use (Kubryakova, 2000, p. 6).

In his book *Linguistic Circle: Person, Concepts, Discourse*, Russian linguist V. I. Karasik outlines eight interpretations of the term *discourse* as proposed by Swiss linguist P. Seriot. These definitions generally equate discourse with a linguistic unit that exceeds the scope of a single utterance or sentence (Karasik, 2002, p. 190).

In modern linguistic thought, the concept of discourse is closely linked to that of *text*. Its emergence is associated with the expansion of text analysis beyond surface structures. A *text* is typically seen as the outcome of either written or spoken language use, while *discourse* refers to both the process and the product of communication (Kibrik & Plungyan, 1997, p. 307). According to Arutyunova, discourse is a text (spoken or written) characterised by distinct pragmatic, sociocultural, and psychological dimensions (Arutyunova, 1990, pp. 136–137). In this sense, discourse is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that, in addition to its textual and linguistic elements, incorporates extralinguistic factors that shape both interpretation and function.

An essential step in discourse analysis is the classification of its types. Differentiating discourse types allows for a more precise description of their unique linguistic and extralinguistic features. This review will focus specifically on the distinctive features of *business discourse*.

Practical – or business – communication is one of the most critical components of the contemporary world. It plays a key role in establishing and sustaining effective professional relationships. The terms *practical communication* and *business communication* are either used interchangeably or interpreted hierarchically, with one viewed as a subset of the other. In a broader sense, practical communication encompasses all domains of human interaction, including business, education, culture, politics, and economics. Consequently, business communication manifests in numerous forms and functions.

As a foundation for professional relations, this type of discourse is commonly employed in areas such as production and its financing, the sale and purchase of goods and services, insurance, product promotion, and

negotiations in all the above-mentioned areas (Shiryaeva, 2008, pp. 12–13). Participants in business discourse include economists, business executives, advertising and marketing professionals, entrepreneurs, customers, and others. To achieve their communicative goals, these actors employ various tools—both linguistic and extralinguistic—without which effective communication would be unattainable.

This leads to the conclusion that *corporate discourse* refers to verbal communication that unfolds within status- and role-defined contexts: within organisations, between organisations, or between organisational representatives and individuals. A clear structure and specific linguistic features govern this type of discourse. Parameters such as communicative tactics, underlying values, and textual characteristics help define it. Tactics include tools such as negotiations, interviews, and training sessions. The core values of corporate discourse include establishing partnerships, generating profit, and managing operations effectively (Shiryaeva, 2008, pp. 12–13).

One of the defining characteristics of this form of communication is its capacity to direct recipients toward specific, goal-oriented actions.

The broadening scope of business communication has contributed to the development of standardised linguistic patterns that are consistently applied across both spoken and written formats of business discourse.

Within the linguistic literature, a meaningful distinction is drawn between *corporate discourse* and *business discourse*. F. Bargiela-Chiappini and C. Nickerson offer a widely accepted definition: business discourse is verbal or written communication between individuals who are directly involved in business interaction, to advance their own or their organisation's interests. This occurs within relationships that are clearly defined by roles, statuses, and responsibilities (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 2002, pp. 273–276).

Thus, business discourse represents a specific form of communication in which business relations serve as the overarching framework, shaped by the expectations and interests of the business environment.

Unlike corporate discourse, business discourse cannot rely solely on formal, institutionalised genres. Such genres are primarily suited for internal communication within an organisation—typically between management and staff—or for external negotiations and contractual agreements. However, they are not applicable in interactions involving product presentations, customer engagement, or the marketing of services. For these reasons, business and corporate discourse must be distinguished, even though they may intersect or overlap in certain cases.

At its core, business communication is closely tied to the initiation and development of professional relationships. Verbal communication has existed since the earliest forms of human interaction, although its specific forms and

functions have evolved. As an academic field, communication studies began to emerge in the early 20th century. In this regard, E. B. Atrushkevich notes the following:

“The development of communication theory began in the early 20th century with scholars such as Harold Lasswell and Claude Shannon, who aimed to construct mathematical models of communication. In the 1950s and 1960s, Marshall McLuhan and Harold Innis focused on the influence of mass media on society. Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, Stuart Hall and Michel Foucault began to explore the relationship between communication and power.”(Atrushkevich, 2023, p. 6)

Research Methods

This research applies both descriptive and analytical methods. The descriptive approach enables the structural examination of texts typical of business communication, identifying the communicative functions of specific linguistic units within their contextual frameworks.

The use of discourse analysis provides an opportunity to examine speech in various social contexts. This study allows for an in-depth analysis of texts characteristic of business communication.

Through the combined application of descriptive and analytical approaches, it becomes possible to uncover a range of communicative phenomena, including the function, meaning, intention, orientation, influence, and practical use of speech. These methods also help reveal the essential linguistic tools employed by prominent speakers to achieve impactful, influential, and engaging communication.

Three such renowned speakers were selected based on their relevance, communicative effectiveness, and resonance with audiences. Real examples of business discourse were chosen across a variety of genres and communicative settings, allowing for the study of both internal and external diversity within business speech.

The article examines lexical features in the speech of the selected speakers, as well as the linguistic and structural elements present in their discourse. It provides a comprehensive account of business discourse—both structurally and functionally—based on the analysis of diverse textual materials. The findings are of practical relevance for linguists and professional communicators alike.

Analysis

In this area of study, particular attention is given to the vocabulary of specialised speech genres, such as presentations, negotiations, corporate and commercial correspondence, interviews, and advertising. The research encompasses both the process and the product of business communication, including intercultural business exchange, corpus-based studies of professional

discourse, and the role of business communication within media and cultural contexts. Rhetorical strategies and their application to business communication are also explored.

Business discourse encompasses a range of subtypes, shaped by fields of usage and the nature of services or products involved. Brown suggests narrowing business discourse into five core functional domains: production and placement, marketing, management, finance, and accounting (Brown & Clow, 2008, p. 101). These subtypes are further classified based on their communicative context.

This article focuses specifically on the spoken dimension of business discourse, analysing its linguistic and extralinguistic features. Emphasis is placed on key linguistic units, contextual patterns, and external elements commonly employed in this discourse type.

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Human communication can be broadly divided into verbal (spoken/written) and nonverbal forms. Both are essential, and effective communicators skillfully integrate them to reinforce their message.

Key principles of verbal communication include:

- Engage in dialogue, not monologue; avoid lecturing.
- Consider the interests and perspective of the audience.
- Use facial expressions, particularly smiling, to build rapport.
- Break certain unspoken social taboos when necessary to address important but neglected topics. (Skazhenik, 2005, p. 46)
- Nonverbal communication encompasses a wide range of expressive tools that complement verbal content and significantly enhance emotional resonance and audience perception. The most common and widely accepted types include:
 - Kinesics (from Greek kinesis, meaning “movement”): facial expressions, gestures, body posture, gait, and eye contact.
 - Haptics (tactile communication): handshakes, pats on the back, physical touch.
 - Proxemics (spatial communication): physical distance, orientation, and seating arrangements.
 - Prosody and extralinguistics: intonation, tone, volume, pauses, laughter, crying, coughing, sighing.
 - Interpersonal space: a critical factor in regulating interaction. (Karasik, 2002, p. 20)

These categories may be further subdivided depending on the context and communicative needs. Importantly, verbal and nonverbal communication occur simultaneously, complementing each other. Neither is complete without

the other, as they represent different manifestations of the same communicative intent.

Examples from Jeff Bezos's Speeches

Prominent examples include well-known statements and interviews by Jeff Bezos, whose language frequently features formulaic expressions and clichés typical of business communication, structured through clearly defined rhetorical models.

Let us examine several statements from Bezos's discourse and provide linguistic commentary (Princetonacademics, 2010):

1. "We are stubborn on vision. We are flexible on details."

This statement conveys the idea that while the company remains steadfast in its long-term goals, it remains adaptable in its approach to achieving them. The phrase contrasts strategic clarity with operational flexibility, forming a memorable juxtaposition that has since become a strategic cliché distinguishing vision from tactics.

2. "Your brand is what other people say about you when you are not in the room."

This aphoristic expression is memorable and widely quoted, often cited as a concise definition of branding. It highlights the role of public perception in reputation-building, emphasising that brand identity exists outside the company's direct control, rooted in what is publicly communicated.

3. "It is always Day 1."

This has become an iconic slogan representing Amazon's internal culture. Here, "Day 1" is symbolic—expressing the motivational mindset of constant reinvention. It reflects a corporate ethos centred on innovation, dissatisfaction with the status quo, and the perpetual energy of new beginnings.

Examples from Elon Musk's Speeches

Now consider several notable statements from Elon Musk, presented with structural and functional analysis (TED, 2017):

1. "Failure is an option here. If things are not failing, you are not innovating enough." Built on paradox, this statement challenges conventional business thinking by positioning failure not as a threat, but as a necessary condition for innovation. It serves as a motivational tool, encouraging risk-taking over fear-driven caution.

2. "I think it is possible for ordinary people to choose to be extraordinary." This phrase expresses belief in human potential, democratising the concept of excellence and success. Musk's message is particularly directed at a younger audience, inspiring them with the idea of building the future. The linguistic strength lies in the verb "choose," which places agency in the hands of the individual.

3. “Some people don’t like change, but you need to embrace change if the alternative is disaster.”

This statement underscores the necessity of adaptability, especially in the face of environmental or technological crises. Structurally, it follows pragmatic logic: resistance to change is riskier than change itself.

Examples from Bill Gates’s Speech

Bill Gates also provides powerful examples of business-oriented discourse. Consider the following (TED, 2015):

1. “If you are born poor, it’s not your mistake, but if you die poor, it is your mistake.” This statement is built on contrast and responsibility, advocating for personal development, education, and opportunity utilisation. However, it may provoke debate due to its socio-political undertones, depending on the cultural and economic context.

2. “The world won’t care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something before you feel good about yourself.”

This statement contrasts societal expectations with personal emotional needs. It emphasises the primacy of achievement over self-perception, serving as a call to action—urging individuals to act, not merely to prepare.

3. “Be nice to nerds. Chances are you’ll end up working for one.” With humour and foresight, this phrase encourages respect for intellectuals. In a single sentence, it subverts social stereotypes and has become a widely quoted, upbeat business “meme.”

In business discourse, one of the primary objectives is to communicate essential information quickly, persuasively, and concisely. As a result, speakers use vocabulary and structures that make it easier for the audience to extract key information and stay engaged with the message’s most critical points.

These texts also often adhere to the principle of strategic scripting. According to Skazhenik (2005), an effective speech opening is essential for achieving the intended outcome. He outlines the following core techniques:

Effective opening strategies:

- Evoking empathy
- Introducing a paradox
- Asking an unexpected question
- Offering an intriguing description
- Presenting an interesting or unusually framed fact
- Quoting an original source
- Complimenting the audience
- Using a vivid example
- Telling a joke
- Appealing directly to the audience’s interests (Skazhenik, 2005, p. 54).

If a speech fails to capture attention from the outset, it risks losing its audience entirely, rendering the remainder ineffective.

Let us illustrate this with an excerpt from Jeff Bezos's 2010 Princeton Commencement Speech (Princetonacademics, 2010):

“When I was five years old, I watched the Apollo moon landing. I remember my grandfather telling me: ‘Jeff, one day, you’ll see people going to space routinely.’”

This opening demonstrates *empathy through personal memory* — a childhood moment that can resonate with the audience emotionally. Later, he poses a philosophical and unexpected question:

“What kind of person do you want to be?” – prompting reflection in a business-oriented setting.

In his 2015 TED Talk titled “*The next outbreak? We’re not ready*,” Bill Gates surprises the audience (TED, 2015). Initially anticipating a speech about war, listeners instead hear this:

“If anything kills over 10 million people in the next few decades, it’s most likely to be a highly infectious virus rather than a war. Not missiles, but microbes.”

This paradoxical opening redefines perceived threats. At the time (2015), the idea was still novel and later gained profound relevance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Elon Musk, speaking at TED Dubai (2017) in “*The Future We’re Building – and Boring*,” employs a striking, sensory metaphor (TED, 2017):

“Starting a company is like eating glass and staring into the abyss.”

Initially humorous, this unsettling imagery immediately captures attention, while also authentically reflecting the harsh reality of entrepreneurship. It even carries a layer of self-directed irony.

The Power of Closings and the Role of Sensory Appeal

The conclusion of a business speech must be clear, emotionally resonant, and motivational, as it is key to achieving the desired impact.

In spoken business discourse, deviations from standard norms are common. Speakers often shift into more interpersonal modes of communication, leading to changes in both vocabulary and grammar. Business success, defined by revenue and profit, depends significantly on effective interaction among participants.

Because people process speech through different sensory channels, public speakers must account for three perceptual types: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.

In visual presentations, for instance, certain design and delivery principles make communication more impactful and less monotonous. According to D.

A. Sevostyanov's *Business Communication*, an effective presentation speech should follow these guidelines:

1. A sentence should contain no more than 11–13 words.
2. Speech pace should be 2–3 words per second.
3. Continuous speaking without pauses longer than 5–6 seconds reduces comprehension.
4. A speaker conveys only about 80% of the intended message; listeners perceive about 70%, and understand roughly 60%.
5. Under emotional stress, only one-third of perceived information is typically understood (Sevostyanov, 2015, p. 16).

For auditory learners, tone of voice, pitch, pauses, rises and falls in intonation, and deliberate tempo shifts all play vital roles.

For example, in Bill Gates's TED Talk "The next outbreak? We're not ready", his calm tone, intellectual style, and structured pauses define his delivery (TED, 2015). Note the phrasing:

"If anything kills over ten million people in the next few decades, it's most likely to be a highly infectious virus rather than a war. Not missiles, but microbes."

The slow tempo and the emphatic pause before "rather than a war" lead the audience to mentally anticipate the ending, creating suspense. The final contrast – "Not missiles, but microbes" – delivered in a lower pitch, solidifies the emotional and cognitive effect.

Elon Musk's speaking style, by contrast, is marked by shifting tempo, introspection, and vocal uncertainty. Consider this excerpt from TED Dubai 2017 (TED, 2017):

"Sometimes I think, well... maybe it's better that we are not in a simulation... because... that means reality is real. Which is... um, comforting... I guess."

His pauses, fillers ("um," "well," "I guess"), and unstable pitch create the impression of a reflective, vulnerable speaker. The hesitancy invites listeners to engage more attentively, amplifying the perception of authenticity—even if it occasionally evokes a sense of discomfort.

On Jeff Bezos's Speaking Style and the Role of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Jeff Bezos's public speaking is distinguished by stylistic variety, a confident tone, and dynamic modulation of pitch. A notable example is found in his 2010 Princeton Commencement Speech (Princeton academics, 2010):

"Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice. Gifts are easy – they are given after all. Choices can be hard. You can seduce yourself with your gifts... but if you are not careful, it will be at the expense of your choices."

Therising intonationin the first line–“Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice”–creates a memorable contrast. Thegentle drop in pitchin “Choices can be hard” signals a shift to a more serious tone. Theslowed paceduring “You can seduce yourself...” serves as a deliberate pause, allowing the speaker to gauge the audience’s emotional response. When discussing values, Bezos frequently usespositive stress patternsandintentional pausesto create rhetorical weight.

To enhance impact and clarity, his speech demonstrates careful use ofstrategic silences,tempo variations, andintonational phrasingthat strengthen key messages.

By contrast,monotone deliverycan quickly disengage listeners, diverting their attention. Similarly,excessively high pitch may fatigue or irritate the audience, creating a barrier to effective communication. Conversely,too low a pitchmight suggest a lack of confidence, requiring listeners to strain, which diminishes attention and can lead to repeated interruptions or disengagement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following key conclusions can be drawn:

1. The concept of discourseis broader than that of a text, necessitating different methods of analysis and interpretation.

2.Business discourseis clearly distinct fromformal/professional discourse; in today’s world, business communication, driven by commercial goals, features specific linguistic and extralinguistic elements not typical of general formal communication.

3. The core aim of business discourse is to make speech accessible, impactful, and results-driven, contributing to success in business. Achieving this requires a diverse array of linguistic and extralinguistic tools.

4. Business discourse is amultilayered phenomenon, with distinctivelexical, grammatical, pragmatic, and extralinguistic dimensions, guided by specific communicative goals.

5. Spoken business discourse, including interviews and public speeches, is rich in idiomatic expressions, memorable quotes, and cliché-like formulaic structures, especially in English-language settings.

6. Nonverbal factorssuch as facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, pauses, and silence play an equally important role, often enhancing the communicative impact more directly than words.

7. Despite ongoing research, the field remains partially defined, with many linguistic features and theoretical questions in business discourse still requiring deeper investigation.

8. The field offers a rich base of material and ample opportunities for continued linguistic exploration and applied research in the study of business discourse.

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LOGISTIC OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN INTEGRATING INTO INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

MARO DETLOFF

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy
of Sciences of the RA

Department of Management and Economics, Lecturer

PhD in Economic Sciences, Associate Professor

National Defence Research University of the Ministry of Defence of the RA,
scientist-analyst

maro.detloff@isec.am

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Abstract

Integration into international transport corridors and global supply chains is one of the main prerequisites for expanding economic activity and increasing the competitiveness of national economies. In this context, the development of logistics systems is of key importance, contributing to the efficiency of freight transportation, increasing trade volumes and deepening regional cooperation. For the Republic of Armenia, which has a strategic location in the South Caucasus, the improvement of the logistics system is an essential factor in terms of organising international transportation and transit movement. However, currently, Armenia's logistics capabilities are significantly limited due to geographical isolation, closed borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as shortcomings in infrastructure and customs processes. These problems are also reflected in the low positions of the country in the Logistics Performance Index (LPI), particularly in the components of the efficiency of customs processes, infrastructure quality, and timeliness of supply chains.

The transport system of the Republic of Armenia is one of the strategic pillars of the country's economic development and regional integration. As a key infrastructure of the national economy, it plays a significant role in the formation of the country's logistics capabilities and the development of transit opportunities. Armenia's logistics system is predominantly based on road transportation, which limits the possibilities for the development of multimodal transportation and hinders the country's effective integration into regional transport corridors.

The development of the "North-South" road corridor and the "Crossroads of Peace" strategic initiative can turn Armenia into a transit hub, connecting the ports of the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea. In parallel with the modernisation of the logistics system of Armenia, it is essential to simplify

customs procedures, introduce digitalisation and form effective management systems, which will contribute to reducing the costs and terms of cargo transportation. In a regionally competitive environment, where neighbouring states have more developed infrastructure, a comprehensive strategic approach is needed so that Armenia can occupy the role of a regional transit hub and expand its economic ties in international transportation networks to increase competitiveness, as well as strengthen regional security and economic stability.

Keywords: Logistics system, international transport corridor, North-South road corridor, Crossroads of Peace initiative, regional integration.

ՄԻՋԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ՏՐԱՆՍՊՈՐՏԱՅԻՆ ՄԻՋԱՆՑՔՆԵՐԻՆ ԻՆՏԵԳՐՄԱՆ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԼՈԳԻՍՏԻԿ ՀՆԱՐԱՎՈՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԵՎ ՄԱՐՏԱՀՐԱՎԵՐՆԵՐԸ

ՄԱՐՈ ԴԵԹԼՈՖՖ

ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի

կառավարման և տնտեսագիտության ամբիոնի դասախոս,

ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարության Պաշտպանական ազգային հետազոտական համալսարանի տարածաշրջանային ռազմավարական վերլուծությունների կենտրոնի գիտնական-վերլուծաբան,
տնտեսագիտության թեկնածու, դոցենտ

maro.detloff@isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Միջազգային տրանսպորտային միջանցքներին և գլոբալ մատակարարման շղթաներին ինտեգրումը տնտեսական ակտիվության ընդլայնման և ազգային տնտեսությունների մրցունակության բարձրացման հիմնական նախապայմաններից մեկն է: Այս համատեքստում լոգիստիկ համակարգերի զարգացումն առանցքային նշանակություն ունի՝ նպաստելով բեռնափոխադրումների արդյունավետությանը, առևտրի ծավալների ավելացմանը և տարածաշրջանային համագործակցության խորացմանը: Հայաստանի Հանրապետության համար, որն ունի ռազմավարական դիրք Հարավային Կովկասում, լոգիստիկ համակարգի կատարելագործումը կարևոր գործոն է միջազգային փոխադրումների և տարանցիկ շարժի կազմակերպման տեսանկյունից: Սակայն ներկայումս Հայաստանի լոգիստիկ կարողությունները զգալիորեն սահմանափակված են աշխարհագրական մեկուսացվածության, Թուրքիայի և Ադրբեյջանի հետ փակ սահմանների, ինչպես նաև ենթակառուցվածքների և մաքսային գոր-

ծընթացների թերությունների պատճառով: Այս խնդիրները դրսևորվում են նաև «Լոգիստիկ կատարողականի ինդեքսում» (Logistics Performance Index – LPI) պետության ցածր դիրքերում, մասնավորապես՝ մաքսային գործընթացների արդյունավետության, ենթակառուցվածքային որակի և մատակարարման շղթաների ժամանակայնության բաղադրիչներով:

ՀՀ տրանսպորտային համակարգը երկրի տնտեսության զարգացման և տարածաշրջանային ինտեգրման ռազմավարական հենասյուներից մեկն է: Որպես ազգային տնտեսության առանցքային ենթակառուցվածք՝ այն զգալի դեր է կատարում երկրի լոգիստիկ կարողությունների ձևավորման և տարանցիկ հնարավորությունների զարգացման գործում: Հայաստանի լոգիստիկ համակարգը գերազանցապես հիմնված է ավտոմոբիլային փոխադրումների վրա, ինչը սահմանափակում է բազմատեսակ փոխադրումների զարգացման հնարավորությունները և խոչընդոտում երկրի արդյունավետ ինտեգրումը տարածաշրջանային տրանսպորտային միջանցքներին:

«Հյուսիս–Հարավ» ճանապարհային միջանցքի և «Խաղաղության խաչմերուկ» ռազմավարական նախաձեռնության զարգացումը կարող են վերածել Հայաստանը տարանցիկ հանգույցի՝ կապելով Պարսից ծոցի և Սև ծովի նավահանգիստները: Հայաստանի լոգիստիկ համակարգի արդիականացմանը զուգահեռ՝ կարևոր է մաքսային ընթացակարգերի պարզեցումը, թվայնացման ներդրումը և արդյունավետ կառավարման համակարգերի ձևավորումը, ինչը կնպաստի բեռնափոխադրումների ծախսերի և ժամկետների նվազեցմանը: Տարածաշրջանային մրցակցային միջավայրում, որտեղ հարևան պետություններն ունեն ավելի զարգացած ենթակառուցվածքներ, անհրաժեշտ է համակողմանի ռազմավարական մոտեցում, որպեսզի Հայաստանը կարողանա գրավել տարածաշրջանային տարանցիկ հանգույցի դեր և ընդլայնել իր տնտեսական կապերը միջազգային փոխադրումների ցանցերում՝ մրցունակության բարձրացման, ինչպես նաև տարածաշրջանային անվտանգության և տնտեսական կայունության ամրապնդման համար:

Քանալի բառեր՝ լոգիստիկ համակարգ, միջազգային տրանսպորտային միջանցք, «Հյուսիս–Հարավ» ճանապարհային միջանցք, «Խաղաղության խաչմերուկ» նախաձեռնություն, տարածաշրջանային ինտեգրում:

Introduction

In the context of globalisation in the 21st century, the development of transport and logistics systems has become a key factor in the economic growth and competitiveness of countries. In this context, integration into international transport corridors provides opportunities for rapid access to markets, strengthening regional cooperation, and expanding trade volumes.

The Republic of Armenia, being a landlocked country operating in a

complex geopolitical environment and with limited external transport links, faces serious logistical challenges. However, the country's geographical location provides an opportunity to become a transit hub that can unite the Middle East, the South Caucasus, Asia and Europe. In this regard, the development of international transport corridors, in particular, the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), the Trans–Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), known as the Middle Corridor, as well as the expansion of multimodal transport platforms in the EAEU and China–EU directions, open up new opportunities for Armenia to participate in the processes of multi-vector transport and regional economic integration. However, the effective realisation of this potential is conditioned by the modernisation of logistics infrastructure, institutional strengthening of management systems, simplification of customs procedures, and deepening of multi-layered international cooperation. In this context, a scientific analysis of Armenia's logistics potential and the obstacles to its development is important to formulate a strategy for the country's effective integration into international transport corridors.

The article aims to analyse the logistics capabilities of the Republic of Armenia and highlight the main challenges that condition the country's effective integration into international transport corridors.

The research objectives are:

- To present the current state and structural features of the logistics system of Armenia.
- To analyse the role of international transport corridors in the processes of regional cooperation and economic integration.
- To identify the factors that limit the integration of the logistics system of Armenia at the international level.
- To propose practical solutions and strategic directions for the effective development of the logistics system of Armenia.

Theory and Methodology

The concept of international transport corridors plays an essential role in economic development, as economies need to be supported by efficient and sustainable logistics systems. It is often used as a development concept to create high-speed lanes between origin and destination points in different countries, facilitating trade and transport, and increasing communication. The establishment of international transport corridors creates opportunities for improving freight transport management, aligning legal and regulatory frameworks, introducing coordinated border-crossing procedures, attracting infrastructure investments, and enhancing the effectiveness of public–private sector cooperation.

The analysis of Armenia's opportunities and challenges for integration into international transport corridors is based on a number of interrelated

theories that address regional economic integration, the efficiency of logistics systems, and the structural and strategic significance of transport corridors. However, each theory has both applicability and limitations, especially for a small, landlocked, and geopolitically complex country like Armenia.

1. Regional Economic Integration Theory (Balassa, 1961) suggests that interconnectivity among countries in terms of infrastructure, markets, resources, and institutions fosters mechanisms for simultaneous development. International transport corridors (ITCs) serve as the physical foundation of this integration, reinforcing bilateral and multilateral cooperation frameworks. This theory is particularly applicable in the context of the Republic of Armenia, as the coordination of transport infrastructure may strengthen collaboration with Iran, Georgia, Russia, and the Central Asian countries. Economic integration also promotes the flow of investments and facilitates access to new markets. However, the theory is somewhat abstract and does not adequately address political disagreements and security-related risks. In Armenia's case, regional integration efforts are often hindered not by economic constraints, but by political and military factors—such as the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict and the closure of borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan. While the theory provides a valuable foundation for shaping national development strategies, its application must be context-sensitive and should be complemented by security and geopolitical analysis frameworks.

2. Territorial Transport Economics (Rodrigue et al., 2020) explores how transport corridors shape economic interactions between regions. The theory emphasizes territorial balance and the enhancement of regional competitiveness. International transport corridors (ITCs) are structured systems of spatial connectivity and logistics integration that facilitate deeper multinational economic ties and improve the efficiency of regional distribution. These corridors are often multimodal in nature and function as “supply chain highways,” supporting the stability of global production and consumption networks. However, territorial economics models often overlook geopolitical risks and conflict zones—factors that are critically important in the case of Armenia. While the theory provides a useful framework for infrastructure development and transport planning, it must be complemented with analysis of regional conflicts and risk management strategies to be fully applicable in complex geopolitical environments.

3. A theory of logistics networks and supply chains that offers a practical toolkit for optimizing logistics systems, reducing costs, and improving the efficiency of connections. It is particularly applicable in conditions of multimodal transportation. International corridors that connect efficient logistics networks contribute to lower production costs, higher competitiveness, and faster delivery times (Christopher, 2016; Chopra & Meindl, 2019). Within

the framework of this theory, logistics is viewed as a value-creating system that operates in an integrated environment of transportation, warehousing, information flows, and management (Christopher, 2016; Harrison & Van Hoek, 2011). Furthermore, effective logistics requires not only infrastructure and technology, but also a strategic management culture that aligns logistics operations with broader supply chain goals (Harrison & Van Hoek, 2011). In Armenia, the technological sophistication of existing logistics nodes is low, which complicates the full application of this theory. The introduction of modern logistics management systems requires not only infrastructure but also professional capacity and a corresponding management culture.

4. The theory of flexibility and vulnerability in the context of global transportation emphasizes the need to reduce the vulnerability of corridors in the face of global disruptions such as conflicts, pandemics, and economic crises (Sheffi, 2007). Armenia, with its limited route diversity, must enhance its logistical flexibility to avoid unilateral dependencies. The theory proposes adaptive and preventive approaches to ensure the resilience of logistics systems. This is particularly relevant for Armenia, considering its closed borders with two neighboring countries (Turkey and Azerbaijan), restricted transit access, and politically unstable regional environment. Armenia's vulnerability within international transport corridors is deeply structural and not always manageable through flexible governance alone, especially in the absence of diplomatic solutions. While this theory is crucial for strategic planning, it must be complemented by risk identification and diversification strategies, clearly outlining alternative routes and allied systems.

The combined application of the aforementioned theories is essential for shaping Armenia's logistics policy and developing a strategy for integration into international transport corridors. However, Armenia's geopolitical position, domestic economic capacity, and regional challenges require an adaptive approach that aligns theoretical models with real political and economic considerations.

Research Methods

The article employs systemic, comparative, economic-statistical, and graphical methods, as well as situational analysis (SWOT), which have enabled a comprehensive assessment of the structure, key indicators, and regional integration opportunities of Armenia's logistics system.

Results

The logistics and transport system of the Republic of Armenia is one of the main pillars of the country's economic development. However, the logistics system is still in its initial stage of development and faces a number of structural, institutional, and technological challenges. The system's efficiency

depends on the quality of transport infrastructure, the effectiveness of customs administration, storage capacities, the level of digitalization, and regional integration opportunities.

In recent decades, the South Caucasus region has become a key strategic hub in the context of the formation and development of international transport corridors. Within this framework, the transport system of the Republic of Armenia holds a significant position, both as a transit country and as a platform for diversifying regional connectivity.

The geographical location of the Republic of Armenia—at the crossroads of Europe and Asia—offers the potential to become a regional transit hub. However, the lack of access to the sea and the closure of borders with two neighboring countries significantly limits Armenia’s logistical potential, reducing its ability to access international markets (World Bank, 2023). This situation severely restricts the volume of international freight traffic and diminishes Armenia’s attractiveness as a logistics centre. In the global context, Armenia’s logistics system is often ranked poorly. According to the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) for 2023, Armenia ranks 97th out of 139 countries, with an overall score of 2.5. The LPI score is based on six key components: the efficiency of customs clearance, the quality of infrastructure, the ease of arranging competitively priced shipments, the competence and quality of logistics services, the ability to track and trace consignments, and the timeliness of deliveries.

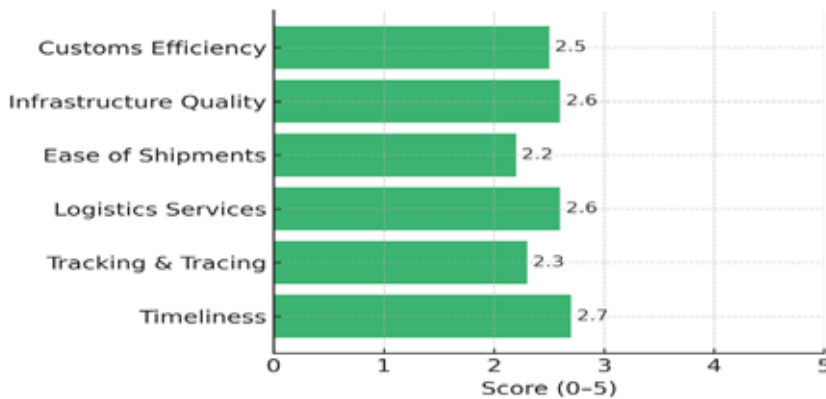


Chart 1. Armenia’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Components – 2023
(World Bank, 2023)

Table 1.

Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Scores of Armenia, 2012–2023
(World Bank, 2023)

Year	Number of Countries Rated	LPI Rank	LPI Score	Customs Score	Infrastructure Score	International shipments Score	Logistics competence Score	Tracking & tracing Score	Timeliness Score
2023	139	97	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.6	2.3	2.7
2018	160	92	2.61	2.57	2.48	2.65	2.5	2.51	2.9
2016	160	141	2.21	1.95	2.22	2.22	2.21	2.02	2.6
2014	160	92	2.67	2.62	2.38	2.75	2.75	2.5	3
2012	155	100	2.56	2.27	2.38	2.65	2.4	2.57	3.07

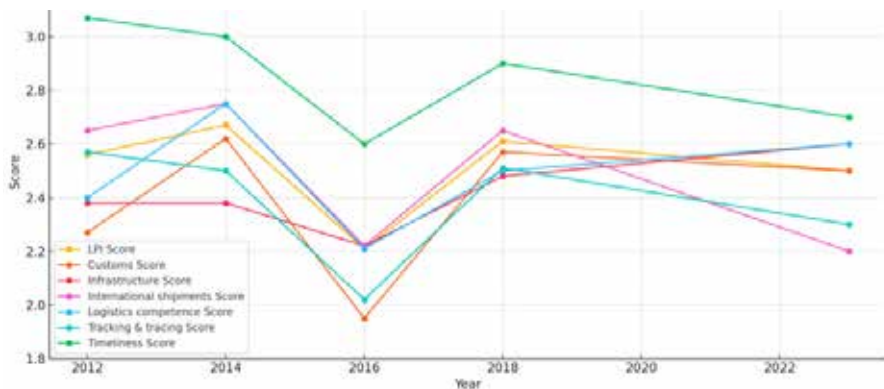


Chart 2. Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Scores of Armenia, 2012–2023
(World Bank, 2023)

Analysis of Table 1 reveals that Armenia’s logistics system developed at an unstable pace between 2012 and 2023. The highest overall score was recorded in 2014 (2.67 points), while the lowest was in 2016 (2.21 points, ranked 141st). Despite some recovery in 2023 – particularly in the areas of infrastructure (2.6) and logistics competence (2.6) – these improvements did not offset the declines observed in international shipments and tracking & tracing. The overall trend indicates inconsistent development of the logistics system and highlights the need for structural and managerial reforms.

Thus, Armenia’s LPI indicators reflect some improvement in infrastructure and logistics competence; however, significant challenges remain in customs procedures, international shipments, and technological development. State strategies should be directed toward deepening digitalization in customs and logistics, enhancing international cooperation in the field of corridor-based transportation, and strengthening professional capacities in the sector.

The logistics systems of Armenia’s neighboring countries have a significant impact on Armenia’s own logistical position. Therefore, assessing the logistics performance of these countries is essential to understanding the opportunities and limitations of regional integration. Below is a comparative analysis based on the 2023 Logistics Performance Index (LPI) data.

Table 2.
Comparative Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Scores of Armenia and Neighbouring Countries, 2023 (World Bank, 2023)

Country	LPI Score	LPI Rank	Customs Score	Infrastructure Score	International Shipments Score	Logistics Competence and Quality Score	Timeliness Score	Tracking and Tracing Score
Turkiye	3.4	38	3.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5
Azerbaijan	2.9	66	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.8	3.2	2.9
Georgia	2.7	79	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.6	3.1	2.8
Armenia	2.5	97	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.6	2.7	2.3
Iran, Islamic Rep.	2.3	123	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.7	2.4

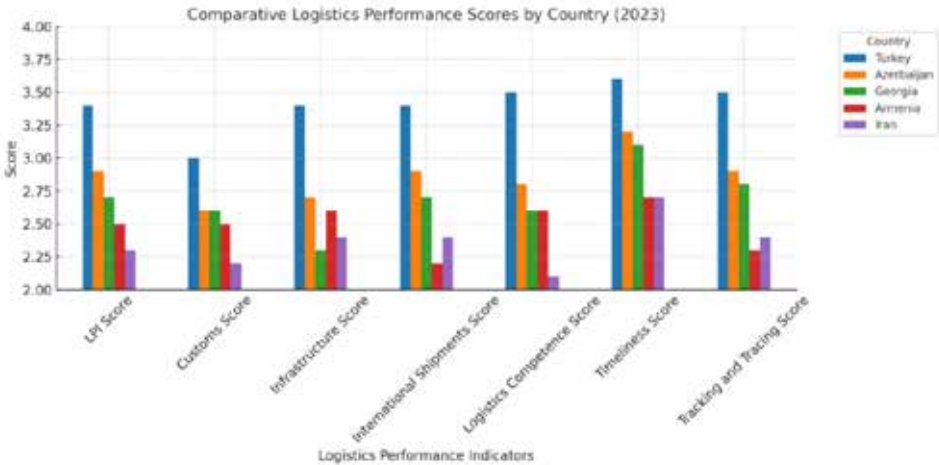


Chart 3. Comparative Analysis of Logistics Performance Indicators of Armenia and Neighbouring Countries (2023)

Table 2 presents a comparative analysis of the logistics performance of Armenia and its neighbouring countries—Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Iran—based on the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) 2023 data. As previously mentioned, Armenia’s LPI score in 2023 was 2.5, ranking 97th out of 139 countries, which is relatively low and significantly lags behind regional peers such as Turkey (3.4, ranked 38th) and Azerbaijan (2.9, ranked 66th). Georgia also outperforms Armenia with a score of 2.7 (ranked 79th), while Iran, despite its considerable economic potential, recorded a lower score of 2.3, ranking 123rd, primarily due to internal logistics and infrastructure limitations.

In terms of customs efficiency, Armenia also demonstrates relatively weak performance (2.5), falling behind Turkey (3.0), Azerbaijan (2.6), and Georgia (2.6). This negatively affects the speed and cost of border crossings. Despite some improvements, Armenia still lags behind Turkey and Azerbaijan in terms of infrastructure quality. The main challenges are related to the underdevelopment of railway, road, and warehousing infrastructure. Moreover, Armenia records the lowest score in the region for international shipments (2.2), which reflects limited opportunities for export and import operations.

Georgia serves as Armenia’s primary logistics gateway to the outside world—particularly to the Black Sea ports of Poti and Batumi. Georgia’s relatively high LPI score in 2023 (2.7) contributes to the reliability and timeliness of the flow of Armenian goods through this corridor.

Iran’s current Logistics Performance Index (LPI) score (2.3, ranked 123rd out of 139 countries) reveals several structural deficiencies in its logistics system, which to some extent limit both Iran’s and Armenia’s integration into international transport networks. However, these limitations can be mitigated through enhanced regional cooperation and the joint development of infrastructure. Armenia can position itself as an intermediary platform between Iran and other countries, partially centralising supply chain functions and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships.

The above-mentioned logistics dynamics in the region have several implications for Armenia’s ability to integrate into international transport corridors:

- **Responsiveness and reliability:** Armenia’s low LPI score indicates that the country does not yet meet the standards required for full participation in major international logistics networks. As a result, Armenia is often perceived as an alternative rather than a primary node for regional transit operations.
- **Regional competitive environment:** Azerbaijan, Georgia, and especially Turkey enjoy a competitive advantage due to their higher logistics performance, making them more attractive in international

transport corridor initiatives. For instance, Turkey plays a key role in the Middle Corridor. At the same time, Azerbaijan is strategically positioned in both North–South and East–West corridors, including the International North–South Transport Corridor and the Middle Corridor.

- **Transit position limitations:** Located at a strategic crossroads in the South Caucasus, Armenia possesses notable transit potential. However, the ongoing blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan significantly restricts its ability to serve as a regional transit hub. In contrast, open borders with Iran and Georgia present opportunities for cargo movement through specific routes—particularly within the frameworks of the North–South and Persian Gulf–Black Sea transport corridors. Nonetheless, full integration will require comprehensive reforms in logistics governance, digitalisation, and infrastructure modernisation.

Armenia’s logistics challenges stem not only from internal systemic shortcomings but also from broader geopolitical constraints. As a landlocked country, Armenia lacks direct access to maritime ports. In addition, two of its borders—those with Azerbaijan and Turkey—remain closed due to political and security reasons. As a result, Armenia operates under complex logistics conditions, relying almost exclusively on transit corridors through Georgia and Iran for foreign trade and transit flows (Asian Development Bank, 2011). By contrast, Turkey has access to major seaports (e.g., Istanbul, Mersin, Izmir), a highly developed road and rail network, and diversified connections with both Europe and Asia. Azerbaijan is actively investing in transport corridor infrastructure—such as the Middle Corridor, the International North–South Transport Corridor, and the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway—thus reinforcing its role as a key regional transit player. Despite internal infrastructural challenges, Georgia serves as Armenia’s principal external gateway, particularly through the ports of Poti and Batumi. In comparison, Armenia’s transport infrastructure remains underdeveloped due to limited investment policies, gaps in strategic planning, and inefficiencies in governance systems. The absence of maritime access exacerbates Armenia’s dependence on the ports of neighbouring countries, especially Georgia (Poti and Batumi) and Iran (Bandar Abbas and Chabahar). The vast majority of Armenia’s international trade is conducted via land routes, transiting through Georgian territory. This dependency results in high transport costs, unreliable delivery times, and increased political sensitivity. Road infrastructure often fails to meet international standards, and rail connectivity is limited in both volume and reach. Consequently, increased transport time and costs negatively affect Armenia’s logistics attractiveness, particularly in terms of foreign direct investment and export competitiveness.

In this context, the improvement of Armenia’s logistics system should be regarded not only as a crucial element of economic development but also

as a means of strengthening political sovereignty. It is essential to develop a comprehensive strategy aimed at modernising infrastructure, expanding multifaceted international cooperation, optimising digitalisation and customs processes, and deepening international partnerships at both regional and global levels.

The improvement of Armenia’s logistics system is vital for enhancing the country’s competitiveness and achieving full integration into international transport corridors. Comprehensive enhancement of the components of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) should be regarded as a strategic objective within the framework of government, international, and private sector cooperation.

The transport system of the Republic of Armenia is one of the strategic pillars of the country’s economic development and regional integration. As a key infrastructure of the national economy, it plays a significant role in shaping the country’s logistics capacities and enhancing its transit potential.

Table 3.

Freight Transportation by Mode and Share in Total Cargo Volume in Armenia in 2019–2023 (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 2024)

	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
Mode of Transport	Freights shipped, 1000 t	Share in Total Cargo, %	Freights shipped, 1000 t	Share in Total Cargo, %	Freights shipped, 1000 t	Share in Total Cargo, %	Freights shipped, 1000 t	Share in Total Cargo, %	Freights shipped, 1000 t	Share in Total Cargo, %
Motor vehicles	9 661.7	65.6	9 801.3	65.8	12 067.2	70.0	13 239.0	70.1	14 393.4	77.9
Railroad lines	3 212.6	21.8	3 201.0	21.5	3 124.7	18.1	3 509.1	18.6	2 103.3	11.4
Air	20.7	0.1	16.0	0.1	17.3	0.1	23.3	0.1	33.9	0.2
Trunk pipeline	1 837.3	12.5	1 870.9	12.6	2 033.8	11.8	2 124.3	11.2	1 952.4	10.5
Total	14 732.3	100	14 889.2	100	17 243.0	100	18 895.7	100	18 483.0	100

According to the data presented in Table 3, the dominant share of freight transportation in Armenia—77.9%—is carried out by motor vehicles, a figure that has shown steady annual growth, reaching 14.4 million tons in 2023.

This trend is primarily attributed to the relative accessibility and flexibility of the road network, as well as the simplification of freight procedures by motor transport due to Armenia's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, 2024).

A contrasting trend is observed in rail freight transportation. In 2023, the volume of freight transported by rail amounted to only 2.1 million tons, representing a decline of approximately 40% compared to 2022. Correlation analysis reveals the following patterns: a moderate negative correlation between road and rail transportation ($r = -0.54$), indicating a trend of substitutability; a strong positive correlation between road and air transport ($r = 0.78$); and a significant negative correlation between rail and air transport ($r = -0.79$). These interactions suggest that Armenia's logistics system is increasingly concentrating on road transport at the expense of multimodal transportation. This trend limits the country's capacity for diversified multimodal freight operations and hinders its integration into international multimodal transport corridors. This issue poses a serious challenge for Armenia's participation in international corridors, as rail remains one of the key modalities for connection to regional transport networks. The challenge is particularly relevant in the context of the North-South International Transport Corridor. Furthermore, the limited and relatively stable role of pipeline transport highlights Armenia's underutilization of potential energy corridor opportunities. The reconstruction of the railway system and more efficient management of pipeline freight volumes could significantly enhance Armenia's infrastructure, cross-border transport reliability, and multimodal connectivity.

Traditionally, Armenia's North-South highway is associated with the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), particularly due to Armenia's participation in the INSTC agreement. However, it is geographically disconnected from the corridor's western road route. According to analytical reports by the Eurasian Development Bank, the construction of the North-South highway within Armenia is officially regarded as part of the INSTC development projects, as Armenia is a full-fledged party to that agreement (Eurasian Development Bank, 2022). The North-South Road Corridor will contribute not only to the organisation of international freight flows through Armenia, but also serve as a linking route in broader regional networks connecting India, Iran, Central Asia, and Black Sea ports. This corridor has the potential to become part of the INSTC while simultaneously integrating into the Persian Gulf-Black Sea International Transport and Transit Corridor, which aims to establish a route from Iranian ports through Armenia and the Black Sea (via Bulgaria and other participants) to European markets. The Persian Gulf-Black Sea Corridor naturally overlaps with the North-South highway's alignment in Armenia, reinforcing the diversification of transit options. In this

context, Armenia's North–South Roadway can serve as a vital link from Iran to the Black Sea—and further—to EU markets.

Thus, road transport plays a pivotal role in the formation and development of Armenia's logistics system, serving as the primary structural component of the national transport infrastructure. Within this subsystem, the construction of the North–South Road Corridor in Armenia holds strategic significance, to activate the country's transit and foreign trade potential by integrating Armenia into international freight transport networks. The construction of this strategically significant highway is expected to facilitate smooth transit from Armenia's southern border to the Georgian border—and subsequently to Black Sea ports—enabling freight and passenger transportation in line with European standards and creating significant development opportunities for all settlements along the north–south axis (Armroad, n.d.).

Despite the strategic significance of the North–South project, its implementation has been significantly delayed. Initially planned for completion by 2017, the project remains only partially realised, which negatively affects the performance of Armenia's logistics system. This situation reflects existing challenges related to governance efficiency, investment climate stability, and program implementation capacity.

Upon completion of the North–South project, the following key outcomes are anticipated:

- An upgraded road corridor meeting international standards;
- First-class four-lane highways along the Yerevan–Gyumri and Yerevan–Ararat sections;
- Upgraded roads on other sections of the corridor to international standards, with future potential for expansion to four lanes;
- Efficient and safe traffic management along the corridor (Armroad, n.d.).

The North–South corridor serves not only as a means of transport communication but also as an instrument of regional integration. Its operation will enable the creation of a unified transport corridor linking Armenia with Persian Gulf ports such as Bandar Abbas and Chabahar, as well as Black Sea ports including Poti, Batumi, and Burgas. The formation of such a trans–Eurasian corridor can transform Armenia into a regional transit hub, provided that the necessary road, border, and customs infrastructures are constructed and modernised. This project aligns with several strategic initiatives of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, including the “Gyumri Tech City,” “Tatev Tourism Centre,” “Jermuk City Development,” and “Zvartnots Free Economic Zone” programs, all of which are interconnected with the activation of logistics potential (Armroad, n.d.).

Thus, the whole operation of the North–South road corridor can

significantly enhance Armenia's logistics efficiency, promote regional and intercontinental cooperation, expand export opportunities, and reduce time and financial costs. However, the sustainable and effective implementation of the project requires an improved governance system, a stable investment climate, and efficient interagency and international cooperation.

An adequate and well-functioning railway infrastructure plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainable growth of Armenia's national economy and enhancing its competitiveness in the global economic system. The South Caucasus Railway, a branch of the Russian State Railway, operates the Armenian railway network, connecting it with Georgia's railway system and facilitating freight transport to the ports of Poti and Batumi. However, the absence of railway connections with Turkey and Azerbaijan limits the international integration potential of this infrastructure. Reconstruction and modernisation programs are essential to achieve full compliance with international standards and to enable the effective use of multimodal logistics.

Enhancing competitiveness in domestic and international transport markets requires efficient use of railways as a cost-effective, reliable, and intercontinental freight transport backbone. From this perspective, the development of logistics functions within Armenia's railway system is a key element for the effective organisation of international transport and transit. Armenia's strategic goal should be to establish a comprehensive, internationally compliant logistics system within its railway network, which will foster regional integration and strengthen the country's position in international transport corridors.

The construction of the Southern Armenia Railway (linking Armenia and Iran) holds significant strategic importance for the Republic of Armenia (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2014). This project would help restore Armenia's role as a transit country and serve as the shortest overland transport route connecting the Persian Gulf basin countries to the Black Sea ports. From the perspective of freight movement between the Persian Gulf and European countries, the Iran–Armenia railway would position Armenia as the most efficient land-based corridor. However, the implementation of the project is currently considered less feasible due to its high investment costs.

Armenia's geopolitical position, along with the prolonged blockade of regional transport communications, places the Republic of Armenia in a constant search for new economic and logistical solutions. In this context, Armenia's strategy for integration into international transport corridors becomes particularly significant. In recent years, Armenia has intensified its diplomatic and economic efforts aimed at developing new transit routes and modernising its logistics infrastructure. The Government of the Republic of Armenia has developed the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative, aimed at

unblocking transport and communication infrastructure and promoting regional cooperation (Mirzoyan, 2025). The initiative seeks to restore and expand regional connectivity by reactivating existing infrastructure and constructing new roads, railways, pipelines, electricity lines, and digital corridors. It encompasses both North–South and East–West directions, fostering Armenia’s integration into global transport networks and enhancing regional economic ties (Mirzoyan, 2025; Harutyunyan, 2024). Armenia approaches the process constructively, based on four fundamental principles:

1. Routes must operate under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the countries they traverse.
2. Reciprocity and equality must be ensured.
3. Any form of unilateral control or the involvement of foreign forces must be excluded.
4. Security and oversight must be guaranteed through international standards and modern technologies without compromising Armenia’s sovereignty (Mirzoyan, 2024).

Within this framework, Armenia has expressed its readiness to take practical steps to implement the initiative and expects active support from international partners (Harutyunyan, 2024).

Thus, Armenia’s integration into international transport corridors—particularly within the framework of the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative—may serve as a strategic solution, simultaneously contributing to the expansion of the country’s logistical engagement, economic diversification, and the strengthening of regional stability.

Conclusions

As a landlocked and partially blockaded country, Armenia faces serious logistical challenges that hinder its full integration into international transport corridors. At the same time, the ongoing expansion of global and regional transport corridors provides an opportunity to make more effective use of Armenia’s strategic geoeconomic position. Realising Armenia’s transit potential could not only generate economic benefits but also serve as a tool for increasing regional influence.

While Armenia declares its readiness to engage in international transport corridor initiatives, other countries in the region—including Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey—are already implementing mutually beneficial projects. Therefore, Armenia must complete the North–South Highway within the shortest possible timeframe and, to integrate into international transport corridors, must not only develop its physical infrastructure but also implement efficient logistics solutions by integrating road, rail, and air transport capabilities. To this end, it is proposed to establish integrated logistics centres at key highway junctions, such as the Yerevan–Ashtarak or Gyumri area.

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CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL BANKING DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF LATEST BANKING TECHNOLOGIES

HAYK SARGSYAN

Armenian State University of Economics
Chair of Financial Markets and Institutions, Lecturer, PhD in Economics
hayk.sargsyan@asue.am

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Abstract

This study examines the multifaceted factors that influence the adoption and advancement of digital banking in the context of rapid technological evolution and shifting consumer expectations. Drawing on an extensive review of recent scholarly and industry sources, the research examines the intersection of technological, psychological, and socio-demographic factors that shape user behaviour. Key variables identified include perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, trust, and cybersecurity concerns—factors consistently shown to affect adoption rates across diverse user segments. Furthermore, social influence, age, education, income level, and digital literacy emerge as significant moderators. Beyond the user-centric perspective, institutional strategies such as platform customization, integration of artificial intelligence, open banking infrastructure, and ESG-driven (Environmental, Social, Governance) financial products are examined for their role in enhancing operational efficiency and customer engagement. The research underscores the critical importance of building resilient cybersecurity frameworks to mitigate evolving threats such as data breaches, malware, and AI-targeted attacks. Additionally, global comparative data from the 2025 TABInsights ranking of the top 100 digital banks offers empirical support for trends in profitability, market expansion, and regional differentiation. The findings suggest that future competitiveness in digital banking hinges not only on technological innovation but also on aligning services with user values and regulatory expectations. Recommendations are provided for researchers and practitioners to guide future developments in the field.

Keywords: Digital banking, profitability, fintech, cybersecurity, market capitalization, innovation.

ԹՎԱՅԻՆ ԲԱՆԿԵՐԻ ԶԱՐԳԱՅՄԱՆ ՄԱՐՏԱՀՐԱՎԵՐՆԵՐԸ ԲԱՆԿԱՅԻՆ ՆՈՐԱԳՈՒՅՆ ՏԵԽՆՈԼՈԳԻԱՆԵՐԻ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՈՒՄ

ՀԱՅԿ ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի
ֆինանսական շուկաներ և ինստիտուտներ ամբիոնի դասախոս,
տնտեսագիտության թեկնածու

hayk.sargsyan@asue.am

Համառոտագիր

Այս հետազոտությունը նպատակ ունի վերլուծել թվային բանկինգի ընդունման և զարգացման վրա ազդեցություն ունեցող բազմաչափ գործոնները՝ արագ տեխնոլոգիական առաջընթացի և փոխվող սպառողական ակնկալիքների համատեքստում: Հիմք ընդունելով վերջին գիտական և ոլորտային աղբյուրների համակցված վերլուծությունը՝ ուսումնասիրությունը կենտրոնացնում է այն փոխազդեցությունների վրա, որոնք ձևավորում են օգտատերերի վարքը թվային ֆինանսական ծառայությունների կիրառման գործընթացում: Գլխավոր գործոնների թվում առանձնանում են ընկալվող հարմարավետությունը, օգտակարությունը, վստահությունը և կիբեռանվտանգության հետ կապված մտահոգությունները: Նշված գործոնները վճռորոշ դեր ունեն տարբեր սոցիալ-տնտեսական խմբերի համար: Բացի այդ, սոցիալական ազդեցությունը, տարիքային, կրթական, եկամտային մակարդակն ու թվային գրագիտությունը կարևոր միջնորդող գործոններ են: Ուսումնասիրվել են նաև ինստիտուցիոնալ գործելակերպերը, ներառյալ հարթակների անհատականացումը, արհեստական բանականության կիրառումը, բաց բանկային (open banking) ենթակառուցվածքների ներդրումը և ESG սկզբունքներով առաջնորդվող ֆինանսական ապրանքների զարգացումը՝ հաճախորդների ներգրավվածության և գործառնական արդյունավետության բարձրացման նպատակով: Հատուկ ուշադրություն է դարձվել կիբեռսպառնալիքների աճին՝ շեշտադրելով կայուն և ձկուն պաշտպանական համակարգերի անհրաժեշտությունը: TABInsights-ի 2025 թ. վարկանիշային տվյալները ծառայել են որպես էմպիրիկ հիմք՝ թվային բանկերի շահութաբերության, շուկայի ընդլայնման և տարածաշրջանային տարբերակների վերլուծության համար: Արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ թվային բանկերի մրցունակության ապագան կախված է ոչ միայն տեխնոլոգիական նորարարությունից, այլև սպառողների արժեքների և կանոնակարգային պահանջների հետ համահունչ ծառայությունների ձևավորումից:

Բանալի բառեր՝ թվային բանկինգ, շահութաբերություն, ֆինտեխ,

կիրքերանվտանգություն, շուկայական կապիտալիզացիա, նորարարություն:

Introduction

Digital banking has rapidly transformed the financial services industry, marking a significant shift from traditional, branch-based banking to more efficient, tech-driven solutions. The proliferation of online and mobile banking platforms has made financial services more accessible and user-friendly, catering to the growing demand for convenience, speed, and cost efficiency. As Saharawat (2024) highlights, digital banking offers a variety of essential services, including account management, fund transfers, loan applications, and digital wallets, all accessible through smartphones and computers. This has not only streamlined banking operations but also promoted financial inclusion by providing services to previously underserved populations, particularly in developing regions. The evolution of digital banking has been facilitated by key technological innovations such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and machine learning, which enhance decision-making, security, and customer service. Neobanks and internet-only banks are prime examples of the sector's adaptability, offering tailored, user-centric financial solutions that challenge the traditional banking model. However, despite these advancements, digital banking faces several challenges. These include cybersecurity threats, regulatory complexities, and the increasing demand for banks to deliver personalized, customer-focused services. Moreover, the rise of green banking, which integrates Environmental, Social, and Governance principles, demonstrates the growing importance of sustainability in shaping digital banking practices.

This paper explores the emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in digital banking, with a focus on technological advancements, cybersecurity, regulatory frameworks, and customer-centric innovations that are shaping the future of financial services globally.

Research methods

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative content analysis with quantitative secondary data evaluation. Academic literature, industry reports (e.g., TABInsights, McKinsey, PwC), and empirical rankings were systematically reviewed to assess digital banking trends, shifts in market capitalisation, and user adoption factors. A comparative framework was applied to evaluate digital banks' performance across dimensions such as profitability, funding structure, asset growth, and regional distribution. The study also incorporated macroeconomic indicators (e.g., interest rate shifts) and regulatory developments (e.g., CBDC pilots) to contextualize strategic responses. This methodological design enables a multidimensional

understanding of the evolving global digital banking ecosystem.

Theoretical and methodological bases

Digital banking has emerged as a pivotal innovation in the financial sector, enabling customers to access a range of banking services through digital interfaces. According to Saharawat (2024), digital banking encompasses online and mobile banking platforms that offer essential features such as account management, fund transfers, loan applications, and digital wallets. This paradigm shift from traditional to digital infrastructures not only increases operational efficiency and reduces costs but also broadens financial inclusion by reaching underserved populations. Various types, such as neobanks and internet-only banks, illustrate the adaptability of digital banking to diverse user needs. Ultimately, digital banking aligns financial services with technological advancement, redefining consumer interaction with banks (Saharawat, 2024).

According to Das, Patnaik, and Satpathy (2024), digital banking adoption is shaped by a combination of technological, psychological, and socio-demographic factors. Their literature review identifies perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, trust, and security concerns as primary determinants. Furthermore, social influence, along with individual characteristics such as age, education level, and income, significantly impacts user behavior. The authors emphasize that while digital infrastructure is foundational, users' perceptions and contextual factors are equally vital. Their study underscores the importance of a holistic, multidimensional approach to fostering digital banking adoption in the context of rapid technological advancement and changing consumer expectations (Das et. al, 2024, pp. 592–616).

Waliullah et al. (2025) conduct a systematic review of literature addressing how cybersecurity threats affect digital banking adoption and growth. The study identifies key risks—such as data breaches, identity theft, and malware—that hinder user trust and adoption. The authors argue that enhancing cybersecurity infrastructure, increasing public awareness, and implementing regulatory protections are essential for fostering secure digital financial services. Their findings emphasise the balance between technological advancement and safeguarding user confidence in digital banking (Waliullah et al., 2025).

Indriasari, Prabowo, Gaol, and Purwandari (2022) explore the challenges, emerging technological trends, and future research directions in digital banking. They discuss how digital banking is transforming traditional financial services, driven by innovations such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and mobile technologies. The paper highlights challenges like cybersecurity risks, regulatory issues, and the digital divide. Furthermore, the authors emphasize the need for future research in areas such as customer experience, digital

inclusion, and the integration of new technologies in banking systems. Their work provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the evolution of digital banking (Indriasari et al., 2022).

Mohanty, Singh, and Mohanty (2023) present a systematic literature review examining customer satisfaction in digital banking. The study identifies key factors influencing satisfaction, including service quality, perceived usefulness, perceived risk, performance expectancy, and effort expectancy. Utilising Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with data from 222 banking customers in Northern India, the authors find that reliability, tangibility, and responsiveness significantly impact customer satisfaction. The research underscores the importance of aligning digital banking services with customer expectations to enhance satisfaction and retention. The study contributes to understanding the dynamics of customer satisfaction in the evolving digital banking landscape (Mohanty et al., 2023, pp. 48–71).

Chauhan, Akhtar, and Gupta (2022) conducted a structured literature review to examine the impact of digital banking on customer experience and its subsequent effect on financial performance. Analyzing 88 studies published between 2001 and 2021, the authors identified key determinants of customer experience: functional clues (e.g., trust, convenience), mechanical clues (e.g., website design, usability), and humanic clues (e.g., complaint handling). They propose an integrative framework linking digital banking factors, CE, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and financial performance. The study highlights the role of gamification in enhancing CE and offers strategic insights for banks aiming to improve online customer engagement (Chauhan et al., 2022m pp. 1–20).

Jalani and Easwaramoorthy (2024) explore the factors that influence the adoption and usage of mobile banking applications among Malaysian consumers. The study systematically identifies critical determinants, including security concerns, service quality, technological factors, and convenience, that affect consumer behaviour in relation to mobile banking. Employing a quantitative approach, the researchers utilized an online survey with 152 participants to collect data, which were subsequently analyzed using correlation analysis and multinomial logistic regression. The findings emphasize the importance of security and convenience in fostering greater engagement with mobile banking services (Jalani et al., 2024).

Stefanelli, Manta, and Toma (2022) investigate the strategic response of European banks to the digital transformation within the financial sector, particularly focusing on the adoption of open banking and application programming interfaces (APIs). The study examines how these technological innovations alter the dynamics of customer relationships and the overall role of banks in the broader financial ecosystem. By analyzing the implications of open banking, the paper explores the shifting boundaries of traditional banking

services and the evolving landscape of financial interactions (Stefaneli et al., 2022).

Kovacevic, Radenkovic, and Nikolic (2024) investigate the dual aspects of artificial intelligence integration within the banking sector, focusing on both its transformative potential and associated cybersecurity risks. The study highlights how machine learning enhances decision-making, fraud detection, and customer service automation. However, it also addresses emerging threats such as adversarial attacks, including data poisoning and evasion tactics, which exploit vulnerabilities in AI models. The authors advocate for the development of secure, resilient, and trustworthy AI systems to mitigate these risks and ensure the safe deployment of AI technologies in financial institutions (Kovacevic et. al, 2024).

Kshetri et al. (2023) conduct a comprehensive review of emerging cyber threats, specifically cryptojacking and ransomware attacks, within the banking industry. The study examines the evolving tactics employed by cybercriminals, highlighting the financial motivations and sophisticated techniques that underpin these threats. The authors examine the challenges faced by financial institutions in mitigating such risks and emphasize the necessity for proactive cybersecurity measures. Additionally, the paper introduces a Digital Forensics and Incident Response approach, advocating for its integration into current cyber threat hunting processes to effectively counteract these malicious activities (Kshetri et al., 2023).

The article “Shaping the Future: 7 Digital Technology Trends Reshaping Banking and Financial Services in 2023” outlines seven pivotal digital technology trends influencing the banking and financial services industry. These include the evolution of mobile applications, the impact of wearable devices, and the rise of embedded finance. The piece discusses how these innovations are transforming customer experiences, enhancing service accessibility, and driving the digital transformation of financial institutions. By integrating these technologies, banks aim to improve operational efficiency and meet the evolving expectations of consumers in a digital-first landscape (4 Sight Holdings, 2023).

The article “Top 10 Banking Technology Trends in 2023” by Axiom Groupe outlines ten pivotal technological advancements shaping the banking sector. These include the integration of artificial intelligence for enhanced customer service and fraud detection, the adoption of open banking through application programming interfaces to foster collaboration with non-banking financial companies, and the implementation of blockchain technology to ensure secure and transparent transactions. Additionally, the article discusses the rise of hyper-personalised banking experiences, the utilisation of the Internet of Things (IoT) for real-time data collection, and the emphasis on cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive financial information. The piece also highlights

the growing trend of neobanking, the automation of banking processes through robotic process automation, and the exploration of quantum computing for complex financial modeling. These trends collectively signify a transformative shift towards more efficient, secure, and customer-centric banking services (Axiom Groupe, 2023).

According to Setiawan and Prakoso (2024), digital banking adoption demonstrates a nuanced relationship with bank performance in Indonesia. While it exhibits a negative effect on return on assets, it enhances operational efficiency. The authors argue that bank size significantly moderates these outcomes, with larger banks being better equipped to optimize digital banking implementation. These findings underscore the importance of institutional scale and strategic alignment in maximizing the benefits of digital transformation in the financial sector (Setiawan et al., 2024m pp. 196–207).

According to Poon, Wibowo, and Tang (2024), this study develops a comprehensive framework for clustering FinTech based on technology, business models, and stakeholder perspectives. It synthesizes over 100 studies to classify FinTech into various clusters, providing a holistic view of the FinTech ecosystem. The authors emphasize the importance of understanding these classifications for both academic research and practical application in the rapidly evolving digital finance sector (Poon et al., 2024).

Asamoah and Osei (2024) explore the factors influencing users' intention to continue using digital banking services. Their study reveals that perceived self-efficacy, usefulness, and ease of use significantly affect users' continued usage intentions. The authors argue that user experience plays a critical role in sustaining digital banking adoption, underscoring the importance of improving service quality to retain customers (Asamoah et al., 2024, pp. 3332–3342).

According to Coelho, Figueiredo, and Valério (2025), their report provides a comprehensive overview of key regulatory and non-regulatory developments in the fintech sector during the fourth quarter of 2024. The report covers various aspects, including decentralized finance (DeFi), digital assets, stablecoins, and central bank digital currencies (CBDCs). It also examines the metaverse, artificial intelligence, and related technologies such as robotics and quantum computing. The authors emphasize the importance of understanding these developments to navigate the evolving landscape of digital finance and technology (Coelho et al., 2025).

Results

Deloitte's (2024) report assesses the digital maturity of banks across 44 countries, analyzing 1,005 functionalities in areas such as account opening, customer onboarding, everyday banking, and non-banking services. The study identifies two primary strategies among leading banks: enhancing customer

experience through intuitive design and expanding functionalities to create comprehensive “super applications.” The findings highlight the importance of both user-centric design and functional breadth in achieving digital banking excellence (Deloitte’s, 2024).

Murrar, Asfour, and Paz (2024) examine the relationship between banking sector development and economic growth using advanced statistical modeling techniques. The study finds that investments and loans have a significant negative correlation with bank capital, whereas deposits have a positive impact on bank capital. Additionally, bank capital is significantly related to various components of GDP, including private consumption, gross investment, and net exports, highlighting the critical role of the banking sector in economic development during the digital transformation era (Murrar et al., 2024, pp. 335–353).

KPMG (2024) suggests that Germany’s fintech market showed resilience in 2024, particularly with an 81% increase in corporate venture capital investments. This stability is attributed to favourable regulatory frameworks, such as the EU AI Act, which provide clarity for fintech operations. The report indicates that while global investments declined, the German market’s focus on AI-driven solutions and embedded finance continues to attract significant interest (KPMG, 2024).

BDO (2024) reports a 19% growth in German fintech investments in H1 2024, highlighting a shift towards niche markets and partnerships between fintechs and traditional financial institutions. The study also notes significant interest in AI, blockchain, and embedded finance, despite a more cautious investment climate in Europe (BDO, 2024).

As McKinsey & Company (2024) suggests, the lower-value cross-border payments market, which represents a substantial portion of the global payments sector, is increasingly being dominated by nontraditional players such as fintechs and money transfer operators. According to their analysis, these players have captured up to 65% of the market share in regions like Asia, a significant portion of the \$2 trillion global market. The report asserts that to counter this shift, traditional banks must modernize their infrastructure, integrate real-time processing capabilities, and enhance customer experience through transparent pricing and user-friendly interfaces. These measures are essential to regain competitive advantage and secure a share of this growing market, projected to account for nearly 40% of total global cross-border payment revenue in 2025 (McKinsey & Company, 2024).

The 2023 PwC Digital Banking Survey, focusing on Southeast Asia, reveals that while over 70% of banks in the region have established clear digital strategies, a significant implementation gap remains, with more than 80% of banks falling short of achieving their digitalisation objectives. The

primary drivers of digital transformation are enhancing customer experience (68%) and improving operational efficiency (56%). Challenges such as ineffective implementation (62%) and cybersecurity threats (59%) are hindering progress. To overcome these issues, banks are focusing on modernising their technology architectures, adopting cloud solutions, and upskilling their workforce; however, concerns regarding cloud security and regulatory compliance still impede adoption in countries like Thailand (PwC, 2023).

The 2025 Global Digital Bank Rankings by TABInsights highlight the rapid growth and increasing profitability of digital-only banks worldwide. Brazil’s Nubank leads the list, followed by ING Group’s retail arm and China’s WeBank. These top 100 digital banks collectively held \$2.4 trillion in assets, \$2 trillion in deposits, and \$78 billion in revenue by the end of FY2023. Notably, 61% of these banks reported full-year profitability, a significant increase from 48% in 2024. The average time to reach profitability has decreased to two years, indicating improved operational efficiency. Despite this progress, the global break-even ratio remains below 25%, with interest income being the primary revenue source. The rankings assess over 160 banks across five key dimensions: customer base, market/product coverage, profitability, asset and deposit growth, and funding. The Asia Pacific region accounts for 47% of the top 100, Europe 30%, and North America 10%.

According to TABInsights (2025), digital banks have shown strong growth in assets, users, and profitability, with Nubank (Brazil), ING’s retail division, and China’s WeBank leading global performance. These top 100 digital banks, selected from over 400, operate independently from traditional banks, emphasizing fully virtual customer experiences. By FY2023, they managed \$2.4 trillion in assets, \$2 trillion in deposits, and \$78 billion in revenue. The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for assets, loans, deposits, and revenue from FY2021 to FY2023 stood at 7%, 8%, 7%, and 18%, respectively, signaling sustained momentum (Kapfer and Weng, 2025)



Figure 1. World’s top 10 digital banks (2025)
Source: TABInsights

According to Kapfer and Weng (2025), the *TABInsights World's Top 100 Digital Banks Ranking 2025* demonstrates the global expansion and operational maturity of digital-only banks. These banks, evaluated across 42 markets, were ranked based on a multidimensional scorecard that emphasises customer engagement, profitability, growth in deposits and assets, product reach, and funding strength—rather than sheer size. A new metric, “funding as a percentage of total assets,” was included to better reflect financial sustainability. Among the top 100 banks, 47 are based in Asia Pacific, 30 in Europe, and 10 in North America. For comparative performance analysis, this study highlights the top 30 digital banks, which include market leaders such as Nubank, ING, and WeBank. A visual line chart has been constructed to illustrate the relative performance of these banks, offering insight into their digital maturity and regional competitive advantage.

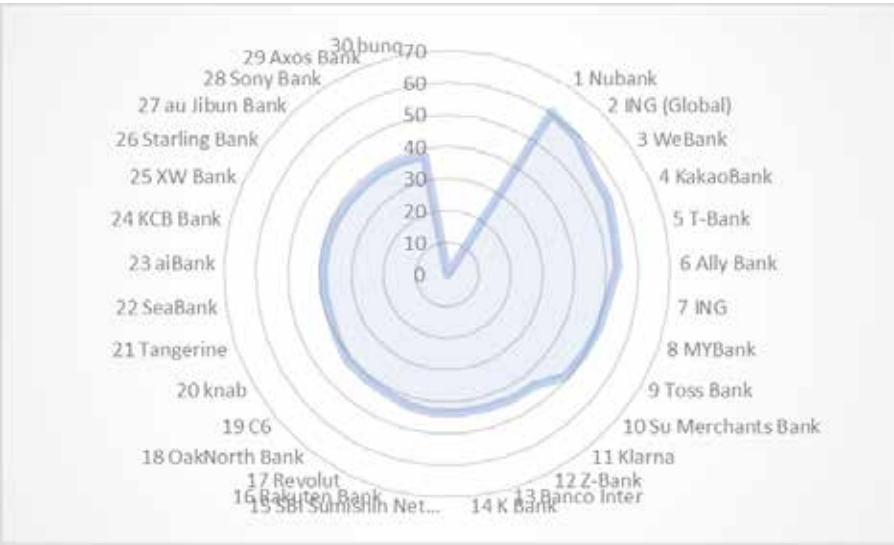


Figure 2. World's top 10 digital banks (2025)

Source: TABInsights

According to Fintech News Singapore (2025), the top digital banks in Asia for 2025 include Maya (Philippines), Kakaobank (South Korea), and ANEXT Bank (Singapore). Maya, a digital bank in the Philippines, has achieved significant growth, reaching a deposit base of ₱25 billion from 2.3 million clients by August 2023. Kakaobank, established in South Korea in 2016, had 21.8 million customers as of March 2023 and offers a range of banking and financial services. ANEXT Bank, a digital wholesale bank in Singapore, has been recognized for its excellence in digital banking innovation, customer growth, and financial performance. These banks exemplify the rapid expansion and innovation within the digital banking sector across Asia (Fintech News Singapore, 2025).



Figure 3. Top Digital Banks in Asia According to *The Banker* (2025)

Source: Fintech News Singapore. (2025, February 11)

The “Project mBridge” initiative, a collaboration between the central banks of Hong Kong, UAE, and Thailand, has significantly improved cross-border CBDC transaction settlement times, reducing them from 2–5 days to mere seconds. As of mid-2024, the project reached its minimum viable product (MVP) stage. Additionally, the future of digital banking emphasises customisation, moving away from generic interfaces and rigid product bundles to enable customers to personalise their banking experiences. Furthermore, green banking integrates Environmental, Social, and Governance principles, offering sustainable products and carbon tracking tools to align financial choices with customers’ values.

In Q4 2024, the combined market capitalisation of the top 25 global banks surged by 27.1% year-on-year, reaching \$4.6 trillion, according to GlobalData (2025). This growth was largely attributed to the U.S. Federal Reserve’s interest rate cuts, which positively influenced investor sentiment and stock prices. JPMorgan Chase led the rankings, with a 37.2% increase in market capitalisation, reaching \$674.9 billion, while Bank of America saw a 26.6% rise. In Asia, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) experienced a 37.8% growth, reaching \$328.2 billion. Other notable performers included Goldman Sachs, which posted a 42.9% increase, and ICICI Bank, which rose by 25.8%. Despite the overall positive performance, TD Bank experienced a significant decline of 20.1% due to regulatory challenges and missed financial targets. This robust growth underscores the resilience of major banks amidst global economic uncertainties, highlighting the profound impact of monetary policy decisions (Blakey, 2025).



Figure 4. Top 25 Global Banks by Market Cap, Q4 2024
Source: GlobalData intelligence Center and Stock Exchanges

This performance contrasts with the increasing pressure on digital banks to maintain profitability and operational efficiency in the face of competitive market dynamics and rising cybersecurity threats. Digital banks, while benefitting from technological advancements and operational agility, must also confront challenges in scalability, regulatory compliance, and consumer expectations for personalized services. In particular, the move towards highly customizable banking experiences, alongside growing demands for secure, green banking solutions, suggests that future innovation must balance both profitability and sustainability (Poon et al., 2024). Thus, as traditional financial institutions continue to flourish, digital banks must focus on adapting to market trends, ensuring robust cybersecurity, and aligning with global regulatory frameworks to secure long-term success in the evolving financial landscape.

Conclusions

This study highlights the rapid evolution and multifaceted nature of digital banking, emphasizing the critical role of technological advancements, regulatory frameworks, and customer-centric innovations in shaping its future. The findings suggest that while traditional banks continue to thrive, digital banking presents a formidable challenge and opportunity for growth, especially as customer expectations for personalized, efficient, and secure

services continue to rise. The integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and mobile applications has led to enhanced customer experiences and operational efficiencies, providing banks with new tools to maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly digital-first financial landscape.

However, the research also underscores the significant challenges that digital banks face, particularly regarding cybersecurity threats and regulatory compliance. Cybersecurity risks, including data breaches, identity theft, and cyberattacks, are major concerns that can undermine user trust and slow down adoption rates. To address these challenges, the development of robust cybersecurity infrastructures, clear regulations, and consumer education is essential for building trust and encouraging widespread adoption.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of adapting digital banking platforms to meet the evolving demands of diverse consumer segments. Factors such as ease of use, perceived usefulness, and service reliability play a crucial role in driving adoption. Additionally, the increasing focus on green banking, sustainability, and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) factors reflects the growing consumer demand for socially responsible financial products and services.

Ultimately, for digital banks to succeed in a competitive and fast-evolving market, they must strike a balance between technological innovation, customer satisfaction, and regulatory adherence. The future of digital banking depends not only on embracing new technologies but also on understanding the shifting dynamics of customer behavior and global financial regulations. As digital banking continues to grow, financial institutions must prioritize security, customer engagement, and regulatory compliance to remain competitive and resilient in the long term.

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DUPONT ANALYZES IN THE ASSESSMENT OF BANKING SYSTEM PROFITABILITY: ESTIMATING EVIDENCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

GAYANE HARUTYUNYAN

Armenian State University of Economics, Faculty of Applied Finance,
Chair of Financial Markets and Institutions
PhD in Economics, Associate Professor
g.harutyunyan7@gmail.com

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Abstract

In recent years, the banking system worldwide and especially in the Republic of Armenia (RA) has undergone significant changes. In 11 years period (2014–2024) the banking system of RA went through various challenges: in fact of Equity normative level was increased many banks had to merge and acquire, Covid-19 pandemic led to changes in government policy, in 2020 there was a territorial conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan which led some banks to change their territorial location. Besides, many changes in banking regulation strengthened the role of banks and banking regulation and led to a continuous rise in profitability.

The conducted research aims to discover:

- What main factors impact the banking system's profitability in RA,
- What factors have the most impact on the latter,
- Whether banking system profitability in RA has the potential to rise in the predicted two years.

For that purpose, DuPont analyses were performed, and five-factor analyses were done to understand which indicators influence the RA banking system's profitability the most, to what extent and how. Next, the Trend Lines for three main indicators (ROE, ROS, and IB) were constructed to predict the profitability of the banking system for the next two years.

The analyses were performed using Excel's predictive tools for 2014–2024 data for the entire banking system. Analysed results let us conclude that the RA banking system is rapidly growing and ROE changes were driven not only by internal banking indicators but also by changes in legislation in RA.

Keywords: DuPont's analysis, Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE), Assessment and Estimation, Trend Line, Prediction.

ԲԱՆԿԱՅԻՆ ՀԱՄԱԿԱՐԳԻ ՇԱՀՈՒԹԱԲԵՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԳՆԱՀԱՏՈՒՄԸ DUPONT ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿԻՐԱՌՄԱՄԲ՝ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՕՐԻՆԱԿՈՎ

ԳԱՅԱՆԵ ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ

Հայաստանի պետական տնտեսագիտական համալսարանի
կիրառական ֆինանսների ֆակուլտետի
ֆինանսական շուկաների և ինստիտուտների ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
տնտեսագիտության թեկնածու

g.harutyunyan7@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Վերջին տարիներին բանկային համակարգն ամբողջ աշխարհում և, հատկապես, Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում (ՀՀ) բազմաթիվ փոփոխությունների է ենթարկվում: 11 տարվա ընթացքում (2014–2024թթ.) ՀՀ բանկային համակարգը բախվել է տարբեր խնդիրների. ավելացել է սեփական կապիտալի նորմատիվային մակարդակը, բանկերից որոշները ստիպված են եղել միավորվել, Covid-19 համավարակը հանգեցրել է պետական քաղաքականության փոփոխությունների, 2020 թ. տեղի է ունեցել տարածքային հակամարտություն Հայաստանի և Ադրբեջանի միջև, որի հետևանքով փոխվել են որոշ բանկերի տարածքային տեղակայումը: Բացի այդ, տեղի են ունեցել բանկային կարգավորման բազմաթիվ փոփոխություններ, որոնք ամրապնդել են բանկերի հուսալիությունը և բանկային կարգավորումը:

Ուսումնասիրության նպատակն է պարզել.

- որո՞նք են ՀՀ բանկային համակարգի շահութաբերության վրա ազդող հիմնական գործոնները,
- ո՞ր գործոններն են ամենամեծ ազդեցությունն ունենում վերջինիս վրա,
- արդյո՞ք բանկային համակարգի շահութաբերությունն ունի աճի ներուժ առաջիկա երկու տարիների ընթացքում:

Նպատակին հասնելու համար իրականացվել է Դյուպոնի հինգ գործոնային վերլուծություն՝ պարզելու, թե որ ցուցանիշները որքանով և ինչպես են առավելապես ազդում ՀՀ բանկային համակարգի շահութաբերության վրա: Այնուհետև երեք հիմնական ցուցանիշների (ROE, ROS և IB) համար կառուցվել են միտման գծեր առաջիկա երկու տարիների համար բանկային համակարգի շահութաբերությունը կանխատեսելու նպատակով:

Վերլուծությունն իրականացվել է Excel-ի միջավայրում կանխատես-

ման գործիքների միջոցով՝ ամբողջ բանկային համակարգի 2014–2024 թվականների տվյալների վերլուծության հիման վրա: Վերլուծված արդյունքները թույլ են տալիս եզրակացնել, որ ՀՀ բանկային համակարգն արագ զարգանում է, իսկ շահութաբերության փոփոխությունները պայմանավորված են ոչ միայն ներքին բանկային գործոններով, այլև ՀՀ օրենսդրության փոփոխություններով:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Դիուպոնի վերլուծություն, ակտիվների շահութաբերություն (ROA), կապիտալի շահութաբերություն (ROE), գնահատում և վերլուծություն, միտման գծեր, կանխատեսում:

Introduction

The economy of the Republic of Armenia is constantly growing. It is proven by indicators such as Gross Domestic Product, Share of Total Loans and Deposits in GDP, steady and regulated Inflation, and normal economic growth (Figure 1).

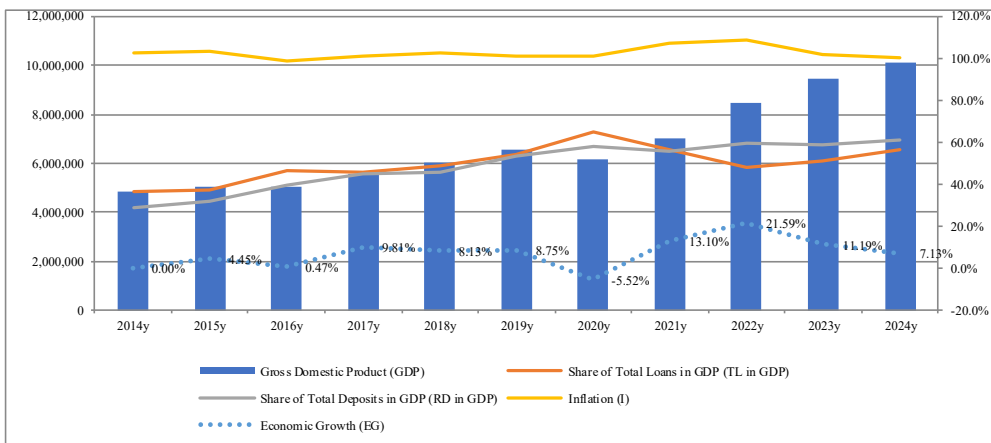


Figure 1. GDP (Left Axis), mln drams, TL in GDP, TD in GDP, I and EG in RA, %, for 2014–2024 (Right Axis)¹

In these trends, the Banking system of RA plays the leading role. The share of latter remains constantly big for the past decade (83%–86%). That means that its performance and operating effectiveness affect the whole economy of RA. The share of Loans and Deposits tends to grow, which indicates that there are all the necessary conditions for the population to purchase the

¹ All figures are built by the author on the basis of retrieved data from www.armstat.am, www.cba.am and from the annual reports of 18 commercial banks' web pages operating in the Republic of Armenia

banking services and products (especially new ones). Moreover, the GDP of RA nowadays is more dependent on the population, Deposits, and Loans, which means that the trust in the RA banking system tends to stabilise. Many economists note that the banking sector is the backbone of any country's health (Zhongming et al., 2019; Rabaa & Younes, 2016) and is the engine of growth for any country's economy (Nimalathasan, 2008). Others note that the performance of the banking sector is an indicator of the health of the whole country and is crucial for its financial system (Trung, 2021).

In light of facts, the stability and effectiveness of the banking system are the first. It can be measured through different coefficients, which show the effectiveness of performance. At the same time, the simplest and most effective one is the ROE, which measures the profitability of shareholders' investments.

In this paper, we have studied the RA banking system ROE, its changes and the factors that impact the latter. It has been done by DuPont's multifactor analysis. The latter helps us understand the trends in the RA banking system's operational effectiveness and financial stability.

Theory and Methodology

The banking system plays a crucial role in the development of a financial system, especially in a country's economic growth. It generates resources and distributes them in different ways: by providing loans, buying securities, buying derivatives, investing in the real estate market, and others. On the other hand, the great variety of products and services provided by banks directly affects the profitability of the banking system.

Nowadays, the banking system of RA is rapidly developing. According to the research of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB), the financial sector in Armenia is dominated by banks with an 83.8% share in total financial sector assets. Moreover, the size of the banking sector in Armenia is large relative to the economy, as banks' total assets to GDP equals 108%, a level that is close to the average for BSTDB member countries (BSTDB, 2023). This coefficient growth is accompanied by steady growth of ROE.

Let us also note that over the past decade, the RA banking system has navigated a complex landscape of socio-political challenges, economic shocks, and regulatory reforms, raising questions about its stability and long-term growth. So the main challenge now is to understand how changes in ROE affect the banking system performance as a whole.

ROE is typically defined as net income divided by the book value of equity. Therefore, a bank's ROE can be changed in two ways: through a change in net income or by operating with more or less equity. (Tijmen and Shahin, K., 2016). Moreover, ROE is a central measure of performance in the

banking industry, which is used to allocate capital within and across divisions. The reliance on this metric emerged from the risk management approach to banking, which underlies bank capital regulation (Moussu & Petit-Rome, 2014). So we can say that, as bank lending activities provide capital for the economy, they play an extremely important role in promoting production and business in enterprises (Pham, 2025). One common criticism against the use of ROE as a central performance measure is that it plays a role in inducing high leverage in banks (Goodhart, 2014; Thakor, 2013). This raises the issue that the effect of crisis ROE on bank risk may be driven by the impact of leverage. As can be seen, ROE is a complex coefficient, and many factors affect it.

ROE is calculated as follows (Bektas E., 2014; Kowoon Y., et al, 2022):

$$ROE = \frac{\text{Profit}_{after\ tax}}{\text{Capital}} \quad (1)$$

Besides many analyses and performances, there is one which can let us understand which factors (internal and external) affect ROE. This performance is known as a DuPont analysis or DuPont model.

The DuPont model was created in the early 1900s to assess the profitability of a business (Sheela and Karthikeyan, 2012). The DuPont system of financial analysis is based on ROE, with the components of this ratio being the net profit margin, the total asset turnover and the equity multiplier (McGowan and Stambaugh, 2012). According to DuPont analysis, ROE is a function of ROA (Return on Assets) and Leverage (The proxy variable being Equity Multiplier) (Narayanawamy, 2017). A good attempt of adopting DuPont's model was made by Kusi, Ansah-Adu & Sai (2015) in the use of an econometric technique to test the significance of each of the components of the DuPont ratio on the ROE of banks in Ghana. Twenty five (25) banks were sampled for the period 2006 to 2012 and panel regression was used in the data estimation technique. Their findings show that all five elements of the five-step DuPont model have a positive and significant relationship with ROE, including tax burden and interest burden.

Du Pont analysis takes into account three or five indicators to measure a firm's profitability: ROS, ROA, ROE, IB and TB. ROA offers a different take on management effectiveness and reveals how much profit a company earns for every dollar of its assets. Return on Sales (ROS) – measures how profitable a firm's sales are after all expenses, including taxes and interest, have been deducted. Interest Burden (IB) shows how interest expense impacts a bank's profits, and Tax Burden (TB) shows how the state affects banks' activity. As we can see, DuPont analysis provides a detailed breakdown of ROE, revealing the key drivers of a company's financial performance. DuPont analysis gives a more insightful and actionable understanding of a company's financial performance.

It empowers stakeholders to make better decisions and drive improvements. Moreover, it can identify a company's strengths and weaknesses.

Generally, DuPont analyses can be performed in three and five-factor analyses. The three-factor analysis is the following (Doorasamy M., 2016):

$$ROE = \frac{\text{Profit}_{\text{after tax}}}{\text{Gross Income}} * \frac{\text{Gross Income}}{\text{Assets}} * \frac{\text{Assets}}{\text{Capital}} = \text{Return On Sales} * \text{Asset Turnover} * \text{Leverage} = ROS * AT * L \quad (2)$$

The Five-factor analysis is the following:

$$ROE = \frac{\text{Profit}_{\text{after tax}}}{\text{Profit}_{\text{before tax}}} * \frac{\text{Profit}_{\text{before tax}}}{\text{EBIT}} * \frac{\text{EBIT}}{\text{Gross Income}} * \frac{\text{Gross Income}}{\text{Assets}} * \frac{\text{Assets}}{\text{Capital}} = \text{Tax Burden (TB)} * \text{Interest Burden (IB)} * ROS_{IB} * AT * L \quad (3)$$

Let us note that (Universalcpareview.com):

$$EBIT = \text{Operating Income} - \text{Other Expenses} \quad (4)$$

The DuPont analysis allowed us to determine how the RA banking system's strategy has changed over the past 11 years and which operations have led to the most significant change in ROE.

Research Methods

The object of our research is the Banking system of the Republic of Armenia as a whole. For that purpose:

- The data of 18 banks operating in the Republic of Armenia have been studied. Annual data from 2014 to 2024 were analysed. The necessary data were obtained from each bank's annual report on the bank's web page.

- DuPont five-factor analysis has been performed, so ROE, ROA, ROS, L, IB and TB have been calculated, and their trends have been presented in a Figure.

- Using the assessment, trend forecasting and identification methods, the features of the presented data set have been identified. In particular, based on graphs created in Excel, trend lines have been constructed so that they make it possible to represent deviations of actual data from the predicted ones. For that purpose, a Polynomial trend line was built, which is used when the data presented in the series has a simultaneous trend of growth and decrease. In such cases, the graph has one or more extreme (maximum and minimum) points. Of great importance for the accuracy of forecasting is not only the coefficient of determination (R²), which should be greater than 0.8, but also the correct choice of the degree (order) of indicators, which should be one more than the number of extreme points. Thus, the possible values of the

ROE, ROS and IB have been predicted.

• Thus, it has been analysed what factors impact the change in the RA banking system ROE the most, and what are the apparent reasons for the latter.

Results

It is widely known that only Profit after Tax (PAT) is not an effective coefficient to measure the banking system’s efficiency. To understand how the RA banking system develops its profitability, ROE was calculated for the observed 11 years (Figure 2).

Data presented in Figure 4 shows that ROE in the RA Banking System has grown nearly 10 times. In fact, equity in the RA banking system is managed more efficiently. We can highlight some years when ROE has decreased (2017, 2020, 2023). All these years were connected either with changes and or supplements in jurisdiction or depression and war. We will consider the ROE change in each year to understand the main dynamics in the RA banking system.

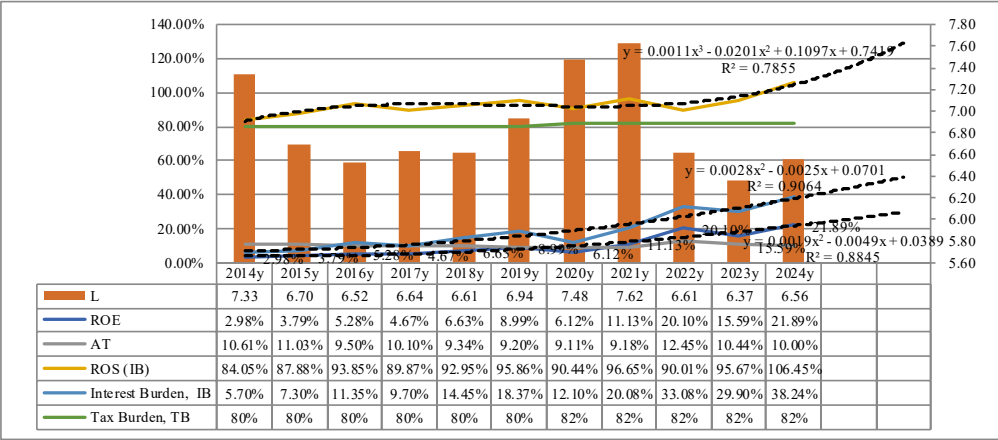


Figure 2. ROE, ROA, ROS, IB, TB, % (Left Axis), L (Right Axis) for 2014–2024²

Figure 2 shows that in 2015, ROE grew. It was mainly due to L reduction and IB rise. It means that Assets to Capital reduced and Profit After Tax to EBIT increased. In the first case, both Assets and Capital increased, but Capital increased faster than Assets. It means that though the banking system was expanding, it was not due to risk but to financial stability enforcement. In the second case, PAT increased faster than EBIT. And it means that interest income operations had slightly increased, which led to offering new products and services, as well as increased population involvement.

2 All figures are built by the authors on the basis of retrieved data from the annual reports of 18 commercial banks’ web pages operating in the Republic of Armenia

In 2016, ROE continued to grow. And again it was due to L reduction and IB raise. The reasons were the following. The number of customers served in the commercial banks of Armenia grew by 7.2% in 2016, primarily due to an increase in the number of natural person customers by 7.3% relative to 2015. In 2016, the share of interest-earning assets in total assets grew by 2.5 percentage points and reached 75.0%. In 2016, the gross income of the banking system grew by 9.3% and gross expenses by 1.5%. Within gross income, interest income grew by 2.7%, and non-interest income by 1.8%. Banking system interest income grew primarily due to an increase in income from loans to the economy (including overdraft, credit lines, and credit cards): their share in total interest income was 80.8% (compared to 84.6% in 2015) (CBA, Financial stability report, 2016). In 2016, the Armenian banking system experienced structural changes, consolidation, and increased focus on financial stability. Key changes included an increase in the minimum capital requirement for banks, leading to a reduction in the number of banks and an increase in market concentration.

In 2017, ROE was 4.67%, which was mainly due to ROS and IB. There were some changes and supplements in the RA legislation. In 2015, the Central Bank announced that it would tighten the rules: the minimum threshold of total capital of banks is set to be AMD 30 billion since January 1, 2017. If we look closer at ROS, it is evident that PAT has decreased (from 30 billion in 2016 to 28.9 billion in 2017). On the contrary, Interest and Non-Interest Incomes have increased by 4.5% and 37.4% respectively. That means that though banks in RA continued to enlarge their investment policy, PAT decreased. The fact was because of Interest Expenses. The latter increased by 3% due to the Deposits raised more rapidly than Loans. In 2015–2016 changes and supplements to RA Law “On Guaranteeing Remuneration of Bank Deposits of Individuals” introduced new stipulations and limits to guaranteed deposits, as follows: if the depositor holds only a dram denominated deposit with the insolvent bank, the amount of the guaranteed deposit will be AMD 10 million; if the depositor holds only a foreign currency denominated deposit with the insolvent bank, the amount of the guaranteed deposit will be AMD 5 million. All these changes contributed to the increase of confidence in the banking system of RA.

In 2018, ROE increased and reached 6.63% due to an increase in ROA, ROS and IB. The L was nearly on the same level, which means that Assets and Capital increased by the same level. ROA increased due to notable changes in the RA banking system, including increased lending, particularly in consumer and mortgage sectors, driven by both economic growth and state programs. Compared to 2017, 2018 consumer loans increased by 37%, and the share of total loans became 25%, up from 21% in previous years. (Ghalayan I.,

Arustamyan T., 2019) Legislative changes were made by the Government's initiative to smooth the barriers of the banking system and to free the banks from unnecessary burden, which allowed getting rid of a considerable sum of non-performing loans.

In 2020, ROE was 6.12% and the decline was due to Du Pont's all factors. In 2020, there was a change in Taxing Legislation, which led to a decrease in the rate for Profit Tax (from 20% to 18%). This factor is a reason for PAT to rise. L was high in 2020 and 2021. Mainly, it was due to all banks (except Ameriabank, EvocaBank, AcbaBank, ArtsakhBank, ByblosBank). The largest share of large leverage was due to Ardshinbank. Its deposits grew faster than loans. If the leverage ratio rises, it is either due to an Increase in Assets or an Increase in Capital. In our case, Assets grew by 14.17% and Capital by 5.81%. In Ardshinbank, Assets grew by 27.17% and Capital by 12.05%. It means that the RA banking system, and especially Ardshinbank, increased its riskiness. Banks of RA started to invest more not only in Loans but also in Armenian or International corporate bonds with or without rating. It was due to the Pandemic that the population in RA was unable to borrow or return the existing Loans.

In 2021, the Leverage ratio had also risen, but in this case, Assets grew by 4.42% and Capital by 6.38%. It means that, though the risk was higher in 2020, banks were able to gain more Income to increase their Capital. Higher Leverage led RA banks to almost double the PAT. That meant that the RA banking system managed its risks effectively. From 2022, L dropped, equaling the 2018 year's point, and it continues to decrease to the present. In the last three years, the RA banking system's Capital increased faster than its Assets. That was because of retained earnings and especially the rise in non-interest income (foreign exchange swaps). In 2020 additional changes and supplements to RA Law "On Guaranteeing Remuneration of Bank Deposits of Individuals" introduced new stipulations and limits to guaranteed deposits, as follows: if the depositor holds only a dram denominated deposit with the insolvent bank, the amount of the guaranteed deposit will be AMD 16 million; If the depositor holds only a foreign currency denominated deposit with the insolvent bank, the amount of the guaranteed deposit will be AMD 7 million. These changes also led to ROE rising for the following years.

In 2022, additional changes in other laws were made that led to more confidence in the RA banking system. The most important addition was the introduction of a new Law on "About non-cash transactions". According to the Law starting from July 1, 2022, transactions on the alienation of goods, alienation of property, use of goods, use of property, performance of works and services, payment of passive income, provision and receipt of loans made by individual entrepreneurs and organizations in the territory of the Republic

of Armenia for an amount exceeding AMD 300,000, if one of their parties is a person, carried out in a non-cash form. This means that the Central Bank of Armenia is strengthening regulations in banks and the population, also preventing money laundering and terrorist attempts. Nowadays, to conduct risk mitigation in the banking system, most of Loans are issued in RAI to prevent dollarisation.

In 2023, ROE decreased to 15.59% mainly due to the IB decrease. In 2023, the PAT slightly reduced due to a decrease in Non-Interest Income (by 27%). Mostly it was due to the decrease in exchange operations in AmeriaBank and ArdshinBank.

From Figure 4, it can be seen that ROE has the same trend as ROS and IB. But if we generate Trend lines, we can see that for the upcoming years (2025 and 2026), their dynamics are different. Though IB and ROS are increasing, ROE is tending to increase, but at a slower rate.

Data in Table 1 shows that in 2026, ROE will decline, though ROS and IB tend to increase. It means that TPAT tends to increase, so the decline is due to Capital, which will also increase but faster than PAT.

Table 1

Actual and Predicted coefficients in the RA banking system, %, for 2014-2024³

Actual coefficients				Predicted coefficients		
Year	ROE	ROS	Interest Burden, IB	ROE	ROS	Interest Burden, IB
2014y	2.98%	3.83%	5.70%	3.59%	83.26%	7.04%
2015y	3.79%	5.13%	7.30%	3.67%	88.97%	7.63%
2016y	5.28%	8.52%	11.35%	4.13%	91.98%	8.78%
2017y	4.67%	6.98%	9.70%	4.97%	92.95%	10.49%
2018y	6.63%	10.75%	14.45%	6.19%	92.54%	12.76%
2019y	8.99%	14.09%	18.37%	7.79%	91.41%	15.59%
2020y	6.12%	8.97%	12.10%	9.77%	90.22%	18.98%
2021y	11.13%	15.91%	20.08%	12.13%	89.63%	22.93%
2022y	20.10%	24.41%	33.08%	14.87%	90.30%	27.44%
2023y	15.59%	23.46%	29.90%	17.99%	92.89%	32.51%
2024y	21.89%	33.38%	38.24%	21.49%	98.06%	38.14%
2025y				25.37%	106.47%	44.33%
2026y				29.63%	118.78%	51.08%

3 Data presented in the table are calculated by the author

It follows that RA banking systems’ financial stability tends to grow. And it does approve the fact that the Central Bank of RA provides its second main objective: ensuring financial stability. If we try to understand the main reasons for the increase in IB and ROS, they are as follows. The increase of IB can be due to:

- Profit After Tax (PAT) increase or
- EBIT decrease or
- Both coefficients increase, but the growth rate of PAT will surpass.

Table 4 data show that ROS will increase in the upcoming two years. That means that

- PAT will increase, and the sum of Interest Income (II) and Non-Interest income (NII) will decrease
- The growth rate of PAT will surpass.

Observed data show that in the recent 11 years, the RA banking system’s Income growth rate (Interest Income (II)– 3.27 times, Non-Interest Income (NII)– 4.89 times) surpasses the Expenses growth rate (Interest Expenses (IE) – 2.85 times, Non-Interest Expenses (NIE) – 2.14 times). This means that PAT has a stable growth rate. In the case of Income, it may decrease due to a decline in NII (especially due to a decrease in foreign exchange swap volume). It means that PAT growth rate will surpass even in the worst-case scenario. Let us return to IB. If PAT is increasing, it may exceed the EBIT growth rate. Again, it can be due to a decrease in foreign exchange swap volume. So, if PAT is tending to increase, it means that ROE is tending to decrease due to other factors. This can be because the RA banking system’s Capital growth rate will be higher. From another point of view, it is a good condition because the RA Banking system is becoming more financially stable.

To understand which indicators impact ROE the most and to what extent, Regression analyses were performed (Table 2).

Table 2.

Regression statistics: Dependent Variable: ROE⁴

Explanatory Variables	ROE
Leverage	0.01** 0.0045
Asset Turnover	1.18*** 0.2825
ROS(IB)	0.13 0.0671

4 Data presented in the table are calculated by the author

Interest Burden	0.53*** 0.0437
Tax Burden	0.06 0.2566
Interception	-0.38 0.2263
Number of observations	11
Adjusted R2	0.998

Figures in parentheses show standard errors, ** 0.01< p ≤0.05 and *** p <0.001.

From Table 2, it can be seen that L, AT and IB are valuable from the point of view of p-value. Moreover, AT and IB have the most impact on ROE. It can be assumed that if:

- AT is changed by 1 point, then 1.18 points will change ROE
- IB is changed by 1 point, and 0.53 points will change ROE.

Discussing the results, we can conclude that the RA banking system generates a continuously rising ROE. It is due to different factors. Mainly, it is due to changes and additions in legislation, leverage limitation, risk mitigation and other factors. Du Pont’s five-factor analysis lets us understand that ROE has the same trend as ROS and IB. It means that the banking system in RA is still mainly dependent on Interest Income and Interest Expenses. These analyses are new due to ROE prediction based on Du Pont’s five-factor analysis. This type of analysis shows that banks in RA tend either to increase retained earnings or share capital. But in our case, the first statement is true, and this is the proof that the RA banking system is increasing its financial stability.

Conclusions

The analysis in the Results stated that DuPont’s factors do impact the banking system’s profitability in the Republic of Armenia. AT and IB are the factors that have the most impact on ROE. Moreover, the banking system’s profitability has the potential to rise in the next two years if ROS and IB are managed effectively.

From 2014 to 2024, the Republic of Armenia underwent significant changes in the banking system. The latter can be divided into two main directions. The first one is related to changes in legislation, and the second one to changes in internal banking factors. The Republic of Armenia has all the potential to be an emerging country. The GDP, GDP per capita, constant regulated inflation, rising economic growth and growing ratio of Assets to GDP show that conditions in the banking system are improving from year to year. This was due to an increase in the minimum capital requirement for banks, leading to a reduction in the number of banks and an increase in

market concentration. Also, the threshold of total capital of banks was set to be AMD 30 billion since January 1, 2017. In 2015–2016 and in 2020, changes and supplements to the RA Law “On Guaranteeing Remuneration of Bank Deposits of Individuals” introduced new stipulations and limits to guaranteed deposits. In 2022, the transparency of the banking system has increased due to an important addition in legislation: the introduction of a new Law on “About non-cash transactions”. All these changes indicate that there is great potential for the population to trust the banking system. Though the rising quantity of bank clients adds supplementary riskiness, on the contrary, the appropriate management raises ROE.

In the case of internal banking indicators, AT and IB impact ROE the most. It means that if the RA banking system expects a rise in ROE, it should not only increase its assets but also allocate them in a way that can generate more income (especially Non-Interest Income) and also invest in such products that can generate interest income. The latter can be performed by revival of the securities market, especially by legislation changes that can enable banks to invest in securities. This can be through the distribution of allocated means in different sectors of an economy: green markets, education, industry and others. The legislation may be changed in a way that banks have privileges for investing in the securities market (for example, additions to tax legislation).

The results of the research can be valuable for ROE prediction for the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia. The extent of impact can be a substantial value for changing the strategy of banking system development in the future, considering unpredictable challenges. The coefficients of AT and IB can be a good base to justify the appropriate changes of ROE in the future.

In our further research, we are going to analyse how AT and IB can be changed optimally so that ROE will generate more effectiveness.

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THE ROLE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VARDAN KALANTARYAN

International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences
Department of Economics and Management, applicant

vardan.kalantaryan@edu.isec.am

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Abstract

In a modern economy, investment activity is one of the main factors of economic development, structural changes and increased competitiveness. A significant part of the countries of the world strive to attract and encourage foreign investments to strengthen productive capacities and sustainable economic development. And for a foreign direct investor, the primary motive for investment is the establishment of long-term relations with the host enterprise, provided that it has a significant influence on its management, as well as increasing profits, reducing taxes, diversifying risks, etc. Currently, the main subjects of foreign direct investment in the global market are international companies and financial groups.

However, in reality, foreign direct investment alone cannot guarantee the prosperity of the national economy. The latter, as a development tool, has both its advantages and disadvantages, and in the host country, they contribute to sustainable economic growth only if certain conditions are met. In this regard, the government of the host country is responsible for establishing conditions for foreign direct investment that will contribute to the long-term economic growth of that country, and not only to ensuring the profits of foreign investors. Therefore, the impact of foreign direct investment on the host country depends on many factors, such as the method of entering the market, the sources of financing for direct investment, the latter's impact on the activities of companies operating in the host country, etc.

On the other hand, regardless of the volume of foreign investment, it can also be completely useless and lead to the ruthless waste of the country's natural resources, as well as the population's dependence on the outside world for many years. Only with a balanced and considered approach to the joint interests of investors and the host country can it be ensured that foreign investments are effectively attracted and utilised for the benefit of the country's economic prosperity and the improvement of the population's living standards.

Keywords: Foreign direct investment, digital economy, enterprise.

ՕՏԱՐԵՐԿՐՅԱ ՆԵՐԴՐՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ԴԵՐԸ ԵՐԿՐԻ ՏՆՏԵՍՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԶԱՐԳԱՅՄԱՆ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏՈՒՄ

ՎԱՐԴԱՆ ՔԱԼԱՆԹԱՐՅԱՆ

ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գլխավորական միջազգային կենտրոնի
տնտեսագիտության և կառավարման ամբիոնի հայցորդ
vardan.kalantaryan@edu.isec.am

Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից տնտեսությունում ներդրումային գործունեությունը տնտեսական զարգացման, կառուցվածքային փոփոխությունների իրականացման և մրցակցության աճի հիմնական գործոններից մեկն է: Աշխարհի երկրների զգալի մասը ձգտում է ներգրավել և խրախուսել օտարերկրյա ներդրումները՝ արտադրողական կարողությունների ամրապնդման և տնտեսության կայուն զարգացման նպատակով: Իսկ օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրողի համար ներդրման հիմնական շարժառիթը ներդրում ընդունող ձեռնարկության հետ երկարաժամկետ հարաբերությունների հաստատումն է՝ վերջինիս կառավարման վրա նշանակալի ազդեցություն ունենալու պայմանով, ինչպես նաև շահույթի մեծացումը, հարկերի կրճատումը, ռիսկերի դիվերսիֆիկացումը և այլն: Ներկայումս համաշխարհային շուկայում օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրումների հիմնական սուբյեկտները միջազգային ընկերություններն ու ֆինանսական խմբերն են:

Սակայն, իրականում, միայն օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրումներն չեն կարող երաշխավորել ազգային տնտեսության բարգավաճումը: Վերջիններս, որպես զարգացման գործիք, ունեն ինչպես իրենց առավելությունները, այնպես էլ թերությունները, ընդունող երկրում դրանք նպաստում են տնտեսական կայուն աճին միայն որոշակի պայմանների ապահովման պարագայում: Այս առումով՝ ընդունող երկրի կառավարությունը պատասխանատու է օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրումների համար սահմանել այնպիսի պայմաններ, որոնք կնպաստեն այդ երկրում երկարաժամկետ տնտեսական աճին, այլ ոչ միայն օտարերկրյա ներդրողների շահույթի ապահովմանը: Հետևաբար, օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրումների ազդեցությունն ընդունող երկրի վրա կախված է բազմաթիվ գործոններից, ինչպիսիք են՝ շուկա մուտք գործելու եղանակը, ուղղակի ներդրումների ֆինանսավորման աղբյուրները, վերջիններիս ազդեցությունն ընդունող երկրում գործող ընկերությունների գործունեության վրա և այլն:

Սյուս կողմից, անկախ օտարերկրյա ներդրումների ծավալից, վեր-

ջիններս կարող են նաև լիովին անօգուտ լինել և, հանգեցնել երկրի բնական ռեսուրսների անխնա վատնման և երկար տարիներով ազգաբնակչությանը արտաքին աշխարհից կախվածության: Միայն ներդրողների և ընդունող երկրի համատեղ շահերի հավասարակշռված և կշռադատված մոտեցմամբ է հնարավոր երաշխավորել օտարերկրյա ներդրումների արդյունավետ ներգրավումն ու օգտագործումը ի շահ երկրի տնտեսության բարգավաճման և ազգաբնակչության կենսամակարդակի բարձրացման:

Բանալի բաներ՝ օտարերկրյա ուղղակի ներդրումներ, թվային տնտեսություն, ձեռնարկություն:

Introduction

From the point of view of ensuring the development of the economy and the expanded reproduction process, ensuring stable flows of investments from various sources is of vital importance for any country. A significant part of the countries in the world strive to attract and encourage foreign investments to strengthen productive capacities and develop the economy sustainably. In this regard, the latter are improving national regulations in the field of foreign investment, making industrial policy more targeted in strategic sectors of the economy, as well as establishing clear and detailed procedures for attracting and selecting companies that implement foreign investments. Of course, in some cases, there are risks that some of the listed measures are taken with protectionist goals in mind for the national economy (Blonigen et al., 2007).

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is investment made by non-resident investors in enterprises in a given foreign country, and the reasons for making foreign direct investment are diverse.

FDI implies that the investor exerts a significant degree of influence on the management of the enterprise resident in the other economy. Such investment involves both the initial transaction between the two entities and all subsequent transactions between them and among foreign affiliates, both incorporated and unincorporated. Individuals as well as business entities may undertake FDI. Flows of FDI comprise capital provided (either directly or through other related enterprises) by a foreign direct investor to an enterprise, or capital received from an investing enterprise by a foreign direct investor.

The share of foreign direct investment in the economy is growing. If in the 1970s it was only 6%, then in the 1990s about 20–25% of the total investment flow fell on foreign direct investment (UNCTAD, 1999).

The specific reasons for the export and import of foreign capital are largely the same, despite the differences in their relative roles.

The main impetus for the intensive development of the investment process for business is the need to increase their competitiveness at the international level by expanding operations in new markets, rationalizing production, reducing costs, diversifying risks, and ensuring access to resources and strategic assets in the economies of different countries.

The objectives of direct investment differ from the objectives of portfolio investment, in which investors usually do not seek to influence the management of the enterprise, but rather pursue profit-making and risk diversification.

Foreign direct investment has several advantages for the host country compared to portfolio investment. First, it activates the private sector. Host companies receive a new spur for their activities and additional resources, which, due to the multiplier effect, are spread to their domestic partners. Second, through FDI, it is sometimes easier to enter new markets. Host companies get the opportunity to use the capabilities of the investing company in the distribution of products. Third, it facilitates access to new technologies and management methods. The investing company is typically interested in modernising production and developing enterprise management technologies. When receiving direct investment, the probability of reinvesting profits within the country is higher. Conversely, when making a portfolio investment, the probability of exporting profits to the home country is higher. Direct investment relations, by their nature, can lead to long-term, stable financing and technology transfer, thereby increasing corporate output and returns over time. Portfolio investors do not seek to establish long-term relationships, and the main factor influencing the decision to buy or sell securities is their profitability.

Theory and Methodology

The existence of different theories in the field of foreign direct investment research has led to varying views on the role of foreign direct investment in economic development.

Investment activity is a set of measures taken by legal entities, individuals or the state to implement investments aimed at increasing capital, achieving profit or other positive results (Zakharova, 2015).

According to the definition formulated by the EBRD, foreign direct investment is a type of international investment that is made by a foreign resident (direct investor) based on long-term interest in the capital of an enterprise resident in a country other than the country of the direct investor (enterprise receiving direct investment or recipient)(OECD,2008).

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) methodology, foreign direct investment can be considered as investments that involve the acquisition

of at least 10% of the authorized capital of a commercial organization in the territory of the host state and allow the investor (or its representative) to have a strategic influence on the management of that organization, including partial or full control over them(IMF,2004).

However, in practice, a 10% share in the authorised capital of the recipient organisation is often still insufficient to establish effective control over the company's management or to ensure the long-term interests of the investor. Therefore, direct investments should generally be significant enough and long-term enough to allow the foreign investor to establish effective control over the management of the recipient company and to ensure long-term interests in the successful operation and development of the latter. At the same time, the long-term nature of capital investments within the framework of foreign direct investments limits the opportunities for investors to exit the market quickly and thereby increases the interest of host countries in FDI.

FDI has three components: equity capital, reinvested earnings and intra-company loans.

- Equity capital is the foreign direct investor's purchase of shares of an enterprise in a country other than its own.
- Reinvested earnings comprise the direct investor's share (in proportion to direct equity participation) of earnings not distributed as dividends by affiliates, or earnings not remitted to the direct investor. Such retained profits by affiliates are reinvested.
- Intra-company loans or intra-company debt transactions refer to short- or long-term borrowing and lending of funds between direct investors (parent enterprises) and affiliate enterprises (UNCTAD,2007).

In general, horizontal and vertical forms of FDI are distinguished. Horizontal investment involves the organisation of production in another country of almost the same goods and services as those produced in the home country. For example, if a soft drink company opens a new factory abroad, this is a horizontal investment. Horizontal investment is usually accompanied by expansion by the parent company and large-scale FDI investments in the host country's economy. Horizontal foreign direct investment is preferred by the organisation when selling goods to foreign markets is too expensive due to transportation costs and trade barriers (Prostenko, 2003).

Vertical FDI refers to international companies that divide the production process along geographical lines. They are called vertical, because international corporations divide the production chain vertically, controlling some stages of production abroad. The peculiarity of such a division is that the production process includes many stages of production that require the availability of different input materials. If the prices of these components differ by country,

then it will be beneficial for the company to divide the production chain by those countries.

In the case of vertical reverse foreign direct investment, an enterprise is established abroad by the investing company as its own supplier of production factors, providing the parent company with the necessary components. Primary investments are directed to foreign branches of transnational corporations that receive the necessary components for their own production from the parent company and, thus, stand behind the parent company in the production chain. A single transnational corporation often employs both types of investments, which is explained by the varying costs of the necessary components in different countries (Aizenman & Marion, 2003).

Research Methods

Research methods applied within the investigation framework of the article include universal scientific methods such as dialectical, systematic, comparative analysis, historical-logical, structural-functional, statistical, and comparative methods.

Results

In 2024, global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows totalled \$1.4 trillion, a 1% increase compared to 2023. However, this growth is less impressive when considering the influence of large transactions through European conduit economies, which often serve as transfer points for investments. Excluding these flows, FDI actually fell by 9% (UNCTAD, 2025). Overall, the share of FDI in global investments is being influenced by a complex interplay of international and regional factors, with some areas experiencing growth while others are contracting. High borrowing costs and exchange rate volatility continue to deter long-term infrastructure investment, especially in the least developed countries. And multinationals are restructuring supply chains towards South-East Asia, Eastern Europe and Central America – a shift that began during the pandemic and is accelerating. FDI to developed economies fell by 22%. Europe was hit hardest, with inflows down 58% in 2024. FDI fell in more than half of EU countries, with sharp declines in Germany (–89%), Spain (–39%), Italy (–24%) and France (–20%). North America saw a 23% rise, driven by a wave of semiconductor megaprojects in the United States, where FDI rose 20%. Asia remained the top recipient region, despite a 3% overall decline and a 29% drop in flows to China. South-East Asia stood out, with ASEAN countries up 10%, reaching a record \$225 billion in FDI. India saw strong momentum in greenfield investment, even as total inflows dipped slightly (UNCTAD, 2025). FDI flows in G20 non-OECD economies dropped by 30%. China saw a continued decline for the third consecutive year and received less FDI than India and Indonesia (with Indonesia being the only G20 non-OECD economy to report

an increase in FDI inflows) (UNCTAD,2025).

The United States remained the top destination for FDI inflows worldwide in 2024 (USD 308 billion), followed by Luxembourg (USD 106 billion) and Canada (USD 64 billion). FDI outflows from the OECD area increased by 9%, but fell by 14% when excluding large fluctuations from the European countries. The United States experienced the largest drop in FDI outflows in the OECD, with foreign affiliates extending loans to their US parents. In contrast, Japan reported higher FDI outflows, mostly in the form of equity flows. In the EU area, FDI outflows almost tripled compared to 2023. However, when excluding volatile outflows from selected EU countries, they declined by 16%. The largest decreases within the EU were observed in France and Germany, due to movements in intra-company loans. FDI outflows from G20 non-OECD economies dropped by 25% in 2024. The most significant declines were recorded in China and, to a lesser extent the Russian Federation, likely reflecting reduced new investment activity and, in the case of China, changes in intra-company loans.⁶ Brazil also reported lower FDI outflows, as foreign affiliates increased lending to their Brazilian parents. In 2024, the United States (USD 299 billion), Japan (USD 204 billion) and China (172 billion) were the primary sources of FDI outflows worldwide (UNCTAD, 2025).

The development of the digital economy currently has a significant impact on global investment flows. FDI flows mainly to countries with a high level of scientific and technological progress and highly qualified specialists. The volume of FDI in the digital economy has amounted to about \$122 billion annually in recent years. Between 2021 and 2023, the sector received 8.3% of global FDI on average – up from 5.5% between 2012 and 2014. For developing economies, average annual FDI flows to the digital economy nearly doubled over the same period. Globally, the growth has been driven by expanding digital services, rising demand for software solutions and emerging tech talent and start-up ecosystems. Investment in the digital economy brings clear benefits, including better infrastructure, skilled jobs, technology transfer, and more dynamic innovation ecosystems. But many low-income countries remain locked out. Infrastructure gaps, high investment risks and weak regulatory frameworks continue to deter capital.

As for FDI regulation, in 2024, investment policymaking was pulled in two directions: the need to attract capital, and the pressure to protect national interests. Roughly 78% of new measures were labelled as favourable to investors – especially in developing countries (89%). Incentives are now the leading tool governments use to attract and steer capital where they want it. These include fiscal incentives, such as tax breaks, and financial incentives, such as grants and subsidies (UNCTAD, 2025).

In 2024, they accounted for 45% of all new measures favourable to

investors – most notably in clean energy and industrial sectors. Meanwhile, restrictions tightened in strategic sectors – especially in developed economies. More than 40% of all restrictive measures in 2024 concerned screening mechanisms, which aimed to monitor foreign investment in sensitive sectors, such as high-tech and critical minerals.

More than 40% of all restrictive measures in 2024 concerned screening mechanisms, which aimed to monitor foreign investment in sensitive sectors, such as high-tech and critical minerals. The number of countries with FDI screening regimes for national security has more than doubled to 46 since 2015.

Let us consider the main macroeconomic factors influencing FDI flows, especially in the case of developing countries:

- Market capacity and growth prospects of the host country. Market capacity is one of the most frequently used variables in studies to determine the factors related to the attraction of foreign direct investment. The true hypothesis of a positive relationship between FDI and market size stems from the experience of many investment-receiving countries; however, there are also researchers who argue that the market capacity of the host country and its growth rate are not the main factors in attracting foreign direct investment.

- The macroeconomic stability of the host country, as well as the effectiveness of the legal and regulatory processes in the investment sector, are important factors influencing investors' decisions.

- International trade relations. FDI usually follows trade movements at both the micro and macro levels. For example, if a company currently has a particular share of the export market, it will likely make foreign direct investment in the future. In fact, the higher fixed costs associated with a production facility located abroad (compared to exports) are compensated by lower variable costs if it is possible to ensure appropriate economies of scale. In addition, American researchers have found a significant relationship between trade between the United States and several developing countries, as well as US direct investment in these countries. In the initial stage, companies export their products to foreign markets. However, when exports reach a critical level, or in cases where they are threatened by tariff or non-tariff barriers, the exporter must launch production abroad, making appropriate direct investments in the country where the latter's products are mainly exported. Therefore, the first step is export, followed by foreign direct investment. Trade relations allow investors to gain more knowledge not only about the demand for their products in partner countries, but also to better understand the market factors of production, which are necessary for making decisions about direct investment. At the same time, geopolitical fragmentation and tensions in trade relations negatively affect investor confidence and the prospects for

foreign direct investment.

- **Import substitution.** The fact that FDI follows international trade is also reinforced by the import substitution policy adopted by a section of developing countries. The latter is aimed at protecting local markets and producers from the influx of cheap foreign goods. In this case, foreign companies will have to invest in establishing production in a given country (depending on the size and growth prospects of that economy) to maintain that market. Sometimes, the prospect of an import substitution policy can encourage foreign suppliers to organise local production, rather than import into a given country. In fact, restrictions on import quotas, tariffs and import duties are also overcome in this way.

- **Exchange rate.** The effect of the exchange rate is another factor that can affect the relationship between trade and FDI. In the theory of currency zones of foreign direct investment, R. Aliber argues that companies in countries with stronger currencies can borrow at lower interest rates than companies in countries with weaker currencies. As a result, FDI moves from the former to the latter, depending on the share of capital in value added and the ratio of the currencies of the two countries. Experimental studies have been conducted to prove the relationship between FDI and exchange rate changes in host countries. According to some of them, the depreciation of the national currency stimulates the inflow of FDI and prevents its outflow. However, some other researchers argue that depreciation can have the opposite effect on FDI (Scaperlanda, 1974)⁵.

- **Labor and logistics costs.** Foreign direct investment is also affected by the level of production costs in both the home country and potential host countries, which is influenced by the exchange rate of the currencies in force. However, history shows that Japanese direct investment in developing countries has been dependent on the labor costs of those countries, while investments from the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom have not fully followed this pattern. In addition, the growth of robotic production processes tends to reduce the role of unskilled labour. FDI, associated with the establishment of production in another country, contributes to a significant reduction in logistics costs, which makes it more profitable to produce these goods in another country.

- **Access to natural resources.** Foreign direct investment provides access to the natural resources of the host country on relatively affordable terms, which contributes to a decrease in the cost of production and an increase in the competitiveness of goods.

5 Scaperlanda, Anthony E., Trends, Composition and Determinants of United States Direct Investment in Canada. US Department of Commerce, Office of Foreign Direct Investments, Washington 1974

Although from the investor's point of view, there are clear motives for foreign direct investment, namely access to new markets and the availability of cheap factors of production, many third-world countries, which have quite attractive and promising markets and available resources, do not often represent much interest for foreign investors. In this case, the economic factors related to the location of foreign direct investment can be ignored if the host country is in a politically and economically unstable state. In particular, the economies of many developing countries were hit hard by the global financial and economic crises of 2008 and 2014, and as a result, lost their interest in foreign capital. Moreover, the high level of public debt in many developing countries also repels foreign investment, since in this case the real income from the latter can significantly decrease as a result of high taxes and market stagnation. Such situations can result in partial or complete loss of profit for foreign investors, as well as restrictions on the transfer of profits or capital.

Conclusion

Direct investment as a development tool has both its advantages and disadvantages, and in the host country, it contributes to economic growth only if certain conditions are met. In this regard, the government of the host country is responsible for ensuring such conditions for foreign direct investment that will contribute to long-term economic growth in that country, and not only for providing the profits of foreign investors. Therefore, the impact of foreign direct investment on the host country depends on many factors, such as the method of entering the market, the sources of financing for direct investment, the impact of the latter on the activities of companies operating in the host country, etc.

The positive effects of foreign investment include:

- growth in the volume of real capital investments, acceleration of economic development rates and improvement of the country's balance of payments,
- attraction of foreign innovative technologies, management experience and research results,
- opportunities to use local mineral resources,
- growth in employment, labor qualification and productivity,
- expansion of the product range,
- opportunities to modernize existing infrastructure,
- contributions to the country's state budget increase in tax revenues,
- increase in competition and decrease in the level of market monopolisation.

The most fundamental risks associated with attracting foreign direct

investment are related to the impact of FDI on domestic competition. FDI, particularly in the form of mergers and acquisitions, negatively affects the level of competition in the domestic market of a given country. They can lead to restrictions on trade activities and the abuse of economic opportunities. Thus, large transnational corporations can harm the host country's economy by "choking out" local enterprises, utilising their finances, technology, international connections, advertising skills, and other supporting services to gain a dominant market position and drive small and medium-sized enterprises out of the market.

Foreign investment can also lead to a slowdown in technological development, as resources are directed only to the development of technologies related to the attraction of FDI. FDI can also have a negative impact on the country's balance of payments. Trade deficits can be a real obstacle for the economies of developing countries in the event that investors import more than they export. In this case, FDI can worsen the country's trade position. Inappropriate regulation of relations related to FDI can lead to instability associated with capital flows. Investments in physical assets are fixed, while the income received from them is variable. Therefore, these incomes can also be reinvested outside the country, and in many cases, they significantly exceed the amount of the initial investment over time.

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THE CONCEPTUAL ASSESSMENT AND DOCUMENTATION OF SECURITY INTERESTS

BAGRAT BAGRATYAN

National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia,
Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law, PhD Student

bsbagratyan@gmail.com

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Abstract

In the contemporary context, Armenia's national interests can be understood as a balanced integration of the interests of the Republic of Armenia's citizens, Armenians residing in the homeland, and the wider Armenian diaspora. It is through the consolidation of these interests within the emerging competitive environment that the realisation of national objectives and the safeguarding of values—redefined as conscious societal imperatives—are effectively pursued.

The main guarantee of an effective policy in the realisation of national interests is maintaining a balance between one's own capabilities, ambitions, and objective realities, which may not fully satisfy a particular interest, serving only its vital and realistic part. The core of guaranteed satisfaction of vital national interests is a realistic assessment of the collective potential of state power and setting 'realistic goals' for it.

When assessing national interests at the strategic level, particular emphasis is placed on security policy objectives, which must stem from a clear and precise articulation of interests. Methodologically, the formulation of a national security strategy involves distinguishing between two categories of desired outcomes: general (strategic and political) objectives and specific (concrete) objectives. The first category is of particular significance, as it reflects the priorities defined by the state's political leadership and establishes the overarching direction of the strategy. Accordingly, strategic objectives must be both logically interconnected and realistically attainable, since the national security strategy serves as the primary framework through which the existing security environment is assessed and the national security policy system is aligned.

Keywords: Nation, state, security, interest, goal, priority, concept, strategy, policy, doctrine.

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իրավունքի ինստիտուտի հայցորդ

bsbagratyan@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից աշխարհում Հայաստանի ազգային շահերը ՀՀ քաղաքացիների, հայրենաբնակ հայության և հայկական համայնքների շահերի հավասարակշռված հանրագումարն է, որի ձևավորման միջոցով մրցակցային նոր միջավայրում լուծվում են գիտակցված պահանջմունքների վերածված ազգային նպատակների հետապնդման և արժեքների պաշտպանության խնդիրները:

Ազգային շահի իրացման ժամանակ արդյունավետ քաղաքականության հիմնական գրավականն է սեփական ներուժի, հավակնությունների, օբյեկտիվ իրողությունների միջև հավասարակշռության պահպանումը, որը կարող է և լիովին չբավարարել կոնկրետ շահը՝ սպասարկելով միայն շահի կենսական և իրատեսական մասնաբաժինը: Իսկ ազգային շահի կենսական տեսակների երաշխավորված բավարարման առանցքը պետության հզորության հավաքական ներուժի իրատեսական գնահատականն է և նրա առջև «իրական նպատակների» առաջադրումը:

Ռազմավարական մակարդակում ազգային շահերի գնահատման գործընթացում հատուկ ուշադրության են արժանի նաև շահերի հստակ ու ճշգրիտ որոշման արդյունքում ակնկալվող անվտանգային քաղաքականության նպատակները: Տեսամեթոդական առումով ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարության մշակման ընթացքում որպես վերջնանպատակներ (desired ends) կարևորվում են երկու խմբեր՝ ընդհանուր (ռազմավարական, քաղաքական) նպատակներ և հատուկ (կոնկրետացված) նպատակներ: Այս համատեքստում հատկապես կարևորվում են առաջին խումբ նպատակները, քանզի դրանք այն ակնկալվող արդյունքներն են, որոնք սահմանում է պետության քաղաքական վերնախավը և որոնց ձեռքբերմանն է միտված տվյալ ռազմավարությունը: Հետևապես, ռազմավարական նպատակները պետք է լինեն տրամաբանորեն հստակ կերպով շաղկապված և իրատեսական, քանի որ ազգային անվտանգության

ռազմավարությունն այն հիմնական մակարդակն է, որում համադասում է առկա իրավիճակը և ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականության համակարգը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ազգ, պետություն, անվտանգություն, շահ, նպատակ, առաջնահերթություն, հայեցակարգ, ռազմավարություն, քաղաքականություն, դոկտրին:

Introduction

Every national community interacts with universal human interests and goals. In the context of modern globalisation, market economy, and democracy, civilised humanity can develop along an upward trajectory if the diversity of national interests is preserved and a stable system of international guarantees is established for this purpose. This applies to national interests, the significance of which is undeniable and the importance of which is growing.

According to Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), everyone has the right to social and international living conditions in which the rights and freedoms outlined in the Declaration and other fundamental international documents can be fully realised (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Art. 28). These living conditions are, on the one hand, an expression of human and social security and, on the other hand, a system of specific measures and events (infrastructure) that will ensure the safety of human life (Genrikh, 2017). In this regard, security, being a priority for the survival of the state and the individual in the natural and social environment, is one of the fundamental values and national interests.

Each state and society, despite their commonalities, has its fundamental national interests, the challenges to which resistance and their possible neutralisation constitute the core of the general concept of state security. The national security policy is implemented uniformly in response to various threats to national interests.

Theoretical and Methodological Bases

The author of the national interest interpretation, H. Morgenthau, who is widely read in professional literature, considers the national interest solely as an objective requirement of the state (ensuring the territory, physical security of the population, minimum conditions for economic development), which, regardless of the nature of the State and political regime, are common to all States. Morgenthau essentially equates national interests with the vital interests of each state's survival and notes that the concept of national interest, defined

through power, is an objective criterion by which the goals of a state cannot go beyond its resource capabilities, since the resources to achieve «national goals» are limited. Therefore, a «good statesman» should make decisions that, while preserving and developing the power of the state, do not endanger its security (Morgenthau, 1948, p. 5).

The reasons for disagreement over the professional definition of national interest are mainly related to the diversity of political views on national fundamental values. A number of researchers use national interest as a synonym for public interest, seeing it as the sum of private interests within society. K. Beard, in his work «The idea of national interest», published in 1930, commenting on the national interest, distinguishes it from public interest. The latter, in his opinion, refers to «internal politics of nations» (Beard, 1934, p. 135).

We believe that in the context of assessing interests in political processes, acts of political bargaining and trading political decisions, which are differentially manifested in democratic and non-democratic countries, are of paramount importance. In practice, part of the national interest is defined as a result of competition between political actors. It is clarified by separating the needs of the nation concerned from those of the state.

The elaboration of norms and ‘rules of the game’ that regulate the activities of interest groups is crucial in conditions of free political competition. This view is shared by V. Lipman, who believes that ‘an important prerequisite for the functioning of private interests is the existence of appropriate regulatory norms’ (Lipmann, 1922, p. 104–106), which depends on the balance of political forces in the state and the principles of governance within the political system.

The development and competitiveness of civilisations and individual states are primarily determined by the ideological principles that guide them. Comparative analysis shows that in today’s world, the most effective ideological concepts are those in which liberal, socialist and nationalist approaches are harmoniously combined and complement each other. Moreover, while the first two are considered universal and of universal significance, the nationalist component is a unique category: it expresses the security and military-political capabilities of a given nation, its socio-economic capabilities and the collective intellectual and spiritual-cultural potential underlying them.

National interest as a fundamental issue of political science has been the focus of attention for centuries. However, a theoretically justified national interest was obtained in the works of representatives of the American school of

political realism: C. Beard, E. Carra, G. Morgenthau, A. Walla Fursi, K. Thomson, S. Hoffman, J. Kenna, R. Strauss-Huppé, and later – G. Kissinger, Z. Brzezinsky and «founder» of modern neo-realism K. Waltz, whose theoretical conclusions include ideological approaches of antiquity, the Middle Ages and New Times.

It is also important to note that, in the era of modern, multi-layered development, conflicts of a civilizational nature, as well as the universalisation and globalisation of problems, contain elements of spiritual and cultural confrontation and expansion. In such processes, those nations and countries that act more actively and systematically benefit, while the security and normal development of those that take a passive position are seriously challenged. It follows that resources with spiritual, cultural and other civilisational characteristics are of strategic importance and form part of such a fundamental value as national security.

At the same time, the use of civilisational resources in the service of national interests presupposes particular prerequisites. The priority is the nature and level of civilisation of such resources. Of course, every nation has its own, sometimes unique, cultural heritage, but in the context of modern global processes, it is not always a competitive advantage. Another necessary condition is the ability to transform and utilise theoretically competitive civilizational potential into an effective strategic resource in the political and social spheres, which is primarily reflected in the country's basic security policy documents (strategies, concepts, doctrines, sectoral development programmes, etc.).

The leading actors of national security policy, in forming and developing a set of national interests and making relevant domestic and foreign policy decisions based on them, also take into account geographical, economic, political, cultural and other objective factors (domestic political interests, political platforms of various parties, movements, groups, organisations, etc.). At the same time, the possible reaction of the public and experts to decisions taken by heads of state and the government system is constantly taken into account.

State policy based on national interests carries the global task of ensuring the security and development of the state and society in a more precise manner. At this level, it is essential not only to assess these interests reasonably and clearly, but also to have and accumulate sufficient resources to enable the realisation of national interests.

The state, as the main subject of national interest, is characterised by a set of structural elements and characteristics, the structure and degree of

development of which determine the level of realisation of national interests and the extent to which they are realised. In our opinion, from the perspective of the significance of the potential of national interests, the 'legitimate' interests and 'illegitimate' ambitions of the state are, in essence, nothing more than a question of the balance of power in practical politics.

The actions of state bodies in implementing the concept of national interests at the societal level are objectively assessed by various public circles, which, in turn, lead to certain refinements and increase the effectiveness of their functioning. Consequently, discussing issues related to the assessment of national interests contributes to the implementation of more targeted policies by state decision-makers.

When developing an effective national interest policy, policymakers must answer a number of key questions that influence the specifics of selecting and formulating a particular type of national interest. A similar set of questions can be summarised as follows: how will current internal and external events affect the power of the state; will the opposing forces be able to damage the vital interests of the state; does the state have sufficient authority to protect its vital interests; which interests are essential and which are secondary, how much of its energy potential the state is prepared to use to defend its interests, etc.

In addition, government policy aimed at assessing national interests and the actions arising from them is subject to the constant or variable influence of several objective and subjective factors that determine the effectiveness of government policy oriented towards national interests (Goldstein Martin, 1975, pp. 157–158). These factors include friendly external relations between states, the state's involvement in geopolitical and regional processes, the presence or absence of vital natural resources, the volume of trade in domestic and foreign markets, and imports of vital goods, among others.

Among the factors influencing the realisation of national interests, the criteria of legitimacy and acceptability of the realisation of national interests in the context of international relations are highlighted, which are manifested in three main approaches:

- To what extent do the demands of the state in question stem from its actual national interests, i.e. to what extent could the independence and capacity to act of the state that is the object of these interests be jeopardised if these demands are not met?
- Are the national interests of the state in question such that they do not threaten the interests of independence and sovereignty of other states

or groups of states?

– Do the national interests of the state in question threaten or disrupt the international balance of power? (David, 1988, pp. 64–66).

Thus, national interests form the basis for shaping the foreign and domestic policies of every state. Recognising the key role of national interests in state policy, we note that they are a unique characteristic of state policy and a criterion for evaluation, and that they can change the course of state policy under the influence of various factors. In practice, there are several alternative concepts of national interests in any state, but the idea adopted by the ruling power always prevails.

Formation of the national psyche is a rather complex process, influenced by different spheres of life of the nation and historical events that determine the degree of expression of one or another value characteristic. According to ethnopsychologist A. Nalchadjyan, throughout a nation's historical development, events such as revolutions, wars, and large-scale reforms occur, which subsequently acquire special significance, determining the nature and course of political and socio-economic processes (Nalchadjyan, A. 2001). At the intra-societal level, the process of defining national interests is often accompanied by conflict and sharp clashes of positions, as the adoption of any concept of national interests directly affects the state's international role and authority.

We should also emphasise that the existence of different concepts of national interest is because national interest in this context is viewed as a system of the most favourable conditions for the development of the nation, and therefore cannot be unequivocally understood and accepted by all segments of the population. It is also necessary to take into account that international conditions often predetermine the nature and criteria for the effectiveness of the accepted concept of national interest. Therefore, the inconsistency of ideas about national interest with the requirements of political reality inevitably makes state policy unpromising.

The above-mentioned is of particular importance for countries such as Armenia, which face the challenge of developing state policies based on security and national interests. The first stage of Armenian perception of national interests dates back to medieval religious and ecclesiastical approaches, according to which, in the absence of an independent Armenian state, national interests were represented as the interests of the religious community headed by the Armenian Church, including a range of national-ecclesiastical formulations. The notions of national interests became more pronounced in

the 18th century, when Armenian political thought embraced the ideas of Israil Oru, Hovsep Emin, Movses Bagramyan, and Shaamir Shaamiryan, who shaped the next stage of understanding national interests. During this period, the Armenian understanding of national interests essentially focused on liberating the Armenian nation from Turkish–Persian rule and gaining autonomy, as well as on the goal of building a sovereign state, which “in the case of I. Oru and G. Emin were linked to the implementation of political and diplomatic programmes; in the case of M. Bagramyan, it was associated with the revival of the Armenian nation’s potential, and in the case of Sh. Shahamiryan, it was associated with the Armenian–Russian alliance and the existence of a constitution” (Manucharyan, 2002).

The establishment of the First Armenian Republic marked a pivotal period in Armenia’s approach to national interests. In the new independent republic, the perception of national interest in the context of war, economic crisis and social catastrophe was equated with ensuring statehood and the vital interests of the nation. Following the Sovietization of Armenia, the perception of national interests underwent significant changes, particularly in relation to the specific role and legal and practical status of the Armenian SSR within the Soviet Union. Deprived of the basic characteristics of a sovereign state and the ability to pursue an independent state policy, the Soviet regime regarded a number of provisions arising from the political consciousness of the Armenian nation and conditioned by the Armenian perception of national interests as false, declaring them illegal and ‘nationalist’.

With the attainment of independence in 1991, Armenia set the objective of establishing itself as a democratic and liberal state. However, a distinctive feature of the formation of the Armenian political system is that three centres of interest shaped it: the local needs of Armenian society, the philosophy of the Karabakh conflict, and the factor of the Armenian diaspora. These were the factors that determined the principles of development of the Armenian political system. In fact, all structurally marked elements were interrelated links of the national integration political system. However, from a formal point of view, the exclusive right to determine the national interests of the RA belongs to the citizens of the RA and the state authorities expressing their sovereign political will. Nevertheless, the interrelationships between the individual links in the national political system predetermined the general nature of the system’s development, conditioning the current and future proportionate or disproportionate interaction of all three directions.

The presented developments make it possible to assess the current

situation in the Republic of Armenia, bearing in mind that the concepts of national interest acquire a unique meaning here due to a number of characteristics of the Armenian state: the geographical location of the Republic of Armenia, the significant influence of ethnic unity and intra-ethnic ties on state policy, the impact of powerful national political forces outside the Republic of Armenia, and the enduring historical perceptions of national interest formed in the diaspora in the Armenian ethnic consciousness, the existence of political problems of regional communication, etc. Experts rightly point out that the current National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia (2020) uses the term ‘fundamental’ in defining national interests, which calls into question the approaches to classification accepted in theory (in particular, national interests are classified as vital, important and less important). As for interests, the strategy does not specify the level of interest to which the values presented can be attributed. In addition, fundamental interests are often presented as universal human values and simple truths, such as human rights, peace, and democracy (Kocharyan & Grigoryan, 2021).

Results

It was noted that the bearers of the national interests of the Republic of Armenia are the Republic of Armenia, its citizens, the Armenians living in their homeland, and the Armenian communities of the diaspora. They balance their interests based on a legal, political and value scale derived from their own obligations to the Armenian state, which includes the spatial and value dimensions of national interest. The spatial dimension ensures the primacy of national security, i.e. the survival of the state, the Armenians living in their homeland, and the diaspora communities. In contrast, the value dimension represents a broad perspective on the value perception of national interests, through which national security priorities are allocated among specific areas of national interest.

The analysis of practice documents the fact that in the provisions of the strategic level of national security policy (in the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia, and later also in sectoral security concepts), national interests are presented with minimal assessments, and therefore, the goals and programme developments for their implementation are not fully expressed. In particular, in Section 3 of the 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia, the security interests of the Republic of Armenia are presented in only four sub-clauses, without the development of regulatory acts of the next level (National Security Strategy of Armenia). This approach gives these interests a somewhat declarative character, which consequently has a negative

impact on the overall national and sectoral feasibility of interests. In this regard, the 2007 Security Strategy examined national interests in greater detail, but as such, they were not put forward and were not divided into the consolidation of national interests. In other words, the entire first section of the strategy (divided in sufficient detail into equal subsections) assesses the fundamental values of Armenia's national security, the factors and actions that ensure security, and the threats to it (Decree of the President of Armenia on approving the national security strategy, 2007).

Conclusion

Summarising the presented evaluations of strategic issues of the national security policy of the Republic of Armenia, it is essential to emphasise that the role of national interests in shaping national security policy and strategic security documents is an area of value differences, which contributes to the prediction and disclosure of the essence of security as a multifaceted social phenomenon with systemic, normative, structural and functional properties. As the primary bearer of national interests, the state has the right to use both diplomatic and forceful means to serve these interests, which will allow it to meet the minimum requirements of the state's concept of national interests. However, it is also evident that the use of both diplomatic and forceful means in the pursuit of national interests directly stems from the potential possessed by the state, which is the subject of national interests.

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SMALL STATES IN MODERN INTERNATIONAL MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

MHER SHIRINYAN

National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia,
Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law, PhD Student

shirinyan.m@mail.ru

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Abstract

In modern international relations, states adopt strategies to confront security and other challenges. The strategies they choose, passive, defensive, or active, depend not only on resources but also on the ability of the political elite to correctly assess the international environment and find a balance between security, sovereignty, and development.

Given the disproportionate distribution of power in the field of international relations, small states are often compelled to avoid forceful confrontations and instead utilise diplomatic and multilateral cooperation tools. The international involvement of small states today is predominant, especially within the framework of the UN and other global and regional multilateral platforms, where the majority of member states are small states. These states can combine efforts and act as a collective voice, often promoting global agendas such as the fight against climate change, the goal of sustainable development, the protection of human rights, and the strengthening of peace.

Small states, despite their limitations, can become influential and proactive actors, provided they manage their internal resources wisely and develop a stable and flexible foreign policy. Their strength is not limited to material factors, but is based on strategic orientation, ideological cohesion, effective work with international partners, and institutional cooperation.

In international relations, especially in a multilateral format, the strength of a small state is measured not only by its size but also by its ability to act intelligently, persistently, flexibly, and purposefully. These states can act not only as consumers of security but also as peacemakers, disseminators of international norms, and bearers of joint actions to solve global challenges. Small states rely heavily on multilateral diplomacy, legal mechanisms, and niche diplomacy, which allow them to increase their political weight in international organisations without the resources of force.

Keywords: Small state, superpower, territory, population, sovereignty, economy, international organisation, region, security, multilateral format, foreign relations, cooperation.

ՓՈՔՐ ՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐՆ ԱՐԴԻ ՄԻՋԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԲԱԶՄԱԿՈՂՄ ՀԱՐԱԲԵՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐՈՒՄ

ՄՀԵՐ ՇԻՐԻՆՅԱՆ

ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
փիլիսոփայության, սոցիոլոգիայի և իրավունքի ինստիտուտի հայցորդ
shirinyan.m@mail.ru

Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից միջազգային հարաբերություններում պետությունները որդեգրում են անվտանգային և մյուս մարտահրավերներին դիմակայելու ռազմավարություններ: Նրանց ընտրած ռազմավարությունները՝ պասիվ, պաշտպանողական կամ ակտիվ, կախված են ոչ միայն ռեսուրսներից, այլև քաղաքական վերնախավի կարողությունից՝ ձիշտ գնահատելու միջազգային միջավայրն ու գտնելու հավասարակշռության կետը՝ անվտանգության, ինքնիշխանության և զարգացման միջև:

Միջազգային հարաբերությունների ոլորտում ուժերի անհամաչափ բաշխվածության պայմաններում փոքր պետությունները հաճախ ստիպված են լինում խուսափել ուժային առձակատումներից և կիրառել դիվանագիտական բազմակողմ համագործակցության գործիքներ: Փոքր պետությունների միջազգային ներգրավվածությունն այսօր փաստացի գերակշռող է հատկապես ՄԱԿ-ի և այլ գլոբալ ու տարածաշրջանային բազմակողմ հարթակների շրջանակներում, որտեղ անդամ երկրների մեծ մասը դասվում է փոքր պետությունների շարքը: Այս պետությունները կարողանում են համատեղել ջանքերը և հանդես գալ որպես կոլեկտիվ ձայն՝ հաճախ առաջ մղելով այնպիսի գլոբալ օրակարգեր, ինչպիսիք են կլիմայի փոփոխության դեմ պայքարը, կայուն զարգացման նպատակները, մարդու իրավունքների պաշտպանությունը և խաղաղության ամրապնդումը:

Փոքր պետությունները, չնայած իրենց սահմանափակումներին, կարող են դառնալ ազդեցիկ և նախաձեռնող դերակատարներ՝ պայմանով, որ ունակ են խելամիտ ձևով կառավարել իրենց ներքին ռեսուրսները և ստեղծել կայուն ու ձկուն արտաքին քաղաքականություն: Նրանց ուժը չի սահմանափակվում նյութական գործոններով, այլ հիմնվում է ռազմավարական կողմնորոշման, գաղափարական համախմբվածության, միջազգային գործընկերների հետ արդյունավետ աշխատանքի և ինստիտուցիոնալ համագործակցության վրա:

Հատկապես բազմակողմ ձևաչափում միջազգային հարաբերություններում փոքր պետության ուժը չափվում է ոչ միայն նրա մեծությամբ, այլև խելացի, համառ, ձկուն և նպատակաուղղված գործելու նրա

կարողությամբ: Այս պետությունները կարող են հանդես գալ ոչ միայն որպես անվտանգության սպառողներ, այլ նաև՝ որպես խաղաղարարներ, միջազգային նորմերի տարածողներ և գլոբալ մարտահրավերների լուծման համատեղ գործողությունների կրողներ: Փոքր պետությունները մեծապես ապավինում են բազմակողմ դիվանագիտությանը, իրավական մեխանիզմներին և նիշային (niche) դիվանագիտությանը, որոնք թույլ են տալիս նրանց բարձրացնել իրենց քաղաքական կշիռը միջազգային կազմակերպություններում՝ առանց ուժային ռեսուրսների:

Քանալի բառեր՝ փոքր պետություն, գերտերություն, տարածք, բնակչություն, ինքնիշխանություն, տնտեսություն, միջազգային կազմակերպություն, տարածաշրջան, անվտանգություն, բազմակողմ ձևաչափ, արտաքին կապեր, գործակցություն:

Introduction

In the modern world order, where global and regional political processes are shaped not only by the interaction of superpowers but also by medium and small states, the role and significance of the latter are increasing (Abrahamyan, 2024). For a long time, the theoretical discourse of international relations has been dominated by the analysis of large states, while small states have often been perceived as weak, with limited resources, devoid of political influence, and sometimes as units that hinder the stability of the international system (Cooper and Shaw, 2019, pp. 15–16). The aforementioned perceptions are evidenced by the fact that, to date, there is no unambiguous and universally accepted definition of the concept of “small state” in the professional literature. Small states have often been defined not by their characteristics, but by the properties that they do not possess. In European diplomacy, the concept of “small state” has been formed as a “residual category” between medium and microstates (Ingebritsen et al., 2006, p. 4).

Theoretical and Methodological Bases

By analysing the professional literature, two main approaches to the presentation of the concept of “small state” can be distinguished: the first approach considers the basis of classification as quantitative qualification, the second – qualitative (Tang, 2018, p. 38).

Quantitative qualification implies the territory of the state, the population, and minerals. The distribution of material power in the international system affects and defines the interaction and relations of states. A great power can adopt a more independent and active foreign policy, while a small state, lacking material capabilities, is more difficult to maintain economic development and ensure military security independently, which increases the risk of being exposed to changes in the external environment. It limits what

can be achieved and more confidently strengthens the international role and status of the country than any other factor in microstates (Ingebritsen et al., 2006, pp. 8-9).

Population is the most common method for determining the size of states. It is no coincidence that population size provides many advantages and creates many challenges. If a state has a small population, regardless of the size of its territory, whether it is Luxembourg or Greenland, and regardless of whether it is rich or poor, a small population creates certain challenges. A state with a small population cannot form a large military force, cannot defend itself from enemy attacks, and will depend on other states and international organisations for protection. Experts believe that a small state is considered a state with a population of up to one million. This approach is mainly used by the World Bank, which, in fact, recently increased this number to 1.5 million (there are 56 such states).

In this context, qualitative approaches to defining small states (political, economic, historical, cognitive, etc.) are more important. In this case, a state can be weak in one area, but at the same time strong in another. As Anders Wivel notes, “Power becomes clear in the relations between one or more states whose behaviour we want to explain.” (Archer et al., 2014, p. 34). It is also important to consider qualitative indicators such as the position of states in the global economy and politics, as well as their degree of political and economic independence.

Therefore, there is no clear definition of a small state. The definition depends on both quantitative (population, territory, and GDP) and qualitative (international role and influence) criteria. Qualitative approaches – the political influence of the state, economic independence, and international behaviour – are more important for the characterisation of a small state. The perception of smallness is relative and depends on the regional and global context, so the concept of a small state is always subject to comparison and subjective assessment.

A significant part of the member states of the United Nations are classified as small states. Despite their resource and geographical limitations, these states can employ sensible and purposeful foreign policy strategies to preserve their sovereignty, protect national interests, and exert influence on international platforms. Their active involvement and strategic manoeuvring in international organisations, diplomatic flexibility, and diversity of foreign policy behaviour are of essential importance in the process of shaping modern world politics.

The role of small states in international relations is emphasised by several circumstances: first of all, since the late 1960s, due to a sharp increase in their number as a result of decolonisation (Galstyan, 2019). Second, the

overwhelming majority of UN member states are small states (at least 108 out of 193 member states) (Krasnyak and Shaternikov, 2023). Third. their growing role in world politics since the second half of the 20th century, when they grew from “weak players” to “serious players” on the international stage, capable of imposing their own will and advancing national interests. The collapse of a polarised world, democratisation, trade liberalisation, and the digital revolution have also given small states greater freedom (Henrikson, 2023, p. 5). Therefore, although this group is extremely diverse, small states are simply too numerous and too important to ignore (Ingebritsen et al., 2006, pp. 77–79).

Bilateral and multilateral diplomacy have their characteristics for small states. The goals of small states are different from the diplomacy of large states. If the foreign policy of large states is often associated with strengthening their own international influence, persuasion, coercion, and, finally, the establishment of power over other states, then the diplomacy of small states is mainly focused on solving more specific problems – on specific issues related to security, politics, and economics. In this regard, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy is important not only for solving the above problems, but also for the survival of a small state.

Multilateral diplomacy of small states implies participation in international and regional organisations, forums or summits, where they can express their interests, cooperate with other countries, and raise their agenda on international platforms. Small states should determine their foreign policy priorities and develop relations only with those countries that are most important to them. For example, training qualified diplomats, opening diplomatic missions, and maintaining their activities can be quite a challenge due to limited personnel and material resources.

Bilateral diplomacy is considered more effective and flexible. Meanwhile, multilateral diplomacy and international organisations can serve both as a guarantee of security for small states and as a way to ignore the position of small states against the backdrop of influential large states.

Membership in international organisations is fundamentally important for them. This is because members of international organisations have equal power when voting on the principle of “one state, one vote” (Cooper & Shaw, 2022, p. 44). For example, within the framework of the UN General Assembly, all UN member states have the right to vote and participate in global governance, discussing international issues in accordance with the principle of equality of state sovereignty. Thus, officially, Kiribati has the same weight as Russia, China, India, or the United States (Henrikson, 2023, pp. 29–30). At the moment, at least 108 of the 193 UN member states are considered small states in terms of area, population, and GDP. The latter do not have separate global strategic

importance, but officially, they own more than half of the votes represented in the UN. Therefore, given the fact that global rules and norms are created by large states, small states usually follow the already established order.

The existing capabilities and accompanying limitations of diplomacy can potentially be used to counterbalance great powers (Krasnyak and Shaternikov, 2023, p. 145). For example, when the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945, Luxembourg was the only small member state, and in 1960, the UN had only two small states, Luxembourg and Iceland. The involvement of these small states was criticised globally as irresponsible interference, which was almost considered unacceptable. At one point, the UN even presented a report by a “Committee of Experts” that recommended associate membership for small states without voting rights. There were views that small states lacked “the competence, experience and sufficiently established mechanisms to conduct an effective dialogue with other states” (Cooper and Shaw, 2019, pp. 52–54). However, the world is full of states that, despite their size, exist under the same rules, participate in international processes, and try to find their place in the complex web of global relations.

Small states often use international organisations and alliances for their niche diplomacy. By developing niche diplomacy, small states can provide each other with valuable information, including on the processes taking place in the UN Security Council. Ambassadors from many small states note: “When a small state is elected to the Security Council, it helps other small states to be informed about current developments.” Small states can successfully use “niche diplomacy” by focusing on specific areas where they have experience and capabilities (Ó Súilleabháin, 2014, p. 37). For example, Switzerland has been an active player in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, proposing new ideas, leading negotiations, and preventing deadlocks, which ultimately contributed to the successful adoption of the protocol (Schulz et al., 2017, p. 478).

The use of niche diplomacy can also be useful in the UN Security Council. Thus, Estonia was elected to the Security Council in 2020 as a recognized expert in the field of cybersecurity (Haugevik et al., 2021, pp. 56–57). This allowed Estonia to push the topic further than expected. In 2021, during the Estonian presidency, the first official Security Council meeting dedicated to cybersecurity issues was held. In the Security Council, small states often play a bridging role between large actors, contributing to the resolution of disagreements and the formation of a unified position on international security and peace issues within the Council.

In general, in international relations, several sources of power are distinguished: military, economic, technological, and diplomatic, but it is a fact that the important basis of international relations is power itself. Recent

developments in world politics have led to a change in the balance between soft and hard power. Those entities that do not have sufficient resources to use hard power must now, more than ever, rely on soft power to remain competitive and develop. Soft power is a product of development. It is the ability to make others think what you want, through cooperation or involvement, rather than through the use of force or violence. Soft power is a logical means of overcoming vulnerability. A small state, due to its limited resources, has an unequal position in the international arena in this case as well (Timilsana, 2024, pp. 147–148).

Methodology and Methods

A small state is often forced not to adopt an active policy, but to adapt to the results of external changes or seek external assistance to overcome them in order to ensure its national interests. Another option for addressing vulnerability is the new theory proposed by Baldur Thorhallsson in his book “Small States and Shelter Theory”, the Shelter theory.

The methodological basis for the study of small states was scientific methods of comparison, analysis, and generalisation. The results of the theoretical study are presented from the standpoint of shelter theory and a systems approach to studying small states in the context of multilateral international relations.

Results

To mitigate their vulnerabilities and meet their needs, small states seek what is also called “refuge,” which is provided by larger states and international organisations. The chances of small states surviving and thriving depend crucially on the nature of the refuge they receive. Thus, the theory of refuge addresses three interrelated issues of common interest to small states: first, risk reduction before a potential crisis occurs, second, assistance in overcoming the shock when the risk becomes a real threat, and third, support during the recovery phase. Today, in the era of hybrid warfare, this gap is even more apparent. How can Finland, for example, actually defend itself and rely on NATO when the threats are not only military, but also informational, diplomatic, cyber, and even cultural? Being an ally is no longer just about sending soldiers or signing a treaty. Today, the alliance must also be able to defend in the information arena.

Small states are facing a new reality where traditional approaches are no longer sufficient. They need flexible diplomacy to survive and thrive in this changing world (Thorhallsson, 2019, pp. 189–190). States seek refuge to counter all kinds of vulnerabilities. According to the theory of refuge, these vulnerabilities can be classified into three main areas: political, economic, and social vulnerability.

- Political refuge refers to the support that a state receives from other states or regional/international organisations when it needs to provide support from a political or military perspective. This can involve direct diplomatic support or even military protection provided by a partner state or international institutions, to reduce threats to the political autonomy of a small state. This support also includes the application of organisational rules and norms aimed at the protection and stability of a small state.

- Economic refuge includes the mechanisms of economic support that larger and stronger states or international organisations provide to small states in times of crisis. This support can take various forms, including direct economic assistance, monetary union, credit support, and participation in a common market. These measures help small states manage their economic situation, ensure stability, and reduce the risks arising from crises.

- Social shelter refers to the support provided in the social and public spheres, within the framework of the protection of human rights, the provision of social welfare, and general social stability. Shelter in this area can include assistance provided by international organisations, social programs, or reforms carried out within a small state, related to sustainable development, education or health. In this way, social shelter helps small states to face their external and internal challenges while maintaining social solidarity and stability. The security of small states begins at home. Social cohesion is an important resource in many small states, which increases stability and reduces the negative consequences of internal security. Small states are distinguished by enviable indicators of political stability.

Discussion

Shelter theory is not limited to independent states, but also considers other smaller political entities. Such entities, whether they are components of federations or united states, can also apply the logic of shelter theory: that is, their decision to leave or stay within a given state will depend on whether they receive sufficient shelter. For example, the majority of the population of Scotland decided that they would have better political, economic, and social shelter as part of the United Kingdom than if they became an independent state. If Scotland were to gain independence, it would still seek shelter from the UK, the European Union, NATO, and the United States. However, the smaller the state is in terms of its economy, territory, population, and military capabilities, the more effective the shelter theory is.

These estimates indicate that small states cannot rely entirely on their own capabilities. External support not only protects small states internationally but also helps them overcome internal constraints, such as a lack of local knowledge, underdeveloped infrastructure, and limited state-building

capabilities. Finally, a small state must find an international actor willing to provide it with sanctuary. This often comes at a cost and can involve deep penetration of the small state by a larger state or regional/international organisation, often with transformative effects on the small state and its society. The relationship of a sanctuary can have significant internal consequences for political, economic, and social developments in a small state. If the quest for protection and security is successful, it often comes at the cost of sacrificing autonomy in both domestic and foreign affairs (Ingebritsen et al., 2006, pp. 28–29). As Nicola Contessi notes, great powers are both an opportunity and a threat for small states. They are an opportunity because close cooperation with them can be a source of aid, patronage, prestige, and other advantages. However, they are also a threat, as obvious power imbalances make small states highly vulnerable to dependence, even dominance, in certain areas or overall by larger ones (Galstyan, 2021).

Conclusion

Thus, in the current multipolar world order, international organisations play a key role in cooperation between states, conflict prevention, and global governance. For small states, international organisations are not only a platform for advancing their interests but also a means of ensuring security, economic development, and political stability. However, while some mechanisms in international organisations ensure the participation of small states, they still face inequality of political influence, lack of resources, and the dominance of large powers. To overcome these challenges, small states must enhance their diplomatic capabilities, become more actively engaged in multilateral processes, and deepen cooperation with like-minded and security-oriented countries. Despite their real vulnerability, small states can create innovative strategies to confront external and internal challenges. They have turned limited resources into an advantage. The development of economic flexibility, specialisation in the service sector, as well as the effective use of new technologies and allied defence relations, allows small states not only to survive but also to play an active role in the international system. Therefore, the question is no longer whether small states can survive, but how they can redefine their place and role in the global system in a new way.

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ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DOCUMENTS FORMING THE FRAMEWORKS OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY OF GEORGIA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

KAREN GHAZARYAN

Yerevan State University, Faculty of International Relations,
Department of Political Science, PhD Student

kar.ghazaryan@gmail.com

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Abstract

In order to understand the foreign policy of Georgia and the Russian Federation, and especially the regional policy, the study of the national security strategies adopted by the government is of great importance. It is essential to understand how geopolitical developments have affected the strategy of both countries. In the article, we analyse the national security strategies of Georgia and the Russian Federation, their priorities and the changes that have taken place after geopolitical developments.

In the course of scientific work, we have set ourselves the following goals.

- To study the national security strategies of Georgia and the Russian Federation,
- To analyse the changes that took place after the geopolitical developments, which were included in the strategies of the two countries,
- To analyse the strategic approaches of both countries for national security and multilateral policy.
- During the study, we used the method of document and content analysis, as well as the historical comparative method.
- Based on the goals set before us, we reached the following conclusions.
- The National Security Concept of Georgia does not fully represent the situation that exists in the politics of Georgia.
- The main changes in Georgia's strategies are related to Russia, but it does not fully represent the current realities. Current changes in Russia's national security strategies are mainly related to geopolitical developments
- In strategic approaches, Russia considers relations with the South Caucasus at the regional level. Many of Russia's strategic approaches have lost their relevance after the developments related to Ukraine in 2022.

Keywords: Georgia, Russia, national security strategy, the West, foreign policy, South Caucasus, bilateral relations, multilateral diplomacy.

ՎՐԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԵՎ ՌՈՒՍԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԴԱՇՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՇՐՋԱՆԱԿՆԵՐԸ ԶԵՎԱՎՈՐՈՂ ՀԱՅԵՑԱԿԱՐԳԱՅԻՆ ՓԱՍՏԱԹՂԹԵՐԻ ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

ԿԱՐԵՆ ՂԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ

ԵԴՀ միջազգային հարաբերությունների ֆակուլտետի
քաղաքագիտության ամբիոնի ասպիրանտ

kar.ghazaryan@gmail.com

Համառոտագիր

Վրաստանի և Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության արտաքին քաղաքականությունը, հատկապես՝ տարածաշրջանային քաղաքականությունը հասկանալու համար կարևոր նշանակություն ունի կառավարության կողմից ընդունված ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարությունների ուսումնասիրությունը: Հատկապես կարևոր է հասկանալ, թե ինչպես են աշխարհաքաղաքական զարգացումներն ազդել երկու երկրների ռազմավարությունների վրա:

Գիտական աշխատանքի ընթացքում մեր առջև դրվել են հետևյալ նպատակները.

- ուսումնասիրել Վրաստանի և Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարությունները,

- վերլուծել այն փոփոխությունները, որոնք տեղի են ունեցել աշխարհաքաղաքական զարգացումներից հետո և արտացոլվել են երկու երկրների ռազմավարություններում,

- վերլուծել երկու երկրների ռազմավարական մոտեցումներն ազգային անվտանգության և բազմակողմ քաղաքականության ուղղությամբ:

Ուսումնասիրության ընթացքում կիրառվել են փաստաթղթային և բովանդակային վերլուծության մեթոդները, ինչպես նաև պատմահամեմատական մեթոդը:

Ելնելով մեր առջև դրված նպատակներից՝ հանգել ենք հետևյալ եզրակացություններին.

- Վրաստանի ազգային անվտանգության հայեցակարգը լիարժեք չի ներկայացնում այն իրավիճակը, որն առկա է երկրի քաղաքականության մեջ:

- Վրաստանի ռազմավարություններում հիմնական փոփոխությունները կապված են Ռուսաստանի հետ, սակայն դրանք ամբողջական կերպով չեն արտահայտում առկա իրողությունները:

- Ռուսաստանի ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարություններում փոփոխությունները հիմնականում պայմանավորված են աշխարհ-

հաքաղաքական զարգացումներով:

- ՌԴ-ն իր ռազմավարական մոտեցումներում Հարավային Կովկասի հետ հարաբերությունները դիտարկում է տարածաշրջանային մակարդակով:

- Ռուսաստանի մի շարք ռազմավարական մոտեցումներ կորցրել են իրենց արդիականությունը՝ 2022 թվականին Ուկրաինայում տեղի ունեցած զարգացումների հետևանքով:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Վրաստան, Ռուսաստան, ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարություն, Արևմուտք, արտաքին քաղաքականություն, Հարավային Կովկաս, երկկողմ հարաբերություններ, բազմակողմ դիվանագիտություն:

Introduction

The beginning of a new phase of Georgia-Russia relations was formed in 1991, when Georgia became an independent state. Good relations have been formed between the two countries since the 90s, which was connected with several historical realities, religious and cultural ties, as well as having a common security and political environment in the USSR. Even during the years of Shevardnadze's administration, the Russian Federation began to have a significant influence on the life of Georgia, registering a dynamic growth within the framework of cooperation in almost all spheres. We cannot say the same about the years of the next president, Saakashvili's rule. On the Georgian side, work on the national security strategy began in this period. The period of Saakashvili's administration can be considered unique in Georgian history, which was caused by sharp changes in the vector of foreign policy and a deep crisis in relations with Russia. The new team announced that it considers the Euro-Atlantic vector of the country's foreign policy to be superior and irreplaceable and that there is an intention to enter the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the European Union (EU) (Melikyan, 2016). At that time, in order to activate the mentioned foreign political directions, the President of Georgia, in 2004, created the position of the Minister of State for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration issues in the structure of the government by Order No. 597 of December 17. The staff of the Minister of State was created on December 31 of the same year. For effective work and implementation of the tasks, three departments are created in the new structure: European integration, Euro-Atlantic integration and coordination of EU programs. In 2005, two state commissions were established: The State Commission for NATO Integration and the State Commission for EU Integration. Only in 2003, following the "Rose Revolution" and 2004, after Saakashvili was elected president, did the work on the development of the strategy begin to intensify. After the draft of the

strategy was prepared, it had to be submitted for approval by the country's parliament and signed by the president.

Analysis of Georgia's 2005 National Security Strategy.

In 2004, Mikheil Saakashvili's administration initiated the drafting of a fundamental conceptual document aimed at defining the priorities of Georgia's foreign policy and identifying threats to its national security. With financial and technical assistance from the United States, the leadership of Georgia finalized the preparation of the country's National Security Concept. The document was officially adopted by the Georgian Parliament on July 8, 2005 (Melikyan, 2016). Its introduction opens with the statement: "Georgia is at an important stage of its centuries-old history." In the introduction, there are also references to 2003 about the importance and significance of the "Rose Revolution" and the countries belonging to European traditions and values. It is noted that "Georgia's national security concept is a key document that presents the country's security development approaches and fundamental national goals and interests. It points out the challenges, risks and threats to national security and states the main directions of the national security policy. The draft of the document reflected both the national fundamental values of Georgia and national interests, challenges, the main directions of the national security policy of Georgia, as well as the priorities of its foreign policy. According to the document, they were considered the national interests of Georgia. 1. territorial integrity, 2. national unity, 3. regional stability, 4. strengthening of freedom and democracy in neighbouring countries and the region, 5. The country aims to strengthen its transit function, provide an alternative energy supply, ensure ecological security, and protect national and cultural identity. The importance of building a pro-Western foreign policy line, continuing support for "strategic partnership" with the United States of America, Ukraine, Turkey and Azerbaijan, partnership with Russia and "pragmatic cooperation" with the Republic of Armenia were mentioned in the section of the main priorities of Georgia's foreign policy (National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005). At the same place, it is stated that Georgia undertakes to ensure the protection of the interests, rights and freedoms of all ethnic and religious groups living in Georgia. For the protection of fundamental national interests, as well as for the elimination of challenges and threats, the authors of the concept proposed the following priorities of the state: 1. strengthening of state administration, 2. strengthening of democratic institutions, 3. strengthening of the country's defense capability, 4. restoration of territorial integrity, 5. Euro-Atlantic integration, etc. (Kakachia and Georgian, 2013). For the first time, in the document representing Georgian national interests, considerable importance was given to developing the country according to Western

standards and to the Euro–Atlantic direction in foreign policy. Focusing on the Euro–Atlantic integration of Georgia, we should note that in order to spread the idea of Euro–Atlantic integration within the country, the President of Georgia, in 2005, by Order No. 752 of September 19, established the NATO and EU Information Centre, which has the status of a legal entity under public law. In addition to the main office in the capital of Georgia, the centre has eight representative offices in the regions of the country. The projects of this structure are financed from the state budget of Georgia, as well as by NATO and the EU. Significant space was given not only to neighbouring states, but also to relations with regional and extra-regional actors. The document also attached great importance to a number of principles and features representing the national interests of Georgia. In the national security strategy adopted by Georgia in 2005, the internal and external priorities, strategic approaches regarding the future of the country and the formation and development of relations were also clearly mentioned. According to the representatives of the National Security Council of Georgia, the document was prepared over almost 10 years. In the last year, a special group of experts of the National Security Council of Georgia prepared the final version of the document. It should be noted that in the last 10 years, several power agencies (for example, the State Department of State Border Protection in 1997 under the leadership of General V. Chkhaidze) or research NGOs have presented their drafts of national security concepts.

However, for various reasons, they were never put together based on a unified document, which was supposed to present the approaches of the country's leadership to the issues of national security of Georgia. In addition, the institutional and personal weakness of the main body called to carry out this work, the National Security Council of Georgia, as well as the crisis of the entire Georgian management system, the uncertainty of determining the main priorities of the security sector, domestic and foreign policy, also hindered the creation of a unified project of the strategy. According to the authors, the strategy should also show Georgia's aspirations for full integration into NATO and the EU, as well as the establishment of security in the Black Sea region as an integral part of the Euro–Atlantic security system. It is also noted that the Georgian government will implement the concept through “long-term initiatives for the protection of fundamental national values and interests”. As the document emphasises, “The concept of national security should serve as a basis for all strategies and programs. Any revision of the concept will also require changes to the corresponding strategies and plans (Veranyan, 2007). The second chapter of the concept is dedicated to the fundamental national values of Georgia, which are based on the following principles: sovereignty, security, peace, democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and

fundamental freedoms, and the well-being of the country. According to the document, the protection of these values is vitally necessary for the existence and security of Georgia. The third chapter refers to the national interests of Georgia. They are the principles of territorial integrity, national unity, regional stability, establishment of freedom and democracy in neighbouring countries and regions, establishment of transit functions of the country and provision of alternative sources of energy supply, as well as ecological security. According to the document, restoring the country's territorial integrity is the most vital national interest of Georgia. The fourth chapter is devoted to national security threats, risks and challenges. Violation of the integrity of the country's territory, military invasion, penetration of existing conflicts in neighbouring countries, international terrorism, Russian military bases, smuggling and transnational organised crime are considered threats. In the concept, the challenges of Georgia's national security are considered to be corruption and the ineffective system of state administration, ecological, social, energy, informational and economic challenges (National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005). The document also mentions that the possibilities of open aggression against Georgia are minimal, but cross-border attacks by state and non-state actors are quite real. The fifth chapter defines the main directions of Georgia's national security policy, which are based on the principles of strengthening state administration and establishing democratic institutions, strengthening the country's defence capabilities, restoring constitutional order throughout the country, integrating and joining the European Union and NATO, and establishing foreign relations. In the chapter (item 5.5: "Strengthening of foreign relations"), Georgia's strategic partners are the USA, Ukraine and Turkey. 5.5.4. The point is entitled "Partnership with Armenia and Azerbaijan". The initial impression is that the authors of the concept tried to present relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan on the same level in a systematic way, especially in terms of general economic cooperation, regional stability and well-being. The importance of the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict and "more active involvement of the international community in the peace process" is also mentioned. However, in the part concerning Azerbaijan, it is already mentioned that "Georgia's relations with Azerbaijan are developing as a strategic cooperation". In other words, more important and high-level relations with Azerbaijan, which would later become one of the most important areas of cooperation, especially in the Georgia-Turkey-Azerbaijan format. Along with the emphasised importance of joint energy, transport and communication projects, there is also talk of close cooperation between the two countries in the field of security and politics, as well as Euro-Atlantic integration processes. "Georgia and Azerbaijan's cooperation within the framework of the GUAM and participation in the EU ENP and NATO PFP programs contribute to the

harmonization of security interests and the development of a joint position on various strategic issues.” (Kakachia and Georgian, 2013) At the same time, the strategy only mentions “close cooperation with Armenia in all spheres of bilateral relations”.

The anti-Russian emphasis continues in the following points, where the violence, human rights violations and inhumane treatment carried out in the territories occupied by Russia are discussed. Among the following challenges, socio-economic, terrorism, environmental protection, cultural, cyber security, demographic and other challenges are also distinguished. In the next section, where national security priorities are discussed, there is again a significant focus on relations with Russia, and the mediation of the international community is also given importance in these relations. Regarding bilateral relations with Armenia, it is emphasised that “Georgia hopes that Armenia will benefit from its transit position for transporting Armenian goods through the territory of Georgia.” At the same time, the authors of the concept note that Georgia “welcomes the deepening cooperation of Armenia with NATO”.5.5.6. The point talks about a partnership with the Russian Federation. It is noted that “Georgia strives to establish neighborly relations with the Russian Federation based on the principles of mutual respect”, and in 1999 The full implementation of the decisions of the OSCE summit held in Istanbul on the withdrawal of Russian military bases “will undoubtedly contribute to the relations between Georgia and the Russian Federation.” This chapter also talks about Georgia’s interaction and cooperation with the Black Sea region, GUAM, Baltic, Central Asian countries, multilateral relations within the OSCE, UN and other organizations, as well as Georgia’s contribution to the fight against international terrorism (National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005). Under the new leader, a new reality emerged not only for Georgian-Russian relations, but also for the entire region, because the relations of regional states are formed in such a way that the development of any new scenario affects all regional states. In particular, a number of issues of great economic importance changed the situation dramatically. Armenia was temporarily cut off from the land connection with its strategic ally through the territory of Georgia, and the Georgian side began to search for alternative energy options, naturally thinking about Azerbaijan first, and also did not rule out sectoral cooperation with Iran. Turkey was trying to take advantage of the situation and increase its presence in regional developments, especially in Georgian life. The West was also not left out of the task of filling the vacuum with its influence. Although the West assured the Georgian side, in the form of the United States, that it had great power on its side, the events showed that Georgia did not receive tangible help, except for appeals and later threats of sanctions. By tangible help, we mean that the Western Armed Forces did not enter Georgia and did

not stop the Russian forces, which reached several dozen kilometres from Tbilisi. Naturally, all this brought about new changes in the context of regional developments. New interests and interests emerged for Georgia, which were fixed in the new concept of national security.

Analysis of the 2011 National Security Strategy of Georgia.

The new national security concept of great importance for Georgia, which was adopted by the parliament in 2011, implied quite important changes. It should be noted that two main changes have been made to the document. First, Russia has turned from a partner country (as envisioned in 2005) into “the main threat and challenge of Georgia’s national security”. In particular, the following wordings were given: “Russian occupation of the territory of Georgia”, “danger of new military aggression by Russia” and “terrorist actions organised from territories occupied by Russia”. Secondly, the role of the country’s Euro-Atlantic integration was strengthened. According to the document, this direction was and continues to be “one of the most important priorities of the country’s foreign policy and national security”. At the same time, the authors especially noted that the August war with Russia could not change the country’s aspiration to join NATO, and in 2004, the country made “great progress” in this direction. In 2011, the concept did not mainly refer to relations with neighbouring countries in the region. The new document established relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan as a “strategic partnership”, and the definition of the relationship with Armenia changed from “pragmatic cooperation” to “close partnership”. The foreign policy of Georgia at that time can be called two-fold, in terms of establishing relations with the USA, European partners and countries of the region (Turkey, Azerbaijan) (Melikyan, 2016). The strategy in the introductory part clearly emphasises the important elements and components that require strategic approaches and also mentions the importance of the document, where there are clear separations regarding actions and directions. Then the document formulations about the safe environment of Georgia follow, where great changes have taken place. Mentioning Georgia’s safe environment in the second part, it immediately refers to the strained relations with Russia, where the Russian side is mentioned as the main security threat for Georgia (National Security Concept of Georgia, 2011). It clearly mentions Russia’s occupation of Georgian territories and non-respectful attitude towards Georgian sovereignty, the biggest manifestation of which was in 2008 (Kakachia and Georgian, 2013). The priorities of Georgia, which are related to democracy, internal and external independence, and, as an important direction of foreign policy, the development of integration processes and the dynamic development of relations with the EU and NATO as a result of serious work towards future membership, are also emphasised.

The ongoing conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh, which undermines security in the region, is also mentioned among the concerns of a safe environment. There is also talk about the dynamic development of relations with the leading democratic states. Great attention is also paid to free economic relations, creation of an active and safe economic environment as a result of cooperation and active communication with countries with developed economies and key structures (Smolnikova, 2011). According to the new concept, sovereignty, territorial integrity, democracy, law and rights, freedom, peace, security and prosperity are considered national values of Georgia, paying great attention to fundamental human rights and freedoms. In the next section, where Georgia's national interests are discussed, points 1-7 emphasise security and stability of economic activity through institutional reforms, and point 7 emphasises energy security (New Concept of National Security of Georgia, 2011). Among the next interests are the need for sustainable operation of transits of regional economic channels, as well as cultural, demographic issues, cyber security and relations with the diaspora. The next section on risks and challenges also begins with an emphasis on threats and aggressive policies from Russia, where they try to create the impression that these threats are serious challenges not only for Georgia, but for the entire region. It is also emphasised that the Russian occupation of Georgian territories and the recognition of the independence of these territories are a big blow to the accepted international norms, and the structures that recognised these territories as Georgian (UN, OSCE, etc.) should also be concerned about this issue. It seems that this emphasises the gauntlet thrown by the Russian side at the internationally accepted norms. Russia, it is noted that the Georgian side welcomes the processes aimed at strengthening democratic values, which can contribute to the improvement of bilateral relations and regional development. However, considering other factors, it becomes clear that great importance is given to the economic relations with Russia, but the non-restoration of the territorial integrity of Georgia will always hinder the process of normalisation of relations. The reference in the following sections is mainly related to moving Georgia's foreign policy in the Euro-Atlantic direction. Great importance is attached to the formation and dynamic development of good relations with the EU and NATO and member states, considering this direction as the main priority ("NATO-Georgia Relations"). The regional policy section talks about relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan, describing relations with Armenia as close cooperation and relations with Azerbaijan as strategic cooperation. Considering also the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Suspa oil pipelines, which represent the importance of the energy sector emphasised by Georgia, as well as the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzrum gas pipeline, it seems that relations with Azerbaijan were given greater importance (Gorvett, 2013).

There is also talk about the importance of relations with Armenia in all fields, but taking into account many circumstances, including the Turkish factor and Georgia's economic and energy dependence on Azerbaijan and Turkey, we believe that the gradually deepening relations of the Georgian side in a trilateral format will reveal new realities in the region, which is so will not be favorable for Armenia, the strained relations between Armenia and Russia are added to all this. In other words, Georgia, which is strategically important for Armenia, has strategic cooperation with Turkey and Azerbaijan, which are the main threats to Armenia's security. In the conceptual approaches of bilateral relations, the Georgian side attaches great importance to the relations with the USA and Ukraine. Within the framework of economic interests, great importance is also given to relations with China, Japan, South Korea, Israel, the countries of the Persian Gulf, Canada and Latin American countries. In the following sections, reference was made to the enhancement of Georgia's role and cooperation with international organisations, particularly the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, etc. The idea of ensuring Georgia's active participation in multilateral forums and other formats deserves special attention. Moreover, the following sections talk about the important and effective fight against terrorism, about Georgia's cooperation with local and international structures, as well as with states. In the last part, the importance of the development and implementation of policies has already been addressed, particularly concerning educational, environmental protection, cultural, cyber security, economic, energy security, health, social and other spheres. In general, the strategy received quite a lot of criticism from Georgian experts and figures, and one of the justifications was that the concept does not fully reflect Georgian interests and strategic directions. It is also mentioned that there are unrealistic provisions and inflexibility, as well as emotional provisions. Naturally, the Russian side followed similar developments. However, it was hard to imagine that the Georgian side would go so far and put several issues related to Georgian security at risk. Over time, Georgia's strongly expressed Euro-Atlantic foreign policy and the continuous intensification of anti-Russian rhetoric further complicated the already poor relations of the new Georgian leadership with the Russian Federation, bringing the two countries to the "August War". The Georgia-Russia conflict in August 2008 had disastrous consequences for Georgia, leading to Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states (De Waal, 2018). Summarising the results and conceptual approaches of Georgia's foreign policy during the presidency of Mikheil Saakashvili, it should be noted that the Euro-Atlantic vector of Georgia has become more important and has become the main direction of official Tbilisi's foreign policy activities. In addition, relations between Georgia and the Russian Federation were in a deep crisis, which led to the 2008 war and the lack of

diplomatic relations between the two countries. At the regional level, Georgia presents itself as a transit country, a “geopolitical crossroads” at the crossing points of “North–South” and “West–East”, as well as “the centre of the Caucasus”, as former President Mikheil Saakashvili liked to say (Saakashvili, 2024). Conceptual approaches and dynamics of Georgia’s foreign political activity changed in 2012. after October 1, when Bidzina Ivanishvili’s opposition “Georgian Dream” coalition celebrated victory in the parliamentary elections. Ivanishvili took the post of Prime Minister (Dmitrienko and Biryukova, 2012). From the very first days, the new leadership of Georgia announced that it was partially revising the country’s foreign policy, completely abandoning provocative anti–Russian policy and rhetoric. Other foreign policy vectors, regional and Euro–Atlantic, remained unchanged. Thus, traditional strategic relations with the USA, balanced and neighbourly relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey were preserved. During the period of the “United National Movement” government, the new authorities of Georgia, as the country’s foreign policy priority, noted the partnership and friendly relations with the EU and expressed the desire for further integration into NATO and the EU. However, despite the assurances of the Georgian authorities, foreign policy issues, in particular relations with Russia, have repeatedly become the object of criticism by Georgian oppositionists, who raised the issue of Georgia’s “European future” to the management of the “Georgian Dream (Dvali, 2021). The new foreign policy document of Georgia for 2019 also clearly reflected the issues of strategic significance that were highlighted in the list of priorities of Georgia. Among the values, peace is also mentioned, and in terms of things to be done, importance is again given to the Western integration processes by joining the EU and NATO. Again, a whole section is devoted to threats from Russia and issues related to Abkhazia and Ossetia. Referring to the relations with the neighbours, we should note that in relation to Armenia, it is mentioned that Georgia values the relations with Armenia and the cooperation with the EU and welcomes the active cooperation of Armenians with NATO. Georgia also attaches importance to the regulation of Armenian–Turkish relations. This was a new reality about the neighbours, which was fixed in the concept. In the new concept, internal and external priorities of Georgia are again addressed in connection with energy, economic, political and other spheres. It should also be noted that Georgia’s 2006–2009 concept (MFA Georgia, 2006) and the adopted foreign policy concept for 2019–2022 (Caucasus Watch, 2019) complemented the national security strategies and provided deeper insights into foreign policy priorities. However, the strategic approaches in the concepts and strategies are the same.

Analysis of Russian national security strategies.

As regards the approach of the Russian side to security and presenting the approaches in a documentary version, the Russian approach differs to a certain extent from the approaches adopted by other states. In particular, the state policy of ensuring national security in Russia in general, including fundamental issues, is defined by the laws “On Security”, “On Defence”, “Concept of National Security”, annual messages of the President to the Federal Assembly, as well as “Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation”—Russian foreign policy doctrine” and other such internal documents. The Russian practice of adopting the most important conceptual documents for the security sector is partly based on the experience of the former USSR. In the last years of the latter’s existence, attempts were made to reform the outdated system of ensuring the country’s security and to adopt a number of legal and political documents regulating the sector. In December 1990, amendments were made to the Constitution of the USSR, aimed at improving state administration. With those changes, it was planned to create a Security Council of the USSR. It had more modest functions than the current Security Council of the Russian Federation. In July 1991, a commission was created under the chairman of the Russian Federation, which was tasked with preparing the draft of the “Security” law. A relatively small staff of the Security Council worked for about a year, led by Skokov. During that time, the Law “On Security” was prepared and passed by the Supreme Council of the RSFSR, which confirmed the functions, powers and competence of the Security Council as the central coordinating body in the field of national security (Federal Law, 2024). In the summer of 1993, the new Secretary of the Security Council, E. Shaposhnikov, published the Basic Provisions of the already prepared security concept and announced the start of its implementation (Russian Council on International Affairs, 2014). The next stage of the creation of the security concept is connected with 1994. The development of Russia’s national security strategies followed a different trajectory. The process began within the framework of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, which was tasked with providing academic support for the elaboration of a national security doctrine. However, it was only in 1997 that President Boris Yeltsin formally approved Russia’s first National Security Concept (Minasyan, 2006). In January 2000, under Acting President Vladimir Putin, the document was updated and adopted in a revised version, replacing the 1997 edition. The national security of the Russian Federation means “the security of its multi-ethnic people as the bearer of sovereignty and the sole source of power in Russia.” “The concept of the national security of the Russian Federation” is a system of views that ensures the security of the person, society and the state in the Russian Federation, in all spheres of life, from external and internal threats, including terrorism. Its distinctive concept

is explained by Russia's special status as a state. In particular, as a multinational state, its interests, internal and external threats, differ significantly from those of other states. In the case of Russia, Russia's short-term and long-term interests are also of great importance, not only in the region, but also outside the region, concerning the interests of the Russian role on bilateral and multilateral platforms and adopted policies. It is also essential to emphasise that the Russian side, as a great power, sometimes represents its interests at the regional level. For example, the South Caucasus is also considered one of the regions mentioned in the priority directions of the Russian foreign policy. The Russian Federation does not address the individual countries of the South Caucasus, but considers the shared regional interests. In the Russian security rhetoric, a special place has always been assigned to the spread of US and NATO influence among the challenges. Of course, changes over time can lead to changes in interests and priority directions, but for the most part, fundamental changes in priority directions of this kind are still not observed.

National Security Concept of the Russian Federation 2005

In Russia, the work on the preparation of the “National Security Concept of the Russian Federation” was published in a new edition in 2005 (On the Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation, 2005). The peculiarity of the “Concept of National Security” of the Russian Federation is that the main object of the country's national security is the person with his constitutional rights and freedoms, society with its spiritual and material values, all population groups with their rights and freedoms, the state with its constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity, with national property and other national interests. The structure of the concept of national security also depends on the definition of the concept of national security, as well as the security objects and entities. For example, if the Russian theory of national security views security as the national security of the trinity of person, society, and state, then this is also reflected in the conceptual documents. “Concept of National Security” is a political document in which the most important directions of Russian state policy are formulated. Based on that document, Russian ministries, departments, state and non-governmental organizations form or adjust their conceptual base, as well as legal documents related to their activities in the field of ensuring Russian national security (for example, “Military doctrine of the Russian Federation” or “Russian Federation the concept of foreign policy”, which, are the determination of the provisions of the concept for the relevant spheres of activity of state power bodies). As for the current situation, based on the concept, every year the administration of the President of the Russian Federation prepares the “Report of the President of the Russian Federation on the Internal and External Situation”(Annual Report of the Commissioner for Entrepreneurs' Rights Protection), as well as the

“Message of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly”. The report and the message specify the current goals and objectives of the state, as well as the plans of the ministries, agencies and organisations that make up the security system of the Russian Federation. Thus, the concept determines two directions of activity of state institutions. The first is the provision of national interests and goals while performing their daily functions. The second is the provision of national security by identifying and neutralising internal and external threats, with security forces and means. These two directions of work are interconnected and mutually dependent. According to Russian experts, from the fundamental differences between the “Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation” and the same document of several other countries (and they operate in quite a large number of countries and have different names: doctrine, strategy, etc., in which we are talking almost exclusively about the external aspects of interests and security). one is that in the Russian document, national interests and security in the domestic and foreign spheres are considered together and interconnected. Moreover, the possessor (especially in the first edition of 1997) was considered the observation of internal factors (Russian Council on International Affairs, 2014). Later, the approach of close interdependence of internal and external aspects of national security was widely used in many post-Soviet countries as well. In the conceptual documents of many post-Soviet countries, the Russian practice of defining national security as the triple security of a person, society and the state took a strong place. However, it should be noted that such a definition of security, where there is a significant orientation towards “human security”, is not merely a Russian scientific achievement. As mentioned, it was also formed in the West, where it was already formed, in the 1970s. In the late 1980s. At the beginning, works dedicated to the problems of general and human security and their correlation with national and state security appeared. However, in world practice, this approach was probably the first to be officially confirmed in Russian conceptual documents (in the 1992 Law “On Security of the Russian Federation”, the 1997 “Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation” and all subsequent documents). This is largely explained by the fact that, unlike many developed Western countries, in which there was already an orderly practice, traditions of adopting national security concepts, and it was even a common thing, in the Russian Federation (and in most post-Soviet countries) the process “started from scratch”. and it was easier to put forward the mentioned approach and fix it in the process of adopting conceptual documents of the field (Protopzhanov, 2019).

National Security Concept of the Russian Federation 2015

The new national security concept of the Russian Federation, which the

president signed on December 31, 2015, presented the complete information about the interests and tasks of the Russian side, which was planned until 2020. Several chapter, and extra-regional politics of the Russian Federation. In 116 articles, the wordings related to various fields clearly indicate a large range of actions that are intended to satisfy the interests of the state. Among the national interests mentioned in the initial part of the strategy, long-term national interests are singled out, in particular: strengthening the country's defense, ensuring the integrity of the Russian constitutional system, sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity, strengthening national harmony, political and social stability, development of democratic institutions, state and civil improving the mechanisms of interaction between society, improving the quality of life, strengthening the health of the population, ensuring the stable demographic development of the country, preserving and developing culture, traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, increasing the competitiveness of the national economy, strengthening the status of Russia as one of the leading world powers, whose activities are aimed at the frontline maintaining stability and mutually beneficial partnerships in a multi-centered world (Pivulsky, 2001). Ensuring national interests is carried out through the implementation of the following strategic, national priorities: national defense, state and public security, improving the quality of life of Russian citizens, economic growth, science, technology and education, healthcare, culture, ecology of living systems and rational management of nature, strategic stability and equal strategic partnership (Pivulsky, 2001). Taking into account the fact that the immediate neighbours value relations with each other, which is more expressed in the conceptual documents of Georgia, it should also be noted that the Russian side considers the importance of Georgia in conceptual approaches at the regional level. However, the importance of the Georgian side is also reflected in many bilateral documents.

Analysis of the national security concept of the Russian Federation for 2021. The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, geopolitical developments, particularly the strained relations with the Western states, as well as the contradictions between the nuclear powers regarding joint nuclear control agreements, forced Moscow to adopt a new national security strategy. If previously there was an agreement to have joint control over nuclear warheads, as of 2020, the contradiction among the nuclear powers has led to the point that there is no longer trust in each other. The Russian Federation also designed the process of adopting the new constitution, where, for the first time, in case of conflict between the constitution and an international treaty, the constitution prevailed. The above was a unique approach, not only in the Russian approach, but also in the global approach. On July 2, 2021, Russia adopted a new national security strategy, which differed from its previous strategy of 2015 in a number of

issues. The modern world is going through a period of transformation. “The increase in the number of global economic and political development centres, the strengthening of the positions of new global and regional leading countries, lead to a change in the structure of the world order, to the formation of a new architecture, rules and principles of the world. The desire to preserve the hegemony of Western countries, the crisis of modern models and tools is of a continuous nature.” This is how the section of the strategy “Russian Federation in the modern world” is mentioned. It is mentioned in the national interests of the Russian Federation. “Taking into account the long-term trends in the development of the situation in the Russian Federation and the world, its national interests at the current stage are: 1) the salvation of the Russian people, the development of human potential, the improvement of the quality of life of citizens 2) the constitutional order, sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation defense, strengthening of the country’s defense. The following chapters discuss the importance of military-political and economic information security, as well as the importance of scientific and technical development (National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, 2021). They also talk about the need to maintain international stability, respect interests, respect the historical past, history and culture. In the “International cooperation and stability” section, the foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation, bilateral and multilateral cooperation are discussed, highlighting the countries and regions of primary importance for the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. In particular, it is noted that Russia is interested in “deepening cooperation with the CIS member states, the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia on a bilateral basis and within the framework of integration associations, first of all, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Union State”. Continuing, it is noted that Russia attaches importance to “Ensuring the integration of economic systems and the development of multilateral cooperation within the framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership (National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, 2021). Development of comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation relations with the People’s Republic of China, especially preferential strategic partnership with the Republic of India, including in the Asia-Pacific region in order to create reliable mechanisms to ensure regional stability and security; deepening multidisciplinary cooperation with foreign countries in the formats of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, strengthening the functional and institutional foundations of cooperation within the framework of the RIC (in the format of Russia, India, China). Regions (National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, 2021). In other words, we should note that the South Caucasus is not mentioned as a separate region. However, the territories of the CIS and EAEU are mentioned as important areas

for the Russian foreign policy.

Russia and South Caucasus relations and basic documents between the RF and Georgia

The importance of the South Caucasus is mentioned in many other documents of the Russian Federation in applications. Armenia–Russia relations in the economic sphere continue to register dynamic growth; the nature of Russia–Azerbaijan relations has become strategic. Russia and Georgia have had mutual interests since their independence, which was quite a serious incentive for enriching the legal contract field in the political, economic, and cultural spheres. More than 90 interstate agreements were signed between the two countries, and cooperation in various fields was carried out (Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia on Russian Military Bases, 1995). In order to mitigate the processes taking place in the internal life of Georgia and the war situation, the Russian Federation began to take a more active part in regulating the internal life of Georgia. Back on June 24, 1992, Georgia and the Russian Federation signed the Dagomis Agreements on the principles of settlement of the Georgian–South Ossetian conflict (Yalanuzian, 2012). This is how the first Georgian–Ossetian war of 1991–1992 ended. On February 3, 1994, the Free Trade agreement was signed between Georgia and the Russian Federation (Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Georgia on Free Trade, 1994). The agreement, consisting of 22 articles, set the bilateral economic relations on a new, higher level, as a result of which the Russian market opened up to Georgian products with greater opportunities. 1994 deserves special attention in the legal contract field of both countries. On February 3, the signing of the agreement on “friendship, neighbourliness and cooperation” between Georgia and the Russian Federation in Tbilisi (Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia on Friendship, Good Neighborliness, and Cooperation, 1994). The first article qualifies the relations between the two countries as friendly. The following points 2–5 talk about the cooperation of the two sides, including military cooperation, emphasizing that the parties undertake not to get involved in such processes and groups that may conflict with each other’s interests. This effectively established the strategic nature of the relations between the parties, which is also important for the peace and stability of the region. The following articles talk about the economic cooperation between the parties, as well as the maintenance of agreements and joint efforts in the Black Sea and adjacent areas, referring also to the agreement signed in Istanbul (Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia on Friendship, Good Neighbourliness, and Cooperation, 1994). It is particularly noted that “on the basis of the agreement, the two countries are ready to effectively use the

natural resources of the Black Sea, respecting the existing agreements between the parties, as well as the internationally accepted norms.” Emphasising the development of bilateral relations, on September 15, 1995, the parties signed an important agreement on the placement of Russian military bases in the territory of Georgia (Legal Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs List of Bilateral International Treaties of the Russian Federation). The above-mentioned agreement was also the basis of the agreement. In particular, it was mentioned that the parties agreed on the following: “Considering that the further development of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation derives from the fundamental interests of the peoples of the two states and serves the cause of peace and security, being convinced of the need for the gradual development of bilateral cooperation in the field of military development, guided by the unconditional respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia and the Russian Federation principles, based on the fact that the basic principle of deploying the military formations of the Russian Federation on the territory of Georgia provides an opportunity to more effectively ensure the security and defense capabilities of both countries, peace and stability in the Caucasus”. The parties hereby also reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (Legal Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs List of Bilateral International Treaties of the Russian Federation). On March 19, 1996, the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Georgia, based on the provisions of the September 15, 1995 agreement between Georgia and the Russian Federation on Russian military bases in the territory of Georgia, based on the friendly relations established between the parties, guided by the mutual desire to further develop multilateral military cooperation, Georgia in order to support the strengthening of the defense capability, at the request of the Georgian side, Russian military advisers and specialists will be sent to Georgia (Regulatory Framework of Bilateral Consular Relations). This bilateral agreement, consisting of 10 articles, clearly states the dates, quantitative and other information related to the mission of the Russian side. In particular, it is noted that the Russian experts will provide great support to the Armed Forces of Georgia in order to operate more efficiently and effectively, to carry out special tasks, and to settle issues of a security and military nature. Many bilateral agreements signed after the 2008 “Five-Day” War were frozen or ceased to exist. However, everything changed after 2012, particularly in the economic sphere, as relations between the parties began to develop, and a number of important new agreements were reached between Russia and Georgia, thanks to the “Karasin–Abashidze” format meetings and other discussions.

As for the economic relations with Georgia in recent years, we should

underline that, despite the tension in political relations between Georgia and the Russian Federation and the contradictions regarding Abkhazia and Ossetia, the economic relations between the two neighbouring states have registered a dynamic growth since 2012. In 2019, after a ban on direct flights from Russia to Georgia was imposed in 2019 due to protests in Georgia and strained relations, Russia lifted the ban in 2022, marking a symbolic gesture towards improving ties. This allowed for easier travel and a potential boost to tourism and trade. The Russian tourism market has also been a major contributor to Georgia's economy, with a significant rise in the number of Russian tourists visiting Georgia each year.

After the 2019 restrictions, in 2022, Georgian tourism from Russia showed a significant recovery. In 2023, it was reported that around 500,000 Russian tourists visited Georgia, making it one of the largest sources of foreign visitors to Georgia (National Statistics Office of Georgia).

This influx of Russian tourists is attributed to the relaxation of travel restrictions and the appeal of Georgia's low-cost, high-quality tourism sector. Despite political differences, Russia and Georgia continue to cooperate in the energy sector, especially in natural gas and electricity. Russia supplies Georgia with natural gas, and the two countries have cooperated on energy infrastructure, though Georgia has increasingly diversified its energy sources since the early 2000s.

In recent years, there have been discussions about improving energy transit through Georgia, as the country serves as a key corridor for Russian energy exports to Armenia and Turkey. Georgia has become one of the largest exporters of wine, fruit, and mineral water to Russia. Wine, in particular, is one of Georgia's main export products, and Russian demand has been strong in recent years. Russia has been one of the largest markets for Georgian wine. In 2023, Georgian wine exports to Russia grew by approximately 10%, reinforcing economic ties in this area. Agricultural exports such as fruits, vegetables, and watermelons, as well as mineral waters like Borjomi, continue to be significant trade items, bolstering economic relations.

(National Statistics Office of Georgia). In 2022, the Russian Federation ranked second among Georgia's foreign economic partners (after Türkiye). In January–August 2024, the share of the top ten trading partners by imports in the total imports of Georgia amounted to 69.4 per cent. The top partners were Türkiye (USD 1,761.8 million), the USA (USD 1,186.4 million), and Russia (USD 1,167.3 million). In January–August 2024, the share of the top ten trading partners in the total external trade turnover of Georgia amounted to 68.7 per cent. The top trading partners were Türkiye (USD 2,085.3 million), Russia (USD 1,636.2 million) and the USA (USD 1,278.8 million) (National Statistics Office of Georgia).

Conclusion

As a regional player, Georgia also plays a major role in the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. The numerous bilateral agreements, official announcements and the presence of documents of strategic importance are a vivid proof of this. The influence of the Russian Federation in the life of Georgia is gradually increasing, which was recently facilitated by the tension between Georgia and the West in connection with the law on “Foreign Agents” adopted by the Georgian government, after which the EU ambassador to Georgia announced that Georgia’s EU membership process had been frozen. Let us add that back in November 2023, Georgia received the status of a candidate to become a member of the EU. Georgia–Russia relations are active against the background of tensions between Armenia and Russia, as well as against the background of the development and deepening of relations between Armenia and the West. In other words, some provisions mentioned in the strategies lose their relevance, because in reality, we have a different picture after the geopolitical developments between the states. Although the Georgian side continues to consider the Russian Federation as the main security threat in strategic documents, the relations with the Russian Federation are growing dynamically, especially in the economic sphere, which prepares fertile ground for effective cooperation in other spheres as well. The Georgian side continues to consider EU and NATO membership as a foreign policy priority. Moreover, contrary to that, the Russian Federation is increasing its influence on the life of Georgia day by day. The strategic approaches of the two countries, as outlined in the document, give a clear idea of the internal and external priorities of these countries. However, the rapid geopolitical developments and changes necessitate a review of some of the approaches outlined in the document. Sometimes the documents do not reflect the reality on the ground, but studying them and understanding the approaches outlined in them is crucial for understanding the foreign and domestic political perceptions and approaches of the countries. Russia continues to consider the CIS area as the most important direction in its foreign policy, as outlined in its strategic documents. For the Georgian side, relations with neighbours are the top priority, with a focus on cooperation with Western countries and structures, as well as final integration. Although the document of 2011 mentions the Russian Federation as the main security threat, compared to the document adopted by Georgia in 2005, the relations between Georgia and the Russian Federation are different. At least in the economic sphere, they are growing dynamically. Georgia–Azerbaijan–Turkey tripartite cooperation and the deepening of relations are strategically a great threat to the national security of the Republic of Armenia, which takes on even more dangerous shades in the background of the tension between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. The documents adopted by

the government of Georgia do not fully represent the realities of its politics in the country, and also do not address the problems that prevented Georgia from joining the EU and NATO.

Suggestion: We think that many strategic approaches of both countries have lost their modernity, and both countries need new strategies, which will more clearly define the realities after the geopolitical developments.

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