



ԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱԿԱԴԵՄԻԱ
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SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG STUDENTS

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Abstract

The problem of a person's subjective well-being is one of the fundamental issues studied by various sciences, such as philosophy, economics, medicine, and psychology. Each science complements this concept with its own content. Medicine connects subjective well-being with other components of the quality of life, such as mental health. Currently, this problem is actively studied by psychologists. This is due to the need to understand the mechanisms underlying subjective well-being: how these mechanisms regulate a person's behaviour and how they affect their relationships with other people. The problem of subjective well-being is associated with the problem of positive development of personal growth. Scientists show considerable interest in this problem, taking into account the trends in the development of modern society. Subjective well-being is understood as a state of mental health, coherence of mental processes and internal harmony, which depends on whether a person has clear goals, as well as the resources and conditions for achieving them. Subjective well-being of students is one of the current problems of psychological science, which acquires special significance in the modern educational and socio-cultural environment. It is considered a multi-component phenomenon, the basis of which is a person's

subjective experiences, internal adaptability, and the ability to function effectively in the social environment.

Keywords: Subjective well-being, self-realisation, self-esteem, development, emotional stability.

ՈՒՍԱՆՈՂՆԵՐԻ ՇՐՋԱՆՈՒՄ ՍՈՒԲՅԵԿՏԻՎ ԲԱՐԵԿԵՑՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՍՈՑԻԱԼ-ՀՈԳԵԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԲՆՈՒԹԱԳԻՐԸ

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Համառոտագիր

Անձի սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցության խնդիրը հիմնարար խնդիրներից է, որն ուսումնասիրվում է տարբեր գիտությունների կողմից, ինչպիսիք են փիլիսոփայությունը, տնտեսագիտությունը, բժշկությունը և հոգեբանությունը: Յուրաքանչյուր գիտություն լրացնում է այս հասկացությունը հատուկ բովանդակությամբ: Բժշկությունը սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցությունը կապում է կյանքի որակի, հոգեկան առողջության այլ բաղադրիչների հետ: Ներկայումս այս խնդիրն ակտիվորեն ուսումնասիրվում է հոգեբանների կողմից: Դա պայմանավորված է սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցության հիմքում ընկած մեխանիզմները հասկանալու անհրաժեշտությամբ. թե ինչպես են այդ մեխանիզմները կարգավորում մարդու վարքագիծը և ինչպես են ազդում նրա՝ այլ մարդկանց հետ հարաբերությունների վրա: Սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցության խնդիրը կապված է անձնային աճի պոզիտիվ զարգացման խնդրի հետ: Գիտնականները զգալի հետաքրքրություն են ցուցաբերում այս խնդրի նկատմամբ՝ հաշվի առնելով ժամանակակից հասարակության զարգացման միտումները: Սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցությունը հասկացվում է

որպես հոգեկան առողջության, հոգեկան գործընթացների համահունչության և ներքին ներդաշնակության հոգեվիճակ, որը կախված է նրանից, թե արդյոք անձն ունի հստակ նպատակներ, դրանց հասնելու ռեսուրսներ և պայմաններ: Ուսանողների սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցությունը հոգեբանական գիտության արդիական խնդիրներից մեկն է, որը հատուկ նշանակություն է ստանում ժամանակակից կրթական և սոցիալ-մշակութային միջավայրում: Այն համարվում է որպես բազմաբաղադրիչ երևույթ, որի հիմքում ընկած են անձի սուբյեկտիվ փորձառությունները, ներքին հարմարվողականությունը և սոցիալական միջավայրում արդյունավետ գործելու ունակությունը:

Բանալի բառեր` սուբյեկտիվ բարեկեցություն, ինքնաձանաչում, ինքնագնահատական, զարգացում, հուզական կայունություն:

Introduction

Student age is considered one of the most complex and dynamic stages of an individual's psychological development. During this period, identity, value system, worldview and attitude towards the future are formed. Subjective well-being, which expresses the subjective satisfaction of the individual, mental stability and positive emotional background, acquires fundamental importance in the lives of students. It directly affects the personal growth of the student, academic progress and social relations. Therefore, it is relevant to study how subjective well-being manifests itself and develops during student age, taking into account the psychological characteristics of students in different courses. Young people are especially sensitive to changes in socio-psychological characteristics. The youth period is an important stage, where, on the one hand, the structure of well-being continues to form and become more complex, and on the other hand, it has already achieved certain qualitative and structural changes in development, thanks to all previous stages. Here, we already have the opportunity to study the manifestations of subjective well-being and, based on this, interpret other psychological characteristics of a person, as well as predict possible patterns in the dynamics of subjective well-being.

Theoretical and Methodological Bases

The features of the formation of individual well-being are interconnected with the process of searching for identity in youth. This period (defined by the age limits of 16–25 years old) becomes special in ontogenesis, since its content is the formation of a person as a subject of his own development. Alexandrova (2017) notes that the features of psychological well-being depend on the age stage. It is determined by new psychological formations that correspond to age and the leading activities characteristic of a given age, the specific social development of each age, individual psychological characteristics, emotional state, and psychological defence mechanisms. Subjective well-being in adolescence, according to Konty (2005), should be determined by the level of formation of basic new-age formations, orientation in one's own personality traits, and the ability to make life plans. Many researchers of the youth period agree with the postulate about the key role of the

development of relationships during this period (Hakobyan et al., 2024; Walters, 2016; Watts, 2015). The peculiarity of the transition from adolescence to youth is largely determined by the fact that during this period of life, not only a person's attitude towards the world around him, other people as part of it, but also his attitude towards himself is sharply manifested. A whole series of different age priorities is built around this. Among them are: personal and professional self-determination, achievement of general social, intellectual and emotional maturity, release from the parental home, identification of the "I", affirmation of self-determination, concept of life, and establishment of meaningful relationships with other people (Sibi, 2020).

Biologically, student age is often defined as the period from 17 to 25 years. This is the period when people complete their physical maturation, but are still in an active phase of psychological and social development. However, socially, student age can span a wider range, since people today often begin or continue their studies later in life.

The student period is an important stage of socio-psychological development, which includes a number of features:

1. Formation of personal identity
 - The student period is a stage of searching for and forming an identity.
 - Many students are trying to understand their calling, interests and life goals.
 - The skills of making independent decisions usually develop during this period.
2. Formation of social roles
 - Students are moving from a transitional stage – from “school” to “adult”.
 - New social roles are added to their lives – student, friend, sometimes employee or member of a newly created family.
3. Striving for independence
 - Gaining independence is important during this period.
 - Many students begin to move away from parental control, take greater responsibility for their education, finances and future.
4. Expansion of social ties
 - The student period is a period of active socialisation.
 - During this period, a variety of relationships are formed – with friends, professors, colleagues.
 - Often, the circle of friends becomes more important than the family.
5. Searching for emotional stability
 - Students may experience emotional instability, stress, and a sense of uncertainty.
 - Emotional skills and coping mechanisms are usually formed during this period.
6. Rethinking values and worldview
 - This period is often accompanied by a reassessment of previous values and

the formation of a new worldview.

- Students begin to form their own opinions on society, politics, culture, and other issues.
7. Planning for a career and the future
- Many students begin to think about their professional lives.
 - This period emphasises self-development, the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills.
8. Personal crises
- Crises related to identity, relationships, and the future may arise during this period.
 - Causes often include a mismatch between expectations and reality, stress caused by exams or failures.
9. Intellectual development activity
- Student years are marked by high activity of intellectual abilities: development of thinking, analysis, and creativity.
 - Interest in scientific research and innovative thinking is often formed.

These features are largely determined by both biological and social factors that affect the psychological and social development of the student.

A person's life path consists of certain stages, the harmonious passage of which contributes to the achievement of personal maturity. One of the life events of a young person is separation from the parental family, which, on the one hand, provides rich resources for personal growth and development, and, on the other hand, can be a difficult life situation that temporarily reduces the level of a person's psychological well-being. To strengthen one's potential, it is especially important to feel well-being. Along with the disappearance of a sense of inner satisfaction, there is tension, the emergence of inconsistencies in actions, a decrease in creativity, and a decrease in the effectiveness of acting in non-standard life situations. There is a depletion of compensatory capabilities and a decrease in the body's resources, which leads to the emergence of certain psychosomatic disorders. According to the opinions of a number of authors, separation from the mother is an inevitable condition for the well-being of an individual. Without timely separation from the family, a person's critical thinking cannot be formed, and creative freedom cannot be fully manifested (Smith, 2014; Sallehuddin, 2021; Keniston, 1960). A significant role in the methodological formulation of the topic was played by M. Bowen's systemic family therapy (Kerr & Bowen, 1988), which raised questions about the differentiation of family members. At the end of the 20th century, a number of empirical studies appeared on the relationships between separation from the family, adaptation to the college environment, and marital satisfaction, among others. Separation from these social environments is recognised as a significant phenomenon for the individual, built on the transformation of the attachment formed in childhood in relationships with parents. In turn, Frankl (1992) notes that the way to gain personal sovereignty is the timely separation of the child from his parents. It is often accepted that a

change of residence is not a sufficient condition for gaining independence, since the external (territorial, financial) aspect does not necessarily determine the internal, psychological one. Physical separation is a complex life situation that can be a potential source of stress, although it is normative. It is the spatial “separation” of parents and children that often triggers adaptation mechanisms, stimulating active adaptation to existing conditions, requirements, and problems, not excluding, and even facilitating, the discovery of new resources both in the environment and in the person himself. In any complex life situation, the established balance, the accepted routine of life, is violated. This causes negative emotions and affects the assessment of the well-being of the individual (Anheier, 2015). One of the main tasks of the modern education system is to create conditions for students’ positive development in a dynamic, unpredictable world. The phenomenon of students’ non-adaptation is widespread, associated with the transition to a new stage of their lives – the beginning of their studies in higher educational institutions. The complexity of information flows and the associated system of interpersonal relationships, as well as the abrupt change in work and leisure schedules, cause prolonged emotional stress and anxiety.

The problem of subjective well-being of students includes two main components:

- cognitive – goals, meanings, achieved results;
- emotional – experiences related to the implementation of the set goals, as well as one’s own behaviour (Diener, 1984).

Today, the main task of the educational system is to create the necessary conditions for students to acquire skills and abilities that contribute to their positive development in a dynamic, unpredictable, information-rich, contradictory modern world. The educational system is currently undergoing active restructuring, and many universities are developing new teaching models. This is due to the fact that curricula are changing, new courses, pedagogical technologies and educational programs are being introduced.

Student age is a period of psychological development during which a person’s self-awareness is formed, self-esteem is established, social relationships deepen, and a professional identity begins to take shape. At this stage, subjective well-being becomes the result of the interaction of both the person’s internal resources and external social factors. A student, as a special stage of development, needs emotional stability to maintain mental health and stabilise self-esteem. If a student does not have emotional balance, then psychological tension, depression, or evasive behaviour may arise under the influence of stress factors. The role of the socio-psychological environment in the formation of students’ subjective well-being is emphasised. Subjective well-being is influenced by the quality of interpersonal relationships, a person’s degree of self-realisation of a person, and the presence of social support systems (Hakobyan & Khachatryan, 2022).

Subjective well-being can be perceived as a psychological manifestation of

an individual's quality of life, which is determined both by the harmony of his emotions and thoughts and by the dynamics of social connections, self-knowledge, and personal growth. It includes favourable self-esteem, a sense of meaning in life, and effective emotional regulation and stress resistance. In modern approaches, subjective well-being is clearly linked to the availability of internal resources, the stability of self-esteem, and psychological coping mechanisms. In this context, student age, as a transitional stage from adolescence to adulthood, is highly sensitive to emotional pressures, the search for identity, fluctuations in self-esteem, and the development of social self-awareness.

Subjective well-being of students is of key importance in terms of their overall development, educational progress and social relationships. It includes elements of both psychological and social and physical well-being. An individual's happiness is directly conditioned by the satisfaction of his or her basic needs: if a person cannot feel happy without satisfying basic needs, then, in the opposite situation, even the satisfaction of some needs cannot lead to full satisfaction if the person does not have the opportunity for self-realisation.

The feeling of happiness plays a vital role both for the individual, for social groups, and for society as a whole. It reflects the value system of society, social stereotypes and the degree of human involvement in social processes. The historical analysis of social understandings of happiness shows the transition from ancient, vague concepts to more individualised, social and cultural concepts (Jarden & Roache, 2023).

In sociological literature, various approaches to happiness have been formed at different times. In the 20th century, an attempt was made to consider it from a scientific point of view. In this context, three stages are distinguished: initially, attention was paid to the role of happiness in social mechanisms, then a decrease in interest was observed in its explanatory value, and recently, its study has been reactivated in the context of the assessment of personality, emotions, culture and everyday life.

Modern theoretical approaches distinguish between objective and subjective approaches: the first focuses on objective indicators demonstrating well-being, and the second considers happiness as a subjective feeling and experience. Accordingly, happiness can be defined as a dominant direction of individual and group consciousness, associated with social values and norms, expressed in a high degree of satisfaction, and accompanied by positive emotional experiences (Stone A., Mackie, 2013).

In modern approaches, subjective well-being is clearly associated with the availability of internal resources, the stability of self-esteem and psychological coping mechanisms. In this context, student age, as a transitional stage from adolescence to adulthood, is highly sensitive to emotional pressures, identity search, fluctuations in self-esteem, and developments in social self-awareness. The study of students' subjective well-being is also important in that it affects academic motivation,

academic progress, social integration, and personal development (Zhou & Chen, 2019; Jarden & Roache, 2023).

Subjective well-being is based on the formation of self-awareness, which includes both cognitive and affective components. An individual who has a stable and positive self-esteem, a clear understanding of the “I”, and developed self-regulation skills is more likely to maintain emotional balance even in difficult situations.

Self-esteem is not only a component of subjective well-being, but also one of its predictive factors. Students with high self-esteem are more likely to trust their own abilities, show initiative, avoid passivity, and overcome failures. In contrast, low self-esteem is associated with emotional vulnerability, social isolation, depressed mood, and a higher risk of self-harming behaviours.

It is noteworthy that during the student age, self-esteem is often formed based on social comparisons. That is, an individual evaluates himself by comparing himself with others, which, in turn, can contribute to both positive emotional experiences and depression, underestimation and ineffective emotional reactions.

Youth (including student age) is a crucial stage in the formation of identity. During this period, the answer to the question “who am I” is formed, based on experience, current role perception and future goals. The successful course of this process contributes to emotional stability, and failure leads to emotional confusion and identity dissonance. Students with a high level of subjective well-being usually have well-developed emotional self-regulation. They can control negative emotions, respond constructively to stress and maintain social ties. This skill develops from childhood and is influenced by family models, the support of the educational environment, and a person’s level of internal maturity. Students’ subjective well-being is not only an indicator of mental health, but also an important factor in educational and social effectiveness. It is determined by the structural elements of self-awareness, including self-concept, self-esteem, and emotional self-regulation. All of these together ensure the student’s personal stability and subjective sense of happiness (Stone & Mackie, 2013).

Methodology and Methods

The methodological basis of the research was formed by both interdisciplinary and intra-disciplinary qualitative research methods: the comparative method, the historical method, the sociological method, and the psychological observation method.

Results

Subjective well-being develops in the process of socialisation, which implies successful adaptation to society. Then a subjectively well-being person successfully solves the problems of his age development and constructively resolves age-related conflicts. At a student’s age, subjective well-being is a phenomenon of subjective perception, which is conditioned by the evaluative function of the psyche. First of all, we mean such evaluative phenomena as “subjective attitude”,

“self-concept”, “self-esteem”, “self-control attitude”, “causal self-attribution”, as well as the formations of assessment of an integral stable consciousness of identity. Self-esteem is considered in the psychological literature from several aspects. More often, researchers consider self-esteem as a component of the concept of self-determination (affective, emotional, evaluative and even emotional-value component). There is no consensus in psychological science on the relationship between self-awareness and self-determination. Thus, in particular, a number of authors argue that self-esteem is an emotional form of manifestation of self-awareness. In contrast to the above, the works of other researchers prove that self-esteem acts as a substructure of the personality, which is expressed through self-awareness. It can act as an indicator of a person’s self-realisation. Self-esteem is an expression of the generalised meaning of the “I”, which is manifested in the degree of self-confidence. Thus, the emergence of self-confidence occurs in the conflict of the “I” with subjective motives, which are objectified by the needs of the individual in his self-realisation. Self-esteem, in essence, is a self-oriented evaluative formation of the individual, created in the process of dialogue within the “I-I” system, and manifested as a relatively stable self-esteem and a certain level of self-esteem. Meanwhile, the basis for the formation of self-esteem lies in the field of social norms, standards, and comparisons with other people. Self-esteem in this case is understood as an autonomous element of self-consciousness, the main function of which is to present its content to self-consciousness in the form of an “assessment result.” The relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem has been widely studied in psychological science. Subjective well-being is formed in the process of socialisation, the successful course of which contributes to the harmonious development of the individual and the stable formation of his self-esteem. In psychological literature, self-esteem is considered a component of a person’s self-determination, reflecting a person’s attitude towards themselves and shaping their social behaviour. At a student’s age, self-esteem has a significant impact on the social, academic, and emotional stability of a student. It contributes to the self-realisation of the individual, helps to overcome life difficulties, and builds effective interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion

Studies of the relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being among students show that self-esteem is one of the main indicators not only of an individual’s subjective well-being, but also of their social and personal stability. In this context, the role of social comparison is particularly important: when an individual evaluates his achievements in comparison with others, this can affect his self-esteem, both positively and negatively. As a result, it can be concluded that subjective well-being and self-esteem are interconnected and are conditioned by social, psychological and cultural factors. Their study is important from the point of view of maintaining and improving the psychological well-being of students,

which can contribute to the full development of the individual and effective social integration.

Subjective well-being of students is closely related to age and personal characteristics. The most stable emotional state is observed among students who have passed certain stages of self-esteem development and social adaptation. Interpersonal communication skills, the presence of social support, and the psychological safety of the environment have a significant impact on the subjective well-being of students. The absence of these factors leads to intrapersonal tension, a decrease in self-esteem and a decrease in learning motivation. A high level of subjective well-being is often combined with high indicators of learning effectiveness. Students who have well-developed communication skills and positive self-esteem easily overcome emotional obstacles and stressful situations.

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THE IMPACT OF INFODEMICS IN THE CONTEXT OF RESTRUCTURING PERSONAL VALUES

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Abstract

In recent decades, the rapid expansion of the information environment and the intensive use of social platforms have led to the emergence of new social phenomena, among which infodemics can be identified as a process of rapid and mass dissemination of information. During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and the forty-four-day war, infodemics manifested themselves not only in the widespread dissemination of false or misleading information but also in their influence on the restructuring of individuals' value orientations.

The purpose of this article is to analyse the impact of infodemics on the formation and rethinking of human value systems in the context of social change and the circulation of large flows of information on social networks. The article examines how the information environment from various sources, including both reliable and false information, circulates rapidly on media platforms, contributing to increased social uncertainty and the spread of anxiety.

It is assumed that the processes of obtaining and disseminating false information may be driven by the human desire to form basic social connections and satisfy the need for security. When these conditions are violated, people may find themselves under constant threat, anxiety, uncertainty, and fear, as a result of which staying within the circle of disinformation can serve as a symbolic mechanism for reducing internal tension and restoring social identification and group belonging. In this process, the formation of “We” becomes not only a communicative but also a value-based process, expressed through the spread of rumours, trust in false sources, and the dissemination of information.

In times of information crises, the values of solidarity, unity, truthfulness, social responsibility, transparency, and empathy become more important in the human value system, acting as potential resources for strengthening social stability, public solidarity, and trust.

Keywords: Infodemic, Infodemic Narratives, Value, Value Restructuring, Spreading Information, Demand, Crisis, Age Group.

ԻՆՖՈՂԵՄԻԱՅԻ ԱԶԴԵՑՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԱՆՁԻ ԱՐԺԵՔԱՅԻՆ ՎԵՐԱԿԱՌՈՒՑՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏՈՒՄ

ՄԱՆԱՆԱ ԵՆՈՔՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱՄ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
գիտահետազոտական աշխատանքների գծով փոխտնօրենի օգնական,
ուսումնական մասի առաջատար մասնագետ,
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Համառոտագիր

Վերջին տասնամյակներում տեղեկատվական միջավայրի արագ ընդլայնումը և սոցիալական հարթակների ակտիվ կիրառումը պայմանավորել են նոր սոցիալական երևույթների ի հայտ գալը, որոնց շարքում կարելի է առանձնացնել ինֆոդեմիան՝ որպես տեղեկատվության արագ շրջանառության և զանգվածային տարածման գործընթաց: 2020 թվականի COVID-19 համաճարակի և քառասունչորսօրյա պատերազմի ընթացքում ինֆոդեմիկ գործընթացները դրսևորվեցին ոչ միայն որպես կեղծ կամ մոլորեցնող տեղեկատվության լայն տարածում, այլ նաև որպես անհատների արժեքային կողմնորոշումների վերակառուցման վրա ազդող գործոն:

Սույն հոդվածի նպատակն է՝ վերլուծել ինֆոդեմիայի ազդեցությունն անձի արժեքային համակարգի ձևավորման և վերաիմաստավորման վրա՝ սոցիալական փոփոխությունների պայմաններում և սոցիալական մեդիայում տեղեկատվական մեծ հոսքի շրջանառման համատեքստում: Հոդվածում դիտարկվում է, թե տարաբնույթ աղբյուրներից եկող տեղեկատվական միջավայրը, որը ներառում է ինչպես հավաստի, այնպես էլ կեղծ բնույթի տեղեկություն՝ ինչպես է արագորեն շրջանառվում մեդիա հարթակներում՝ նպաստելով սոցիալական անորոշության աճին և տագնապային բնույթի տրամադրությունների տարածմանը:

Ենթադրվում է, որ կեղծ տեղեկության ընդունման և տարածման գործընթացները կարող են պայմանավորված լինել անձի բազային սոցիալական կապերի ձևավորման և անվտանգության պահանջմունքների բավարարման ձգտումով: Դրանց խաթարման պայմաններում անձը կարող է հայտնվել մշտական սպառնալիքի, տագնապի, անորոշության և վախի ազդեցության ներքո, ինչի արդյունքում ապատեղեկատվության շրջանառման օղակում գտնվելը կարող է հանդես գալ որպես ներքին լարվածության նվազեցման, սոցիալական նույնականացման և խմբի պատկանելիության վերականգնման խորհրդանշական մեխանիզմ: Այս գործընթացում «Մենք»-ի ձևավորումը դառնում է ոչ միայն հաղորդակցական, այլև արժեքային գործընթաց, որը կարող է արտահայտվել ասեկոսեներ տարածելու, կեղծ

աղբյուրների նկատմամբ վստահության և տեղեկության տարածման միջոցով:

Տեղեկատվական ձգնաժամերի պայմաններում անձի արժեքային համակարգում առավել արդիական են դառնում համերաշխության, միասնականության, ճշմարտացիության, սոցիալական պատասխանատվության, թափանցիկության և էմպատիայի արժեքները, որոնք հանդես են գալիս որպես սոցիալական կայունության ամրապնդման և հասարակական համերաշխության և վստահության ամրապնդման հնարավոր ռեսուրսներ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ինֆոդեմիա, ինֆոդեմիկ նարրատիվներ, արժեք, արժեքային վերակառուցում, տեղեկության տարածում, պահանջումներ, ձգնաժամ, տարիքային խումբ:

Introduction

Society is characterised not only by relative stability but also by periodic social fluctuations and crisis phases that determine its continuous development. In such conditions, the stable functioning of society is ensured by its ability to adapt to changing conditions. One of the most important prerequisites for adapting to changing environmental conditions is the existence of a universally integrated system of values that helps maintain public trust and social solidarity. In today’s information environment, the concept of “infodemic,” which characterises the rapid and widespread dissemination of information, including the spread of unreliable, disinformation, and misleading information that contributes to mistrust of the media, has a major impact on social stability. Such a large flow of information at the individual and societal levels can lead to cognitive overload and hinder rational decision-making. In a narrow sense, an “infodemic” can manifest itself as the spread of panic-inducing news, unscientific medical advice disseminated by fake or non-existent experts, and various rumours that deepen social tensions and uncertainty. The spread of false rumours is facilitated by negative emotional states, anxiety, and fear, the intensification of which has been noted in many studies (Ahorsu et al., 2020).

This trend is particularly noticeable in the digital environment, which has now become the main arena for information warfare in the context of the emergence of a new socio-political reality associated with the development of new information and communication technologies. Information warfare uses a wide range of manipulative techniques: discrediting, spreading conspiracy theories, imitation, and amplifying the emotionality of text messages. These strategies are guided by a number of psychological mechanisms and forms of influence (Mikheev & Nestik, 2021).

Although infodemic processes existed as social phenomena before, the term “infodemic” was institutionalised by the World Health Organisation in January 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Mikheev & Nestik, 2021).

Values in social systems perform a fundamental integrative function, ensuring the unity of individuals and of small or large social groups, nations, and, in a broad sense, humanity as a whole. Manifestations of individual and social crisis usually accompany the destruction of a value system, as it disrupts the mechanisms of behavioural regulation and social control. In such conditions, overcoming a crisis situation may be associated with the formation of new or transformed value orientations. If the weakening of value orientations is not accompanied by the emergence of new values with adequate meaning and significance, a series of social problems begins, including a decline in morality and legal consciousness, social instability, political disorientation of the population, social apathy, and the devaluation of human life (Leontiev, 1996, pp. 15–26). Thus, it can be assumed that value orientations are an important resource for maintaining social order.

People, consciously or unconsciously, strive to organise their value orientations into a logically structured system. Influenced by their biological predispositions, socialisation processes, and life experiences, individuals form unique hierarchies of value orientations, resulting of people in the same socio-economic and cultural conditions having different value priorities. Value orientations are closely related to the motivational and needs sphere of a person: on the one hand, they are formed based on existing needs, and on the other hand, new needs and aspirations may arise as a result of the internalisation of values that dominate in the social environment. Values are dynamic and changeable by nature. That is, if they are not constantly created, realised, and actualised, they are lost (Kukubaeva et al., 2020, pp. 15–17). Therefore, the scientific study of life values and value structures is particularly significant, especially in the context of social transformations and crisis processes.

The socio-economic, political, and cultural development of society and the state is largely determined by the interests, views, and value preferences within that society (Dyukova, 2006). The credit for making the problem of “value” the subject of special analysis in philosophy belongs to the philosopher of the last century, R. Lotzen. In his opinion, any phenomenon can be responded to with an emotion of joy or sadness, or a certain variability of these emotions, and a person values what brings pleasure and what asserts itself as a value (Ilichev et al., 1983). Representatives of another school, W. Wundt, F. Jodl, and F. Paulsen, considered emotions to be the source of values; they also believed that emotions (like values) are subjective. In contrast to them, F. Brentano, A. Mekong, and M. Scheler attempted to prove the objective nature of emotions themselves and, accordingly, the universality and objectivity of values (Chilikov, 2000). According to W. Windelband, values are truth, goodness, and beauty. At the same time, science, law and order, art, and especially religion are considered such values—cultural goods without which humanity could not exist (Tugarinov, 1960). In this regard, we can recall L. I. Ivancon, who discusses the main differences between values and norms. In his opinion, the normative system defines activity more

strictly than the value system because, first, a norm has no gradation—it is either observed or not. Values differ in “intensity” and are characterised by a greater or lesser degree of relevance. Secondly, a particular system of norms is based on internal unity. Rejection of any element of this system leads to instability and inconsistency with the personal structure of the latter. As for the system of values, it is usually built on the principle of hierarchy: a person is capable of “sacrificing” some values for the sake of others and changing the order of their application. After all, these mechanisms, as a rule, perform various role functions in the formation of the personal motivational structure of activity. Values, serving as guidelines, set the upper limit of a person’s social aspirations (Ivashchenko & Zubova, 2010). In Russian literature, positivist interpretations of values can be found in the works of V. P. Tugarinov, who believes that values are necessary for people to satisfy their own needs and interests. V. S. Bakirov argues that values in human existence correspond to the objective requirements of social progress. However, if values are needs and interests, then there is no problem with values; rather, the problem lies with needs and interests. This principle contradicts the understanding of the most important factor in individual and social life—values (Makhrova, 2011, pp. 215–224). Based on the approaches to values of Lotzenin, Wundt, and Paulsen, it can be assumed that the formation of values and their reinterpretation at the individual and societal levels carry a subjective context, which is why the same information can cause different psycho-emotional manifestations and corresponding reactions in different people. And if we consider values from the point of view of Brenton and Scheler as universal and objective, then we can assume that the spread of infodemic texts (false medical materials, warning texts, panic texts about “catastrophes,” conspiracy theories) should elicit different reactions in different segments of society in the context of subjective perception, psycho-emotional manifestations, beliefs, and the dissemination of the latter. Windelband’s normative perception of values allows us to view infodemics as a mechanism for the destruction of social norms that affects the hierarchy of values in society. The works of Tugarinov, Bakirov, and a number of other researchers indicate that the existence of values is necessary to satisfy basic human needs and even to identify human needs and values. From this point of view, we again come to the conclusion that in the context of an infodemic, human needs and the sphere of values are subject to a variety of influences. And to maintain stability and inner balance, some previously existing values may cease to be relevant, while new values form, conditioned by the need to adapt to the given reality.

From the point of view of sociologists, the integrity of the social system is determined by the hierarchy and functioning of values, which are considered the sole factor of socialisation. In research across various sciences, schools, and disciplines, the importance of values in human life remains a central issue. The main emphasis is placed on understanding the world and studying the role of

humans in it, setting goals in real activities and behaviour. Virtually all teachings that address the question of the functions of values agree that values are, first and foremost, norms, ideals, and standards that regulate human activity and through which moral actions are chosen and evaluated. (Diukova, 2006, pp. 227–229)

The question of why people tend to spread and believe false claims during crises, disasters, and epidemics requires reference to cognitive and evolutionary psychology, the history of journalism, and folklore. Today, the following causes of infodemics have been identified:

1. Every human society has a natural tendency to spread rumours.

This is a natural process that helps strengthen bonds within a social group (Sullivan, 2010, pp. 434–449).

According to cognitive psychologists D. Sullivan and M. Landau of the University of Kansas, people who lack political or social influence, as well as those who are emotionally unstable, are more likely to spread rumours (Parsons et al., 1999).

From the above, it can be inferred that, although society tends to spread rumours, it is nevertheless important to clarify which group is most susceptible to this influence: those who are emotionally unstable and do not occupy a significant social or public position. Interestingly, in the aforementioned target group, people’s values change more easily and new ones form.

A study conducted by Landau, Sullivan, and Rothschild proved that people with low self-control are also prone to spreading false news.

2. People’s belief in the accuracy of information plays virtually no role.

People share information they believe in just as readily as information they doubt. This was demonstrated by a study conducted in March 2020, when a target group was asked to decide whether the news presented to them was true or false. Based on this, they had to decide whether to share it on social media, but as a result, the target group agreed to share even the news they considered false (Pennycook et al., 2020).

From the above, we can assume that the most important human need is to exchange information within a wide social circle; here, it does not matter how reliable the information is; what matters is verifying its authenticity and then disseminating it.

3. Harvard University researcher Gary Allen notes that the number of rumours and fake news stories increases in proportion to the degree of instability (Fine, 2010, pp. 5–18).

In this regard, there is a growing body of scientific research on how gossip and lies “infect” the carrier and influence their behaviour. In 2001, the journal *Mathematical Sociology* published an article by E. Neumer in which the author illustrated the spread of rumours using an epidemiological model (Neumer, 2001). As a result, he concluded that some rumours are incredibly “persistent” and can exist for generations, changing periodically but retaining their essence, similar

to new strains of viruses. At the same time, young people (mainly students aged 18–25) are most susceptible to rumours. However, Neumer believes that critical thinking is hampered not by age but by a lack of relevant experience. As soon as young people learn new rumours, they forget them, so most conversations in this environment quickly die down. According to Neumer, sceptics play a key role in the infodemic cycle, taking on the role of an “immune response,” that is, trying to suppress rumours. Neumer calls this process “autocatalysis.” As a result, under pressure from constructive facts presented by sceptics, part of society stands out and refuses to believe the rumours. Y. Brainard and P. Hunters, who have identified the same pattern of misinformation spread with the pattern of infectious disease spread, have also concluded that people, regardless of demographic characteristics, do not trust medical information. At the same time, they trust false medical information when it is spread by their close circle (Brainard & Hunter, 2020, pp. 365–374). Therefore, it is necessary to develop a strategy to counter or slow the spread of infodemic and to strengthen the dissemination of reliable health information so that it reaches the population before infodemic texts do. This requires the efforts of doctors, journalists, and government officials themselves. This is why the approach to managing and containing the infodemic must be revised. As appropriate measures, activities aimed at increasing media literacy among the population are proposed (Zemlianski, 2021).

Thus, participation in the spread of fake news is not influenced by gender, age, or education. But if we exclude the stress factor, people with higher levels of education are more likely to identify fake news and less inclined to agree to spread it (Pennycook et al., 2020). However, it should be noted that the over-40 age group is more likely to have difficulty objectively assessing the credibility of news and facts. And it is important to identify the internal motivations in different age groups that drive people to believe, share, and be inspired by the information.

Based on this, it can be confidently said that an infodemic does not arise on its own. False news is tied to the emotional stability of both the narrator and the listener and arises in conditions of crisis and lack of balance. Emotional arousal and a lack of a sense of control also foster trust in false news. Therefore, the more emotionally stable a person is and the more in control they feel of the situation, the less likely they are to spread rumours.

Infodemic narratives are unreliable texts and the main component of infodemics. Such texts can vary in length and structure. That is why the common feature of all stories is that they arouse suspicion in people and appear very convincing. The life cycle of an infodemic story consists of two parts: visible and invisible. The visible part of the story is its publication on social media (in public groups, communities, personal pages, etc.). The invisible part is private correspondence, such as a school class parent group. If the story gains popularity there, it moves on to the next group, then appears on public social networks and becomes visible to everyone. Obviously, the transition of the narrative from

the invisible part of the life cycle to the visible part is its transition to active dissemination in the information space, when the “big” media are involved in this process. This, in turn, leads to a change in people’s behaviour. For example, as a result of the story about the “healing properties” of ginger, prices for ginger in Russia rose sharply in March 2020 (Zemlianski, 2021).

Many believe that there is a huge gap between belief in material information and its dissemination, but this is not always the case (Hufford, 1982, pp. 47–56).

If we consider narratives as adaptations, it becomes clear that their purpose is to unite people and indirectly resist external circumstances (Boyd, 2019).

Currently, the following typology of infodemic texts is distinguished (Petrov et al., 2020).

1. *Fake medical information*: This mainly consists of advice, methods of treatment, and prevention of diseases at home using traditional medicine. Such materials usually refer to “closed sources” or use the names of non-existent specialists (Stepanova, 2021). They reflect a crisis of institutional trust and the replacement of scientific knowledge with “folk wisdom,” which, as one might assume, indicates a decline in the authority of science and a reevaluation of personal experience.

2. *Warning messages*: these are texts that predict an impending or already unfolding terrible event. As a rule, the events warned about in these texts are somehow connected with contradictory information from various sources. Such materials are often preceded by statements from government officials that are taken out of context and, as a result, misinterpreted and distorted (Zemlianski, 2021). Warning texts indicate an increased perception of danger and a sense of loss of control, as a result of which the need for security becomes a dominant value. Through misinterpretation or selective use of government statements, such messages contribute to deepening distrust of the authorities and the formation of selective trust in sources of information.

3. *Panic-inducing information about “disasters”*: These texts are not fake news, but they exaggerate certain facts or present them in an overly emotional manner. Such materials are always written in the first person (usually from the perspective of an eyewitness or participant in the events, acting as the primary source). These texts are most often distributed on social media and, over time, acquire nonexistent details, turning into a subtype of fake news (Zemlianski, 2021). Panic-mongering texts about “catastrophes” express the strengthening of the values of emotional solidarity and mutual warning in conditions of collective uncertainty, but at the same time contribute to the blurring of the boundaries between facts and subjective experience.

4. *Information materials based on conspiracy theories*: These include conspiracy theories about the origin of COVID-19. For example, the theory that the coronavirus is an invention of Bill Gates (Zemlianski, 2021). Texts containing conspiracy theories can be interpreted as an attempt to make the world controllable

and meaningful in conditions of uncertainty. Strategies that reinforce the “us–them” polarisation are used here. These texts contribute to the polarisation of social reality and the deepening of value polarisation.

5. A single article can simultaneously belong to several types of fake news, combining their characteristics. It is worth noting that different types of texts have different effects on the audience. For example, during the coronavirus pandemic, it was not conspiracy theories that were popular on social media and in society, but fake medical materials, in particular, unreliable advice on disease prevention (Zemlianski, 2021).

The typology of infodemic texts mentioned above can be viewed not only as a manifestation of disinformation but also as an expression of the values undergoing restructuring in society. In the context of the epidemic, established notions of trust, safety, health, and responsibility are being reevaluated, as reflected in the content and structure of circulating messages.

Thus, infodemic texts act not only as distortions of information but also as symbolic expressions of social anxiety and the transformation of values, testifying to the processes of rethinking trust, scientific rationality, and collective responsibility in modern society.

Methodological Basis

The work is based on various scientific approaches. The methodological basis was provided by the works of Mikheev E., Nestik T. on infodemic narratives circulating during the COVID–19 pandemic, the system of life values by S., Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the value orientations of the individual by Dyukova Makhrova, the values of Wundt V., Brenton F., Scheler M., and Ivanconin L. The sample for the telephone survey within the study consisted of 50 representatives of age groups of women and men from 18 to 65 years old.

Research Methods

To conduct the research, a theoretical and comparative literature review was conducted, and a questionnaire was used.

We developed a questionnaire to identify an individual’s value orientations and emotional responses in the context of an infodemic. The questionnaire was created using the 5–point Likert scale, a standardised measurement method widely used in the social sciences. It allows for the quantitative assessment of individuals’ attitudes and value orientations, enabling statistical analysis of the data.

Results

The use of the questionnaire method allowed for the following data to be obtained: 56% of the respondents indicated that in crises, they prefer to trust official sources rather than social networks; 22 of them are female, 6 are male, evenly split between the 18–35 and 36–55 age brackets.

20% of respondents completely agree with the statement that, if information aligns with their beliefs, they are more inclined to accept it without further

verification, while only 9% disagree. In other words, an individual's pre-existing, hardened beliefs and the attitudes derived from them play a greater role in a given phenomenon.

66% of the respondents (aged 18–35) stated that even if the information has an emotional impact on them, they would avoid sharing it without verification. Those who indicated that they were somewhat or completely disagree with the statement were from the 36–55 age group. At the same time, 84% of respondents stated that they have a habit of comparing different sources to assess the credibility of the information. A large percentage are from the 18–35 age group. From this, it can be inferred that participants in the early adulthood age group are more inclined to objectively assess the credibility of information by verifying and correcting it than those in late adulthood.

48% (ages 18–35) fully agree that the public interest should take precedence over personal beliefs when disseminating information. About 60% of respondents consider social solidarity a primary value in crises. Here, the primacy of the need for social belonging is evident. This is when the collective “We” emerges, when solidarity and unity are valued.

18% of the respondents indicated that vague and contradictory information causes fear and anxiety. Interestingly, the majority of male respondents reported not experiencing fear or anxiety under conditions of conflicting information.

About 50% of respondents fully agree that in crises, it is important to feel that the situation is under control. In recent years, the value of health and safety has become more of a priority for about 80% of respondents. A large percentage are representatives of the 18–35 age group. This also confirms the idea that, in conditions of an information crisis, a person's basic needs for safety and security are activated, and uncertainty disrupts their satisfaction of these needs. And the person begins to provide certainty to the situation in various ways.

About 30% of respondents said they find it difficult to answer whether they trust statements from government and public institutions during information crises. And about 46% of respondents (including all male participants) said that transparent conduct by the authorities in the face of information threats is very important to them. Around 70% (men and women alike) noted the importance of public discussions and open communication in reducing the impact of misinformation. These can be assumed to be a consequence of the impact of events in the political and military spheres in recent years.

Conclusion

Infodemic processes affect the value systems of different age groups in different ways, depending on their social experience, level of media literacy, and psychological defence mechanisms. Among young people, infodemics can contribute to rapid changes in value orientations and the adoption of new normative standards. In contrast, among the older generation, defence strategies aimed at preserving existing values, which serve to reduce social uncertainty, are

more often activated.

In an information crisis, the values of solidarity, unity, truthfulness, social responsibility, transparency, and empathy become increasingly important in a person's value system, serving as potential resources for strengthening social stability, solidarity, and public trust.

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INTEGRATION OF THE MONTESSORI METHOD IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Educational programs implemented in the Republic of Armenia, particularly those involving primary school-age children, are generally based on a traditional, closed educational model. However, classroom experience and student behaviour, especially regarding motivation, pose serious challenges: children often lack interest in learning and prefer using their phones during lessons or other digital devices with screens. We believe that the educational process can be organised so that learning becomes sufficiently engaging for the child to choose it over digital distractions. While it is impossible to revolutionise the educational system immediately, new methodological elements can be introduced into the traditional model. The purpose of this article is to propose an integrated approach, substantiate its effectiveness, and highlight its role in the development of primary school-age children.

Keywords: Prepared environment, role of the teacher, personalised learning, mixed-age groups, practical life skills.

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Մոնտեսորի ուսուցիչ,

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Համառոտագիր

Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում իրականացվող կրթական ծրագրերը, մասնավորապես՝ կրտսեր դպրոցական տարիքի երեխաներին ուղղված, հիմնականում հիմնված են ավանդական, փակ կրթական մոդելի վրա: Մակայն դասարանային փորձը և աշակերտների վարքը, հատկապես՝ մոտիվացիայի տեսանկյունից, ցույց են տալիս լուրջ խնդիրներ: Երեխաները հաճախ հետաքրքրված չեն ուսմամբ և դասերի ընթացքում նախընտրում են օգտվել հեռախոսից կամ էկրան ունեցող այլ թվային սարքերից:

Մենք կարծում ենք, որ կրթական գործընթացը կարելի է կազմակերպել այնպես, որ ուսումը դառնա երեխայի համար բավականաչափ հետաքրքիր: Թեև հնարավոր չէ կրթական համակարգը միանգամից արմատապես փոխել, սակայն ավանդական մոդելի շրջանակում հնարավոր է ներմուծել նոր մեթոդաբանական տարրեր:

Սույն հոդվածի նպատակն է՝ առաջարկել ինտեգրված մոտեցում, հիմնավորել դրա արդյունավետությունը և ընդգծել դրա դերը կրտսեր դպրոցական տարիքի երեխաների զարգացման գործընթացում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ պատրաստված միջավայր, ուսուցչի դեր, անհատականացված ուսուցում, խառը տարիքային խմբեր, կենսագործնական հմտություններ:

Introduction

In the modern era, characterised by rapid social change, the comprehensive development of children, enhancing their understanding of knowledge, increasing receptivity, and fostering a harmonious mental and emotional state, has become important. However, the accelerating pace of life, socio-economic pressures, and a global decline in learning motivation create a demand for a new, alternative psychological and pedagogical approach that implies targeted reforms in the educational process.

Whereas decades ago, a child developed within the environment of a “small society”, today even preschoolers live within a much larger socio-digital space. This new information environment places significant pressure on children, primarily through the constant flow of information from television and the Internet. These sources often appear more compelling than traditional teaching and can overshadow the knowledge offered by parents and teachers.

A new generation requires a creative, constructive educational approach—one that increases children’s motivation to learn while acknowledging the specific characteristics of contemporary childhood. Such an approach can lay the foundation for more effective educational programs and methods that support knowledge acquisition and the development of modern competencies. This would allow the educational process to meet contemporary requirements while remaining engaging and motivating for children.

Before presenting the integrated educational method, it is important to briefly review the Montessori Method, as its core principles provide the methodological basis for our work.

Literature Review

This section addresses historical developments in learning theories that emphasise the holistic mental and spiritual development of the child.

The Roman rhetorician Marcus Fabius Quintilian (1830), in his 12-volume work *Rhetorical Education*, argued nearly 2,000 years ago that coercion in teaching has negative effects and should be excluded. Instead, he recommended

making learning appealing and interesting, considering the learner’s personality and characteristics. This approach, he believed, would help prevent negative behaviours.

During the Middle Ages, even emperors expressed interest in educational reform, recognising the importance of cultivating an intelligent, well-rounded, responsible ruling class.

In the 17th century, the Czech educator and founder of scientific pedagogy, John Amos Comenius (the father of modern education), generated significant interest with his work, *Great Didactics* (1658). He proposed making education accessible to all social classes and introduced a structured system of primary, age-based education. He emphasised native-language instruction, the teaching of natural sciences, and the study of nature itself.

Among Comenius’s key contributions were:

- The creation of a preschool education system.
- Division of human development into four six-year stages: childhood, adolescence, youth, and adulthood.
- Emphasising nature, observation, and systematic learning.

We also drew on the ideas of Swiss educator Johann Pestalozzi (1746–1827) (Tröhler, 2013), who identified four key factors essential for a child’s development:

1. **Spiritual and physical well-being**—mental and physical health as prerequisites for active learning.
2. **Family environment**—the importance of loving, supportive relationships.
3. **Communication and expressive ability**—skills necessary for emotional and social development.
4. **Ability to participate**—active involvement in learning and in social life.

German educator Friedrich Fröbel (2024) similarly emphasised the importance of natural knowledge, culture, and creativity. He viewed children as part of God’s creation, endowed with innate abilities that educators must help reveal. Froebel regarded play as the highest form of child development, essential for understanding the world and cultivating moral values.

English philosopher and educator Robert Owen (Taylor & Francis, 2021) stressed the role of culture; for example, singing, dancing, and aesthetic appreciation are important in developing the human soul. He highlighted the importance of nature, physical fitness, and social interaction in children’s education.

The final theoretical foundation for our work is the Montessori Method. Maria Montessori, the first female physician in Italy, created an alternative educational system centred on child-led learning within a carefully prepared environment (Hainstock, 1997). Montessori classrooms, or “Children’s Houses,” are organised into five sections—practical life, sensorial development, mathematics, language, and cultural studies (geography, botany, zoology, history, art and music) — and rely on self-directed activity, hands-on materials, and teacher observation (2016).

In the Montessori school, the teacher, by personal example and with little

verbal explanation, first guides the child on how to use this or that didactic item. Then, he or she carefully observes and studies the child's actions to discover the child's way of thinking, level of attention, strengths and weaknesses, personal characteristics, and interests. As Montessori herself describes it: "The acquisition of knowledge is not the words spoken during teaching, but in reality the child's experience and actions with the things and objects around him or her" (1986).

In other words, when teaching a child, the focus should be on the child and their actions, the child's interests and level of development or maturity, according to age, rather than just the teacher's interpretation and explanation.

For example, consider the development of speech in children. Every child seems to "absorb" the speech that sounds around him, during the period naturally designated for the acquisition of speech. According to Montessori, a child is born capable of learning any language that sounds in his environment. The first two years of a child's life open up a wide horizon for acquiring all kinds of new things. It is in these "Sensitive Periods" of speech development that the child seems to be able to teach himself to speak, listening to the speech that sounds around him, following the movements of the speaker's mouth, and trying to pronounce similar sounds. Gradually, he discovers that the people, things, and objects around him have their own names (1997).

In the educational institution called "Children's House", each object or subject created for learning, as well as the sequence of placement of objects or teaching aids on the classroom shelves, is not random. Each object or subject also has a planned sequence of use for the child and a method of presenting the material to the child. Once a child has mastered the presentation, there might be an extension to the presented lesson. Let us take an example from a section of the mathematics department. First, a number and its corresponding quantity are presented through didactic aids. Thus, through their combination, a connection is created in the child's mind between the number and the quantity it represents. A new transition is made to simple mathematical operations, namely, the ability to obtain a new number by adding or subtracting the quantities corresponding to those numbers. Through the actions presented in the correct sequence and special teaching aids, the child soon, without difficulty, performs addition of numbers, and later multiplication, understanding the concept of these operations. In this case: "Repeated addition of the same numbers is a multiplication." Maria Montessori called such conditions surrounding the child a "Prepared Environment", where there is no need for constant intervention or direct instructions from an adult. However, the child himself can study it with full attention and a focused mind, using didactic materials that interest him, and draw conclusions or discoveries. According to the Montessori method, work with each item has a direct and indirect aim or task. For example, in arithmetic, the direct aim of teaching "Quantity and Number in the Decimal System" is to create a connection in the child's mind about the quantity corresponding to the numbers one, ten, one hundred, and

one thousand. Moreover, the indirect aim is for the child to imagine that each category of the decimal system has nine level elements, after which a transition is made to the next level or category, for example: 1-9; 10-99; 100-999, etc. Let us give another example from the life skills section: organising a suitcase. This work, which seems so simple at first glance, is a sequence of numerous regulated actions that also includes the control and correction of inaccuracies or errors (2016). This work also pursues two other goals: direct and indirect. The first, direct goal is that, while performing the above-mentioned work, the child develops the following qualities: order of actions, concentration of attention, coordination, independence, and increased self-esteem and self-confidence. The indirect aim is to organise the suitcase.

The use of a large number of didactic aids is aimed precisely at developing concentration and coordination. It is undeniable that thinking accompanied by focused attention provides a person with more information, helping them discover the deeper properties of an object or phenomenon.

Numerous studies in the children's institutions called "Children's House" created by Maria Montessori have shown that children are capable not only of learning to read and write from an early age, but also have the ability to master natural knowledge, such as botany, geography, zoology, music, arithmetic, and even perform simple mathematical operations. It is simply necessary to create favourable conditions for their assimilation – that is, a pre-thought-out and specially arranged environment taking into account the sensitive periods of the child's development, as well as the correct methodological guidance of the educator, which is necessarily based on the child's age characteristics and interests. Thus, according to Montessori, learning is a natural process that develops automatically in a human being from birth, provided there are the necessary conditions and prerequisites. The most important role of the teacher is not in managing the teaching process through "lecturing" or constant direct instruction, but in getting to know the child through an individual approach, numerous observations, and in generating motivation, interest, and love for learning.

Moreover, all this in an environment created specifically for the child, called the "Prepared Environment", where teachers, guiding the students by personal example, act as "providers" of the material being taught, while the main task of teaching is to help the child to explore and complete the tasks themselves, not just memorise the teacher's explanation.

A program for integrating the Montessori method into the educational process of primary school children.

We have developed a program based on the integration of traditional and non-traditional methods. Let us now present the program:

a) Curriculum Alignment

- Blend Montessori activities with national curriculum standards (math, reading, science).

- Use Montessori materials (beads, sandpaper letters, number rods) to support conceptual understanding.

b) Classroom Environment

- Flexible seating and learning stations.
- Open shelves with accessible learning tools.
- Quiet areas for individual concentration.

c) Teaching Practices

- Encourage self-directed projects and inquiry-based learning.
- Foster group collaboration while respecting individual choices.
- Integrate observation as a key assessment tool.

d) Skill Development

- Promote problem-solving and critical thinking through manipulatives and experiments.
- Support socio-emotional growth via peer mentoring and shared responsibility.
- Incorporate daily routines (cleaning, organising) to strengthen independence.

e) Assessment Approach

- Replace or supplement standardised testing with continuous observation.
- Portfolios, self-reflection, and teacher notes track progress holistically.

f) Benefits of Integration

- Increased motivation and engagement.
- Development of independence and self-regulation.
- Enhanced creativity and problem-solving.
- Stronger peer relationships and collaboration.
- Deeper conceptual understanding due to hands-on learning.

The Montessori method, developed by Dr Maria Montessori, is a child-centred educational approach emphasising independence, hands-on learning, and respect for each child's natural development. Integrating Montessori principles into primary school education helps nurture autonomy, creativity, and responsibility while aligning with modern educational standards.

g) Challenges and Considerations

- Need for teacher training in Montessori philosophy.
- Resource-intensive (materials and classroom setup).
- Balancing Montessori freedom with state/national curriculum requirements.
- Possible resistance from traditional educational structures.

h) Conclusion

Integrating Montessori principles into primary school education has many positive impacts: building concentration, coordination, independence, fine motor skills and a deep understanding of the concept. While full implementation requires resources and training, even partial integration—through classroom design,

teaching practices, and assessment methods—can significantly benefit children’s academic and personal development.

Research

We conducted a scientific experiment to study the creativity of primary school children (5–11) before and after the application of our integrated method. The Torrens Creativity Assessment Methodology, a modified version of Williams, was used.

E. Torrance’s verbal tests for the detection of creative abilities to identify creative abilities. In addition, through this test, we have identified aspects of creative activity such as curiosity, the ability to predict, to put forward hypotheses, and to establish cause-and-effect relationships. During the test, we offered the children the following tasks:

- What would happen if we imagined that there were ropes glued from the sky that reached the ground? What consequences could this have? /It demonstrates curiosity and the ability to establish cause-and-effect relationships, 5 minutes are given/.
- List as many new uses for a matchbox as possible. (This demonstrates flexibility of thought; 10 minutes are given.

Here, we have evaluated the results according to their uniqueness.

5. Research results

Now, let us present the comparative results of the obtained data.

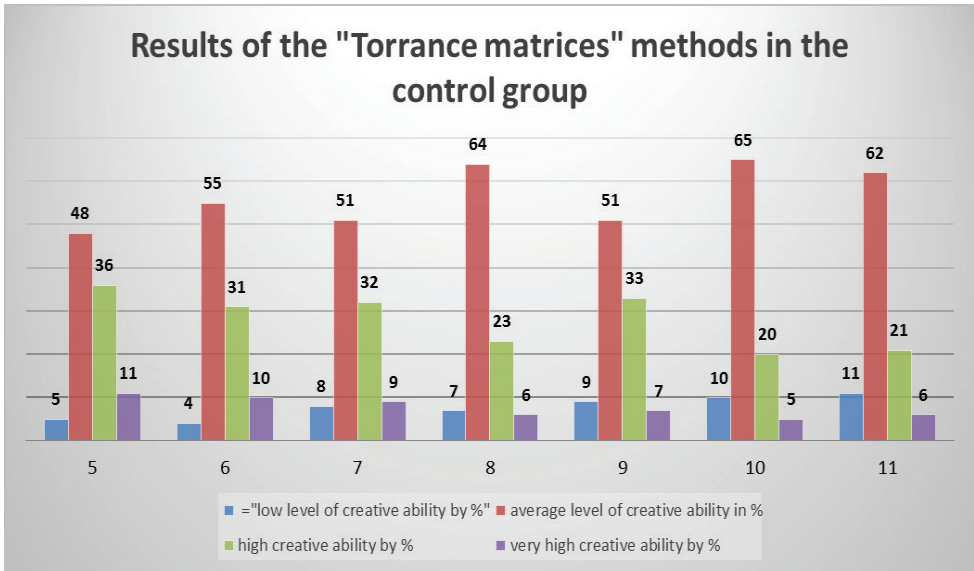


Figure 1. Results of the "Torrance matrices" methods in the control group

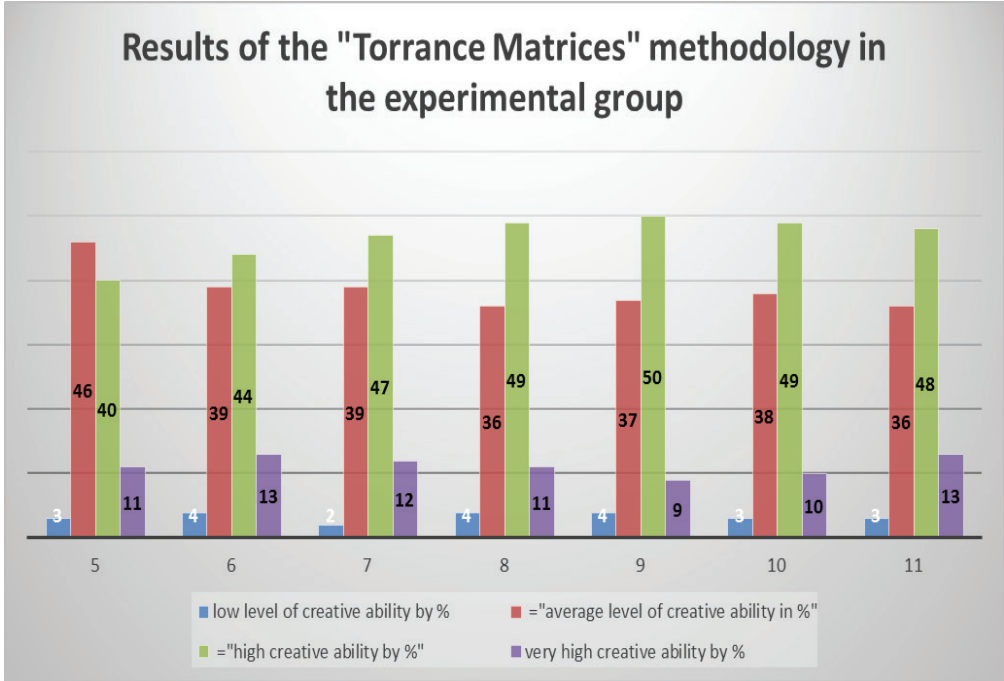


Figure 2. Results of the "Torrance Matrices" methodology in the experimental group

According to E. Torrance's methodology for identifying creative abilities, we see that, unlike intelligence in childhood, the level of creative ability in 5-year-olds is very high, around 36%. We also see a sad picture where the level of creative ability decreases with age, reaching 19%, while the average level increases to 66%.

We explain this phenomenon by the standard application of teaching methods; that is, we find that the modern educational system, by demanding mainly standard approaches from children, negatively affects the child's creativity. Noticing this problem, we propose introducing changes to the teaching process and of the educational methods, and we propose a program, the scientific experiment of which we will present later.

As we can see from the results obtained, the dynamics of the development of creative abilities are almost the same in the results of the preliminary study and in the control group. However, we observe significant differences in the experimental group, where creative abilities not only do not decrease, but on the contrary, increase, which indicates that the «Integrated Psychological-Pedagogical» method developed by us has contributed to the development of creative abilities.

Conclusion

The integration of the Montessori method into primary school education provides meaningful opportunities to transform the learning environment into one that fosters autonomy, curiosity, and creativity. The findings of the conducted study show that traditional teaching methods may unintentionally suppress children's natural creative capacities, while the proposed integrated approach supports and enhances these abilities. By blending Montessori principles with standard curriculum expectations, educators can create a more engaging and developmentally supportive educational process. Although successful implementation requires trained teachers, resources, and structural adjustments, even partial integration can positively influence children's motivation, independence, and holistic development. Therefore, the application of the integrated psychological-pedagogical method is a promising direction for improving the quality of primary education and supporting the formation of well-rounded, creative learners.

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PERCEPTION OF THE OTHER AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SPACE

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Abstract

This article aims to reveal the phenomenon of the perception of the other in the context of the psychological characteristics of space. Psychological studies of the perception of the other reveal a number of areas of a person's life in which the processes of adaptation to a new environment, interpersonal relationships, "us"- "them" value orientations, etc., become relevant. Social-psychological studies indicate that the ability to adapt to a new environment quickly and to demonstrate flexibility in social relationships has become a priority for the activity and life of a modern person. In this context, a person's ideas about the Self are also transformed, and new dimensions of alienation emerge, increasingly penetrating the inner world of the person. If psychological studies of the previous century analysed the perceptions of the other mainly in the context of contacts with strangers and migration processes, now the perceptions of the other acquire shades and meanings of the psychological alienation of the person, the distortion of the I-structure. From this point of view, the socio-psychological analysis of the perception of the other is of interest from the point of view of defining and interpreting the psychological space of a person. Below are presented psychological approaches to interpreting a person's psychological space and manifestations of the perception of the other.

Keywords: Perception of the other, psychological space, anonymity, privacy, value orientations.

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Համառոտագիր

Այս հոդվածը նպատակ ունի բացահայտելու օտարի ընկալման երևույթը տարածության հոգեբանական բնութագրերի համատեքստում: Օտարի ընկալման հոգեբանական ուսումնասիրությունները բացահայտում են անձի կյանքի մի շարք ոլորտներ, որոնցում արդիական են դառնում նոր միջավայրին անձի ադապտացիայի գործընթացները, միջանձնային հարաբերությունները, «մենք»-«նրանք» արժեքային կողմնորոշումները և այլն: Սոցիալ-հոգեբանական ուսումնասիրությունները վկայում են, որ ժամանակակից մարդու գործունեության և կյանքի համար առաջնահերթ է դարձել նոր միջավայրին արագ հարմարվելու, սոցիալական փոխհարաբերություններում ձկնունդություն դրսևորելու ունակությունը: Այս համատեքստում որոշակի կերպով տրանսֆորմացվում են նաև անձի պատկերացումները Ես-ի մասին, ի հայտ են գալիս օտարացման նոր հարթություններ, որոնք ավելի ու ավելի են ներթափանցում անձի ներաշխարհ: Եթե նախորդ դարի հոգեբանական ուսումնասիրությունները օտարի ընկալումները վերլուծում էին հիմնականում անձանոթ մարդկանց հետ շփումների, միգրացիոն գործընթացների համատեքստում, ապա այժմ օտարի ընկալումները ձեռք են բերում անձի հոգեբանական օտարացման, Ես-կառուցվածքի աղավաղման երանգներ և իմաստներ: Այս տեսանկյունից հետաքրքրություն է ներկայացնում օտարի ընկալման սոցիալ-հոգեբանական վերլուծությունը անձի հոգեբանական տարածության սահմանման և մեկնաբանման տեսանկյունից: Ստորև ներկայացվում են անձի հոգեբանական տարածության մեկնաբանման հոգեբանական մոտեցումները և օտարի ընկալման դրսևորումները:

Բանալի բառեր՝ օտարի ընկալում, հոգեբանական տարածություն, անանունություն, պրիվատություն, արժեքային կողմնորոշումներ:

Introduction

The perception of the other is closely related to the demarcation of one's own space from the territory of others. Attitudes towards strangers are shaped by established boundaries. Psychological research on this phenomenon covers not only human societies, but also the animal world. Animals demarcate their territory through defecation, urination, and vocalisation, while in humans, territorial demarcation is carried out by symbolic means. Through symbols, people separate

their own territory from strangers, which leads to the formation of a corresponding perception of the other. People and animals also react differently to invasions of their territory. Animals show aggression, while humans have greater tools to respond to invasions. Studies of the phenomenon of the perception of the other are often carried out in the context of interpreting the term "personal distance", separating one's own world from strangers.

Perception of the Other

The term "personal distance" describes the distance that a person maintains between himself and other members of the group. The psychological motives for the formation and maintenance of this distance are related to the idea of the safety of one's own world. For people, space is the fact of the existence of other people, because when a child begins to move independently, open doors, he discovers for himself new territories and new people to whom these territories belong. Space would not be a problem for a person if they lived alone; therefore, space is the fact of the existence of other people, with whom a person must come to terms and take into account (Blanks, 2019).

The first personal space for a child is the distance of his outstretched hand, because when a child learns to grasp, that distance of his outstretched hand is the only space he can control without the help of an adult's help. As the child learns to move, his space gradually expands.

Even though space often means safety, it is different for humans and animals. This difference is due to the existence and significance of social roles in human society. Territorial motives are also different. For animals, these are biological needs (physical security, mating, and food), for people – social needs (social roles, demarcation of one's own and others' territories)" (Bochaver & Khlomov, 2014).

An important factor in the perception of the other is not only the separation and demarcation of one's own territory from strangers, but also the recognition of the other's territory. The perception of the other can also form in a person's inner world. This is evidenced by psychological phenomena such as anonymity and privacy. A person can alienate themselves by creating pseudonyms or literary names, or by communicating anonymously with others in the virtual world, on social networks, etc. The perception of the other opens up new opportunities from the point of view of the study of psychological space, creating a framework for understanding and interpreting the phenomenon in the psychological sciences (Blanks, 2019; Lingis, 1972).

Classifications of Interpersonal Distance

American anthropologist Edward Hall, together with linguist George Trager, studied the interpersonal distance necessary for a person to function normally. During their research, they identified 8 types of interpersonal distance, in which human senses are involved in different ways (Hall & Trager, 1953).

Later, E. Hall, developing this theory, proposes 4 classifications of

interpersonal distance, considering that 8 is too complex. The classification includes the following 4 components: intimate zone, personal zone, social zone and public zone. Each of these four has its own maximum and minimum limit.

The distance near the intimate zone is the limit for making love, when it is possible to feel the warmth of another person's body with your body. At this distance, people communicate with each other in a whisper.

The distance from the intimate zone is from 6 to 16 inches (approximately 15–41 cm). At this distance, people's heads cannot easily touch each other, but you can easily touch the other person by extending your hand. At this distance, you can see the other person's features very closely and smell their scent. This is the distance at which a person becomes nervous when strangers approach, since it is taboo for non-contact species to engage in physical contact with strangers. At this distance, people still communicate in whispers.

The distance near the personal zone is 1.5 to 2.5 feet. At this distance, the other person's features are still clearly visible, and you can touch them by extending your hand.

The distance from the personal zone is 2.5 to 4 feet. This is the distance at which you can touch the other person's fingers if they also extend their hand. This is the limit of physical dominance, because beyond this limit, it is no longer so easy to touch the other person. At this distance, the tone of the interlocutors' voices is higher than a whisper.

The distance near the social zone is 4 to 7 feet. At this distance, it takes some effort to touch the other person. The tone of the voice is so high that the conversation can be heard from a distance of 12 feet (the tone of the voice varies among representatives of different cultures). The distance between people working together is the near social distance zone. At this distance, looking down on the other person has a dominance effect, as does the conversation between a superior and a subordinate.

The distance from the social zone is 7 to 12 feet. This distance is more formal. The desks and chairs of people in important positions in offices are large and far enough to maintain this distance. From this distance, the other person's entire body is visible.

The near social distance zone is 12 to 25 feet. At this distance, it is possible to take self-defence measures in the event of danger to the person. The conversation is conducted loudly, but not at full volume.

The far social distance zone is defined of 30 feet or more. This is the distance that is maintained around important public figures. At this distance, not only is the body of the other person visible, but also their surroundings.

It is noteworthy that these standards may vary across cultures.

The mentioned standards were established by studying American society. There may be cultures and societies where any of these four interpersonal zones are absent. For example, among Arabs, there is no personal distance at all.

Almost simultaneously with Edward Hall's work "Hidden Space" (1966), the work "Privacy and Freedom" (1967) by American professor, public law specialist Alan Westin (1929–2013) was published, in which the author distinguishes four types of privacy from the point of view of law that exist in Western democratic societies (Westin, 1968). They are: solitude, intimacy, anonymity and reserve.

Solitude is the state of being separate from the group, that is, physical loneliness. However, this does not imply isolation, because a person's senses can be affected by various stimuli, such as sound, light, and smell. Depending on a person's political views and religious beliefs, they may be convinced that special services, spirits, and gods are watching them in solitude. That is, even in solitude, a person may not feel alone. Loneliness is also a state when a person is honest with himself, immersed in himself. "Loneliness is the most complete state of separation that a person can achieve" (Westin, 1968).

Alan Westin describes intimacy as part of a small unit of intimacy, separated from the group. In intimacy, a person has access to close relationships in which they are not tense. Such relationships can be between two or more people. Typical examples of an intimate unit are the relationships of married couples, friends, and even colleagues. According to the author, without intimacy, the basic need for human communication will remain unsatisfied.

The next zone, anonymity, is the state of remaining unknown in public places, among other people, and, as a result, being free there. In such a way, a perception of the other appears. When there are different people around you, none of whom know you or follow you. In such a situation, a person still feels free and does not behave as he would in an environment of familiar people, because being under constant surveillance makes a person tense. It is already clear that this type of privacy is not available to celebrities.

It is interesting that, in conditions of anonymity, people tend to be more honest than in the presence of relatives, because they receive a more objective response from the other person. In addition, by being honest with others, a person does not make himself vulnerable, because that stranger will disappear from his life the next moment.

Another type of anonymity is the publication of books under a pseudonym, when a person wants to share their ideas, but remain unknown. All these manifestations of anonymity are characterised by the author as a demand for public secrecy and privacy.

Moreover, the fourth type of privacy, as defined by A. Westin, the reserve, concerns the psychological barriers people create between themselves to hide something. According to the author, human life is mainly spent in reserve and intimacy. A person experiences the freedom of solitude and anonymity less and less throughout his life, and therefore, he needs to protect himself from others. "Even in the most intimate relationships, communication with another person is never complete, and is always based on the need to hide some parts of his own

'self' that are too personal or embarrassing to show to others." A. Westin considers reserve to be a manifestation of "social distance" and claims that it is present in any type of relationship.

American social psychologist Irwin Altman (1930) defines privacy as follows: "Privacy is the control of boundaries within which people sometimes become open and accessible to others, and sometimes closed to others" (Altman, 1977). Various circumstances condition the process of opening and closing. Irwin Altman identified three functions of privacy:

- Control of social interaction,
- Development of plans and strategies for interaction with others,
- Development and support of one's own identity.

Moreover, without privacy, it is impossible to form an individuality. "The mechanisms of privacy determine the boundaries of the individual. When the permeability of these boundaries is under the control of the person, a sense of individuality develops. However, what is vital for self-determination is not the inclusion or exclusion of others, but the control of those contacts, if desired. If I can control what is "me" and what is not "me", if I can determine what is "me" and what is not "me", and if I can see my boundaries and the area of my control, then I can take serious steps to understand and define who I am. Thus, the mechanisms of privacy help me define/determine myself" (Altman, 1978). The topic of privacy has received little attention in Russian professional literature. Privacy can be considered a phenomenon more characteristic of Western societies. However, based on Western literature and practice, psychology professor Sofia Nartova-Bochaver, in her monograph "Psychological Space of the Person" (2005), identified six areas of psychological space, including both territorial and temporal aspects, as well as social and spiritual aspects. These areas are: the physical body, space, personal belongings, habits, friends, and taste or values. Taste and values are in the same subgroup (Nartova-Bochaver, 2005).

As we see, S. Nartova-Bochaver acts in the same way as E. Hall and A. Westin did before her; she chooses the body of a person as the point of calculation. The sovereignty of the body also underlies the boundary of the space "physical body" defined by S. Nartova-Bochaver. The idea of the sovereignty of the body is as obvious as an axiom and does not even need proof. The security of the body gives a person a sense of security, and vice versa; when the body is threatened, the person cannot feel safe (Nartova-Bochaver, 2005). Security is one of the lowest needs of Maslow's pyramid, a need that everyone has. Therefore, we can conclude that the security of each person begins, first of all, with the security of his body. Any encroachment on a person's body invades their personal space and is actually violence. As a result of violence against the body, some basic human needs are frustrated, such as the need for food.

In addition, the body is the main orientator for a person in space. This is what the 20th-century German philosopher, phenomenologist Edmund Husserl

thought. “‘Here’ is the place where I am with my body, more precisely, it is my body... ‘There’ is determined by ‘here’. If there is no ‘here’, then there can be no ‘there’... ‘There’ is the place where my body is not, or rather, it is what my body is not. Therefore, the transformation of ‘there’ into ‘here’, that is, the conquest of ‘there’, means the transformation not of my body into mine, into the continuation of my body... Therefore, the transformation of not my body into a continuation of my body means that it becomes my tool” (Лекторский, 1980). Here, once again, we see how the body is the zero point of calculation.

S. Nartova-Bochaver distinguished the following functions of the body in space:

- Self-acceptance, which implies the establishment of a connection between one’s own needs and body parts,
- Establishment of a connection with the environment,
- Ensuring a reliable basic trust in the world,
- Development of subjectivity, which implies independence from the environment and its changes,
- The possibility of purposeful activity,
- The possibility of mastering space,
- The possibility of establishing a long-term and reliable attachment.

In order for us to be able to develop and expand our space, that is, to conquer "there," we first need a safe and secure "here" that will allow us to explore and discover "there." In this manner, we confirm that we differ from the others – all humans who are discovered “there”, far from us. In other words, we “create” the stranger, who, by opposing us in psychological or physical space, forms the structure of the Self.

Research methods

The research on the perception of the other is based on theoretical approaches to the definition and classification of psychological space. The perception of the other is revealed through a comparison of the definitions of the psychological space of a person in different theoretical approaches.

The selection and application of interdisciplinary methods of comparison and analysis allow us to reveal a summary picture of the perception of the other, and to highlight the patterns of its formation and the intrapersonal and interpersonal manifestations.

Functions of Psychological Space

The most obvious fact proving the need for a person to have his own space and its importance is his own home. A home is necessary for a comfortable life.

Below, we present the functions of space identified by S. Nartova-Bochaver.

- Space is an indicator of social identification, that is, it shows the status of an individual within a group.
- Space allows you to control the intensity of social contacts.

- Space allows you to control the flow of information.
- Space protects against invasion and external pressures.
- Space provides an opportunity for constructive activity.
- Space provides an opportunity for psychological recovery (Nartova-Bochaver, 2005).

The boundary of personal belongings follows the space. After the child recognises his body and masters his first personal zone, he begins to move independently, expanding his space and, of course, recognising the objects around him. Objects play a large role in people's lives. In addition to their purposeful use, which is motivated by the needs of the individual, objects also have symbolic meaning, which is vividly expressed in literature, in the epics, myths, and fairy tales of people.

Things can tell a lot about their owner. Some things are a necessity and symbolise protection, and some things are an indicator of a person's status in society. That is, in addition to their functional use, things also carry information, which requires a certain level of sensitivity to understand. For example, many of us often feel more confident when our phone is more expensive. This is a rather vivid manifestation of the connection between a person and the thing that belongs to him.

Encroachments on a person's things are perceived by him as violence. For example, answering someone else's phone call is already an invasion of his territory.

Considering the role of things in a person's life, S. Nartova-Bochaver identified the following functions:

- Things are tools,
- Things are communicative guides,
- Things are a means of self-presentation,
- Things are a means of maintaining personal and social identity,
- Things are a means of establishing contact with reality,
- Things are a resource for self-support,
- Things are markers of personal space (Nartova-Bochaver, 2005).

Things are followed by habits. Habits imply a certain sequence of actions. That is, habits help to coordinate actions, and coordinated actions provide a sense of predictability and reduce tension. It is believed that the formation of habits contributes to the creation of a friendly environment. As a result of habit deprivation, an individual's experiences can be compared to an open gestalt. Habits are especially important for individuals who have little control over their environment and therefore need to know the sequence of actions in advance. This group includes children and the elderly in particular. Respect for customs creates trust in relationships.

Habits provide a person with:

- Predictability, which reduces the level of uncertainty,

- Time–space connection, which means that the individual knows at what time of day which part of the territory will be dominant,
- Time–object connection, which means clarity about when which object will be used,
- The ability to avoid frustration caused by unfinished actions,
- Social status perception through leadership and subordination.

The so-called interruption of habits causes discomfort in the person (Nartova–Bochaver, 2005). The next thing we will talk about is social ties or friends. Social ties are about creating trusting relationships. When a person does not expect danger from their friend, they trust them. However, this type of relationship is often about choice and freedom of choice. A person must be able to decide for themselves with whom they want to create social ties. Otherwise, when a person is introduced into his life with someone with whom he is forced to communicate, or when he lives in limited conditions and cannot get acquainted with or establish contact with people of interest to him, then the person feels loneliness and emptiness. That is, the person also needs social contact. However, social contact has a norm, and both contacts above and below it are equally dangerous, as is also evident in the already mentioned “rat paradise” in conditions of overpopulation.

If a person does not have free experience of forming social contacts, not imposed by parents or other authoritative adults, then he cannot form his own attitude towards another person and thus will never achieve psychological intimacy. In addition, without creating social contacts, a person cannot know himself.

Social ties have the following functions:

- Establishing relationships of psychological intimacy,
- Starting from a certain age, also establishing sexual intimacy,
- Choosing a reference group or significant other,
- Developing self-awareness,
- Acquiring personal and social identity,
- Accepting one’s own responsibility in forming relationships with others.

The ultimate boundary of the psychological space is values. Values give a person’s existence existential meaning and guide their actions. At this boundary are thoughts, works of art, everything that arises from thought or is an idea itself. It is no secret that, in the modern world, intellectual property can be registered to protect it. This indicates that a person’s thoughts are important and that these thoughts belong to him. That is, thoughts are an important component of a person’s identification and an important part of their essence.

The boundary of values of the psychological space has the following functions for a person:

- Values provide existential self-confidence, which implies freedom, meaning of existence, and appreciation of one’s own existence.

- Provide a creative attitude towards one's own life,
- Provide a critical approach to ideological influence,
- Provide personal responsibility (Nartova–Bochaver, 2005).

If we carefully examine the components of the psychological space indicated by S. Nartova–Bochaver, we will see that the violence against the first three boundaries – the physical body, space and things – is most obvious, and the violence against the next three – habits, social ties and values – has no visible traces in material terms. In addition, if the absence of the first three can directly threaten the physical existence of a person, then the absence of the second triad does not threaten the physical existence of a person, but significantly affects the quality of his life. From the above, we can conclude that the more developed the society, the higher the level of delimitation of the psychological space of its representatives. And vice versa, the more backward the society, the lower the threshold of the psychological space of its representatives. In addition, in this scheme of psychological space, there is a hierarchy similar to that in Maslow's pyramid of needs. If a person does not have access to the lower thresholds of psychological space – the boundaries of the body and space, then he cannot claim higher thresholds, such as the boundary of social ties and values.

Even though the zones of psychological space defined by S. Nartova–Bochaver are quite extensive and include various aspects of human life, we nevertheless dare to say that this classification is not complete, and we can add one more zone: the virtual domain. In other words, along with the development of technologies, another zone is added to our psychological space, and that is virtual space.

“...We believe it is necessary and possible to distinguish the “psychological space of an individual in the Internet environment” – in cyberspace, or the “virtual psychological space of an individual” as part of the general psychological space of an individual, which will allow us to make efforts to study its features in the future” (Petrova & Shapovalenko, 2014).

Social networks are an integral part of cyberspace, creating a new field for human interaction. People spend a lot of time on social networks, especially young people. Although social networks are now so widespread that one can even talk about age-specific features. This means there are social networks more popular with older users, and others more popular with younger users. For example, young people in the West avoid the social platform “Facebook”, because their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents are there.

At the same time, it is worth remembering that this zone of psychological space has its own nuances and can be divided into distinct boundaries. Moreover, it is quite universal, as it offers a person a wide range of opportunities to fill the psychological spaces that are not available to them in real life.

For example, if in real life a person does not have access to public privacy, he can achieve it in the virtual domain by spreading his thoughts through

anonymous accounts.

Research in this field has allowed us to distinguish three important models of a person's self-concept when forming contacts in the virtual domain. These are: the real self, the representative self, and the interpretative self.

“The model of the real self is created in the real field of communication, harmonising personal and social ideas that are confirmed by life experience. The model of the representative self exists as an image shell that needs confirmation in a virtual text or image.

The model of the interpretative self lives an independent life, outside the control of the author. The text is read by someone else, which is how the virtual image comes to life” (Petrova & Shapovalenko, 2014).

The Virtual Space

From the above, we can conclude that each user presents himself in the virtual space through three aspects, but the three aspects of the “I” mentioned are likely highly individual and vary in proportion for each user. For example, people may prefer a model of their representative “I”, which in reality may have very little to do with their real “I”.

“The virtual environment has expanded the space for communication, including the mediated component, which, in contrast to direct contact between subjects, has created the illusion of freedom and independence of communication between subjects. This mediated form of communication, in contrast to the direct form of communication, has been called communication” (Fedorkina, 2015).

The fact is that communication over time is increasingly replacing real contact, which cannot help but affect a person's psychological characteristics. At the same time, in this case, there are also many negative consequences, of which it is especially worth noting that the virtual space creates a certain atmosphere of impunity, as a result of which the representative model of the user's “I” can be much more aggressive than in real life. The latter is also possible due to the anonymity allowed on the Internet. “The anonymity allowed on the Internet allows a person to experiment with different social roles and different ‘I’, without fear of negative evaluation or social prohibitions that would follow in the case of live contact” (Bochaver & Khlomov, 2014). Data obtained as early as 2005 proves the above phenomenon. The data show that a quarter of adolescents pretend to be representatives of a different gender, age or ethnicity on the Internet, falsify their political views and sexual orientation.

In other words, the ability to remain anonymous in virtual space allows people to try on different roles and reveal themselves, thereby getting to know themselves better. However, the idea of remaining anonymous and unpunished gives users, in addition to the opportunity to express themselves, the space to express aggression.

Various connections have been identified between a person's self-expression in the virtual domain and that user's real identity, which are listed below.

“Virtual self-expression in the Internet space acts as a fulfilment of unfulfilled desires in real life (for example, for power and ability, beauty, belonging, etc.).

Virtual self-presentation presents an ideal “I” that replaces the unsatisfactory real “I” in real life.

If the user is dissatisfied with any aspect of his personality (appearance, gender, age, ethnicity, social status, etc.), then virtual self-presentation and communication create an opportunity to “escape from his own body”.

Virtual self-presentation gives an opportunity to manifest the suppressed part of the individual, which is associated with disapproved aggressive, forceful or sexual tendencies.

Network identity can also be interpreted as an expression of the versatility of the “I”, as a reflection of multiple identities in modern society (Shapovalenko, 2014).

As we can see, in virtual reality, we can fill the psychological gap in real life, but this phenomenon cannot be without its negative side.

Social networks are structured in such a way that each user can share links on their wall that they consider important and worthy of attention. The information the user shares is also available to their friends. This mechanism for distributing news establishes a new system of news perception, in which friends determine the importance of information. The growing drive for likes forces users to consider whether the material is worthy of publication before sharing it. According to experts, this phenomenon poses a risk of increased conformism among users.

In addition, the focus on the user himself is increasing, which in turn infects every user with narcissism. “On Facebook, you can easily become a novelty. It forces people to behave like the media and tell stories that others will like. ...The publication of personal life and the desire for attention and recognition on social platforms go hand in hand with a powerful social trend that sociologists call “cultural narcissism” (Steinschaden, 2011). Research shows that the number of narcissists in Western society has increased. “If in 1982 only 15% of those surveyed could be called narcissists, then in 2006 this number reached 25%” (Steinschaden, 2011).

In addition to the above negative phenomena, another factor must be taken into account. It is cyberbullying. Just as a violation of ethics in real life violates the boundaries of a person’s psychological space, a violation of cyberethics violates the boundaries of a person’s psychological space in the virtual domain, which can cause serious psychological injuries. “Although the balls flying on the Internet are not real, they can still hurt” (Bochaver & Khlomov, 2014).

If in the real world it is possible to establish boundaries and show the other person your territory through physical distance, objects, closed doors, and other visible and tangible means, then in the virtual world it is much more difficult to do so. While an individual gains a new field of psychological space for self-expression

in the virtual realm, he also enters a realm where he becomes more vulnerable, because the traditional methods of protection familiar to him do not work there.

Conclusion

We conclude that the more invisible the boundaries of psychological space are, the easier it is to cross them, to invade someone else's territory, so that he does not perceive it as an invasion.

Thus, we can say that psychological space has two components: physical and psychological. The physical components of space are the key to the development of psychological space. These are personal, intimate, social, and public distances, which are based on the distance between the individual and other members of the group. Moreover, the psychological component also includes terms that acquire symbolic meaning, social ties and, of course, values. Due to the peculiarities of the formation of the physical and psychological components of space, the perception of the stranger is also formed.

Summarising the study of the perception of the other and psychological space, we can say that psychological space is the space completely under a person's control, where they feel safe and regulate the amount of contact with others. The space that is beyond control is "occupied" by others. In some cases, a person "places" himself in a stranger's space that is uncontrollable for others. This happens in accordance with the laws of anonymity and privacy. In addition to being a safe environment where a person satisfies his vital needs, the psychological space is also a space where he can satisfy needs that contribute to his development as an individual, provide opportunities for self-realisation, and protect his ego. In other words, we know the person "there" through and with the help of the "here", and vice versa.

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SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ADDICTIVE SOCIALIZATION

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Abstract

In modern society, the socialisation of adolescents occurs in contexts where various globalisation processes shape individual development. Research in recent decades shows the social multidimensionality of adolescent characteristics, expressed in adolescents' tendencies to disrupt social ties they establish and to transform socially significant values. The socialisation of adolescents takes place in conditions of "decentralisation of values", when the value system formed in society includes age-related value subsystems, which often contradict socially significant value-demand meanings and behavioural models. The age crisis of adolescents is exacerbated in the conditions of the ontological crisis, uncertainty of values, and transformation of modern societies. In this situation, the phenomenon of addictive socialisation arises and is exacerbated. This study focuses on the socio-psychological characteristics of addictive socialisation of adolescence, which were revealed through the method of self-assessment. It has been shown that addictive socialisation develops under the influence of personal and social factors that arise and develop in problematic situations and as a result of distorted perceptions of the consequences of addictive behavioural models, which leads to destructive changes in the socialisation process. Addictive socialisation is characterised by insufficient manifestation of adaptation mechanisms: a distorted perception of reality, increased tension and anxiety, a desire to escape from reality, an emphasis on unmet needs and demonstrative motivation.

Keywords: Addictive socialisation, normative socialisation, perception of reality, behavioural patterns, self-assessment.

ԿԱԽՎԱԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ԶԵՎԱՎՈՐՈՂ ՍՈՑԻԱԼԱԿԱՆԱՑՄԱՆ ՍՈՑԻԱԼ-ՀՈԳԵԲԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԱՌԱՆՁՆԱՀԱՏԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ

ՔՐԻՍՏԻՆԵ ՊԵՏՐՈՍՅԱՆ

ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի
գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ

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Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից հասարակությունում դեռահասների սոցիալականացումը տեղի է ունենում այնպիսի պայմաններում, երբ համաշխարհայնացման տարաբնույթ գործընթացներն ազդում են անձի զարգացման վրա: Վերջին տասնամյակների հետազոտությունները ցույց են տալիս դեռահասության բնութագրման սոցիալական բազմաչափությունը, որն արտահայտվում է դեռահասների կողմից հաստատված սոցիալական կապերը խաթարելու և հասարակայնորեն նշանակալի արժեքների վերափոխման միտումներով: Դեռահասների սոցիալականացումը տեղի է ունենում «արժեքների ապակենտրոնացման» պայմաններում, երբ հասարակությունում ձևավորված արժեքային համակարգում ներառվում են տարիքային արժեքային ենթահամակարգեր, որոնք հաճախ հակադրվում են հասարակայնորեն նշանակալի արժեք-պահանջունքային իմաստներին և վարքային մոդելներին: Դեռահասների տարիքային ճգնաժամը սրվում է ժամանակակից փոխակերպող հասարակությունների գոյաբանական ճգնաժամի, արժեքների անորոշության և տրանսֆորմացիայի պայմաններում: Այս իրավիճակում առաջանում և սրվում է կախվածություն ձևավորող սոցիալականացման երևույթը: Այս ուսումնասիրությունը կենտրոնանում է դեռահասության շրջանում կախվածություն ձևավորող սոցիալականացման սոցիալ-հոգեբանական բնութագրումների վրա, որոնք վեր են հանվել ինքնագնահատման մեթոդի միջոցով: Ցույց է տրվել, որ ադոլեսցենտի սոցիալականացումը զարգանում է անձնական և սոցիալական գործոնների ազդեցության ներքո, որոնք առաջանում և զարգանում են խնդրահարույց իրավիճակներում և կախվածություն ձևավորող վարքային մոդելների հետևանքների վերաբերյալ աղավաղված ընկալումների հետևանքով, ինչը հանգեցնում է սոցիալականացման գործընթացի քայքայիչ (դեստրուկտիվ) փոփոխությունների: Կախվածություն ձևավորող սոցիալականացումը բնութագրվում է հարմարվողականության մեխանիզմների անբավարար դրսևորմամբ՝ իրականության աղավաղված ընկալմամբ, լարվածության և տագնապայնության աճով, իրականությունից փախչելու ցանկությամբ, չբավարարված կարիքների և ցուցադրական մոտիվացիայի շեշտադրմամբ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ կախվածություն ձևավորող սոցիալականացում,

նորմատիվ սոցիալականացում, իրականության ընկալում, վարքային մոդելներ, ինքնազնահատական:

Introduction

Addictive socialisation is a phenomenon of personality development that manifests itself in specific socio-psychological conditions. To understand the essence of addictive socialisation, it is necessary to examine the fundamental mechanisms of personality socialisation. Socialisation, as is well known, is the process of assimilating social norms and rules of behaviour accepted in a given society. Socialisation is not only the result of an individual's adaptation to society's socially significant values of society, but also the result of socially induced norms and rules of behaviour that can reflect values recognised throughout society and those formed within specific social strata or subcultures. In the first case, an individual is accustomed to social values through the main institutions of socialisation—the family and the educational system. In the second case, an individual may be socialised in institutions of socialisation that do not reflect general social norms of behaviour. In this case, the result of socialisation is the assimilation of norms and rules accepted in a particular subculture, which do not reflect the values and rules of behaviour recognised by society as a whole. To understand the fundamental mechanisms of addictive socialisation, it is important to clarify:

- which age and social groups are more inclined to adopt behavioural norms accepted in specific subcultures of society;
- what socio-psychological conditions of individual adaptation trigger the need to adopt behavioural norms that are not accepted or condemned in a given society;
- what emotional background triggers the need to adopt socially condemned behavioral norms.

Theoretical-Methodological Bases

As research in the field of personality socialisation shows, the need to adopt addictive behaviour manifests itself primarily in difficult life situations, when a person finds themselves in a problematic, often conflictual, situation. As Starcevic (2016) noted, when faced with a difficult, often insoluble, situation, a person develops a response that is not always adequate or rational. If adolescents find themselves in a difficult, conflictual situation, it is highly likely that they have not yet mastered rational response methods. Therefore, in adolescence, one often encounters examples of responses to problematic or conflictual situations characterised by:

- an inadequate perception of reality,
- a growing sense of tension and anxiety,
- a desire to escape from reality,
- unmet needs,

– demonstrative motivation (Shaffer et al., 2004; Panova & Carbonell, 2018).

It can also be assumed that, depending on personality traits, this tension will be relieved in different ways. Often, during adolescence, due to an inability to think rationally and to see socially beneficial solutions to difficult situations, inappropriate methods of resolving problems or conflicts prevail (Pine, 2004; Lestaluhu & Lukman, 2019; Kon, 1978). Teenagers often resort to various psychoactive substances, which temporarily relieve emotional stress, but gradually, due to addiction, the desired effect fails. In this case, the teenager seeks to add other psychoactive substances or change them in order to achieve the expected pleasure or relieve emotional stress. Maintaining certain emotions, accompanied by escapism, becomes increasingly necessary. This process initially occurs in parallel with primary activities, but then begins to replace them, forcing the teenager into greater and greater involvement in addictive behaviour (Mykola et al., 2019; Rogers, 1994; Sankar & Reddy, 2012).

An analysis of the scientific literature (Sidis, 1899; Tyson & Tyson, 1998; Andreassen, 2015; *Kuss & Griffiths, 2018*) suggests that people with an addiction are individuals with a persistent desire to change their psychophysical state, a reduced tolerance for difficulties, and a tendency to shirk responsibility in decision-making. They also exhibit a loss of a previously significant value system, low frustration tolerance, and social infantilism.

Thus, addictive socialisation is a form of personality socialisation in which the individual accepts and adapts not to socially significant values and rules of behaviour, but to addictive behaviour patterns. In general, it can be concluded that addictive behaviour is a consequence and result of addictive socialisation (Erickson, 1995).

This assertion is important from both a theoretical and practical perspective. Examining addictive behaviour from the perspective of the phenomenon of socialisation allows us to develop a methodological basis for preventing addictive behaviour in adolescence. At this stage, special attention should be paid to psychological consultation with adolescent parents, as the development and progression of addictive behaviour often occurs due to problematic parent-child relationships or a lack of understanding of the nature of addictive behaviour (Elkonin, 1971; Nalchadzhyan, 2001; Rubinstein, 1973).

Based on various socio-psychological studies on addictive behaviour, the following characteristics of the emotional-volitional sphere and cognitive processes of the human psyche can be identified:

- unstable emotional state,
- increased anxiety,
- dependence on the opinions of others,
- impaired self-control,
- difficulty in self-realisation,
- difficulty coping with difficulties,

- destructive transformation of value orientations,
- decreased optimistic, cognitive, work, and altruistic motivation.

It should also be noted that a characteristic feature of addictive socialisation is the persistent nature of the individual's addictive behaviour. This characteristic of addictive socialisation allows us to distinguish temporary maladjustment from the phenomenon under study. This maladjustment can occur at different periods of life and differs from permanent maladjustment in that the individual does not adopt addictive behaviour patterns as a primary model. Temporary maladjustment can last from a few minutes to several weeks or months. It typically occurs in shock, during life-changing situations, or in unexpected, problematic situations. Typically, if an individual possesses a certain internal potential for overcoming life's difficulties, the corresponding psychological resources and defence mechanisms are activated, shaping the individual's behavioural response to the emerging problematic situation. Overcoming temporary maladjustment occurs through previously learned social values and is a consequence of the individual's socialisation (*Kim, 2017*). Permanent maladjustment of personality differs from temporary maladjustment in that addictive behaviour becomes central to the personality's self-structure. The personality utilises the results of addictive socialisation, thereby increasingly strengthening addictive behaviour patterns. In other words, the personality's affiliation with the social environment occurs through familiarisation, assimilation, adaptation, and subsequent persistent application of addictive behaviour patterns.

By people with an addiction, we mean adolescent and young adult individuals who exhibit persistent addictive behaviour, which includes:

- polydrug-seeking behaviour for self-regulation and adaptation in preclinical forms, i.e., individuals who use but are not yet dependent on drugs;
- internet gaming behaviour, which manifests itself in the narrowing of interests and needs to the sphere of internet gaming activity, the intensity, duration, and repetitive nature of internet gaming activity;
- deviant/delinquent behaviour, characterised by a desire to identify with a deviant/delinquent subculture of society.

It is known that a reduced level of socio-psychological adaptation is a risk factor for adolescent addiction. This manifests itself in a spontaneous, undirected, and unstructured nature of adaptation, leading to the destruction of the individual's structural integrity. The crisis of adolescence is always characterised by a loss of security and comfort, a disruption of internal balance, increased anxiety, and heightened existential fears. By overcoming this crisis, adolescents can successfully socialise—that is, develop progressively, assimilating social norms and values, demonstrating adaptability as the ability to overcome frustrations toward a sense of their own significance in society and the assimilation of socially beneficial norms and values (*Abel et al., 2013; Lodi-Smith & DeMarree, 2017*).

However, one often encounters examples of not successful socialisation, but addictive socialisation, which is characterised by lower personal adaptive potential, diminished communication skills, and moral normativity. Manifestations of adaptive activity are associated with any problematic situation, including the experience of conflicts (external or internal), so anyone can experience partial maladjustment. However, this condition is better characterised as situational, which does not alter the degree of socialisation of the individual. Addictive behaviour is determined by the unsuccessful socialisation of the individual (James, 1890; Spurrett, 2016). Research in the field of personal socialisation has shown that people with an addiction are characterised by a state of identity characterised by a weak sense of self, a lack of progressive self-determination and self-realisation, a failure to assimilate socially significant goals, and a distorted perception of these goals. In a problematic situation, a person with addictive behaviour chooses for themselves the values and behaviour patterns defined by the addictive reference group. This status is characterised by an idealised vision of the future, egocentrism, conceit, and a desire for risk. Addictive behaviour develops as a result of a lack of internal resources. In this case, the lack of internal potential must typically be compensated for by socialisation institutions, through which the adolescent chooses socially and personally beneficial ways to resolve a problematic situation. However, with addictive socialisation, the chosen solutions are themselves addictive, as they are learned in an addictive social environment (Splender, 2021; Steven & Bacigalupe, 2001; Sukhov, 2021).

Methods

The addictive socialisation among adolescents was studied with a self-assessment method. This method was used in an empirical study conducted at the Psychological Observatory of the International Scientific-Educational Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. One hundred and eighty adolescents aged 15–17 participated in the study. Respondent selection was based on expert assessments of adolescents with addictive behaviour. As a result, the entire sample (N=180) consisted of adolescents with addictive behaviour. Adolescents were asked to rate the following statements on a 10–point scale, pertaining to the socio-psychological characteristics of addictive socialisation:

1. In a problematic situation, I easily find a solution.
2. In a problematic situation, I am willing to ask my friend/parent/teacher for help.
3. I try to be a leader in conflict situations.
4. My vision of the future is shared only by my peers.
5. In a problematic situation, I often behave like my online game character.
6. I would like my family to be like my online game character's family.

After the adolescents rated all the statements, a comparative analysis of the ratings was conducted. The results of the comparative analysis allowed us to draw conclusions about the socio-psychological characteristics of addictive socialisation

and develop a tool for further monitoring the addictive socialisation of adolescents.

Results and Discussion

To present the results of the study, a nominal scale was first created to represent the selected statements (Table 1).

Table 1.

Nominal scale of the statements

Nominal scale	Statements
1	In a problematic situation, I easily find a solution.
2	In a problematic situation, I am willing to ask my friend for help.
3	In a problematic situation, I am willing to ask my parents for help.
4	In a problematic situation, I am willing to ask my teacher for help.
5	I try to be a leader in conflict situations.
6	My vision of the future is shared only by my peers.
7	In a problematic situation, I often behave like my online game character.
8	I would like my family to be like my online game character’s family.

The respondents’ ratings on the nominal scale were averaged. The results of the assessment are presented in Figure 1.

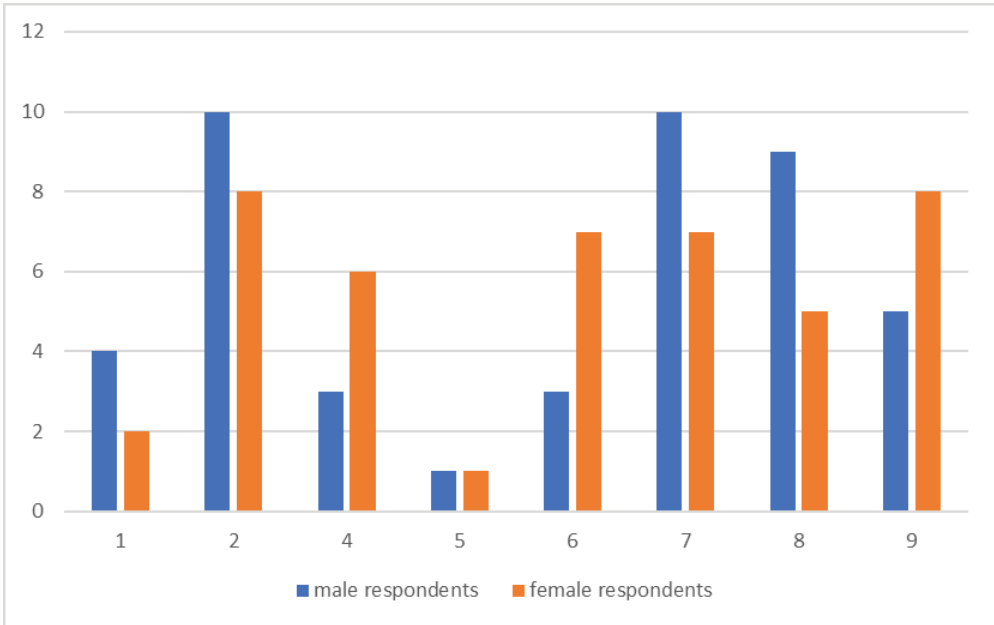


Figure 1. Mean variables of the statements’ assessments among male and female respondents

As the results of the evaluation of statements to identify addictive behaviour showed, the average responses of adolescent boys were more prevalent than the assessments of girls on the 1st, 2nd, 7th and 8th nominal scale. As we see, in conditions of addictive socialisation, leadership is the weakest indicator: adolescents, lacking leadership skills and competencies for rational problem-solving, tend to engage in dependent behaviour. The ability to independently resolve difficult situations is also weak.

Conclusion

Thus, the addictive trajectory of adolescent socialisation is a process of internalisation of deviant addictive patterns based on predisposing personality dispositions and low adaptability, leading to the formation of an addictive identity and worsening maladaptation. Addictive socialisation develops under the influence of personal and social risk factors, misconceptions about the effects of addictive agents, and deviant motives for engaging with them, which inhibit the socialisation process. Individuals with an addictive trajectory of socialisation are focused on the process of activity and the elicitation of positive emotions. This addictive trajectory of socialisation is characterised by the manifestation of maladaptive personality mechanisms: a state of “dynamic discord”, state-focusedness, ego-directed and demonstrative motivation, unconstructive coping mechanisms, and an intrapsychic

tendency to repress and distort reality. Addictive socialization presupposes:

- the formation of an attitude towards regular access to the addictive agent;
- the presence in the immediate social environment of an atmosphere that encourages access to the addictive agent as a way of filling leisure time;
- underdeveloped skills for analyzing and critically evaluating information about the agent's properties;
- the severity of tactical motivation (shortened time perspective);
- traits of an addictive personality;
- the consolidation of mechanisms that provoke access to the addictive agent;
- a deficit of prosocial activity and inclusion in socially useful activities necessary for full development.

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THE NEED TO INTRODUCE THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN ARMENIA

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Abstract

This article addresses the pressing need to integrate international models of doctoral education into the Armenian higher education system, situating the analysis within the broader discourse on the transformation of third-level education in the post-Soviet context. While doctoral education in Armenia largely reflects the model of individualised scientific supervision model inherited from the Soviet academic tradition, leading international universities have moved towards structured doctoral programs. These programs, frequently organised through doctoral or graduate schools, embed comprehensive educational components, distributed supervisory practices, systematic progress monitoring, and explicit mechanisms for preparing doctoral candidates for multiple career trajectories.

The study is based on an analytical review of open-source data from top-ranked universities included in the QS World University Rankings by Subject "Education", complemented by relevant policy and institutional literature. The analysis focuses on five dimensions of doctoral education: organisational models, admission principles, program content and workload, monitoring and supervisory arrangements, and procedures for completion and defence. The findings reveal substantial divergences between Armenian practices and international norms. Specifically, admissions in Armenia remain exam-oriented rather than portfolio- and interview-based; the educational component is largely formalistic and lacks structured development of transferable skills; supervisory responsibility is concentrated on a single academic, in contrast to distributed models; and interdisciplinarity is constrained by rigid regulatory frameworks.

Systemic barriers—including inadequate financial support mechanisms, limited institutional capacity to deliver structured programs, and weak engagement with non-academic labour markets—further exacerbate challenges in aligning with international standards. Nevertheless, recent initiatives under EU-funded projects demonstrate incremental progress, providing a foundation for broader reforms.

The article concludes that a comprehensive, nation-wide reconfiguration of doctoral education in Armenia is imperative. Drawing on international best practices, reforms should prioritise the institutionalisation of doctoral schools, integration of structured curricula emphasising both research and transferable skills, diversification of supervisory models, and the establishment of stronger links with external stakeholders. Such measures are critical to ensuring the competitiveness of Armenian doctoral education and its capacity to prepare researchers for complex and evolving global academic and professional environments.

Keywords: Doctoral education, higher education reforms, structured doctoral programs, supervisory models, Armenia

ԴՈԿՏՈՐԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄԻՋԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ՓՈՐՁԻ ՆԵՐԳԻՐՄԱՆ ԱՆՀՐԱԺԵՇՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆՈՒՄ

ԱՏՈՄ ՄԻԻԹԱՐՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի դեկան,
Ֆիզիկամաթեմատիկական գիտությունների թեկնածու,
մանկավարժության դոցենտ

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Համառոտագիր

Սույն հոդվածը վերաբերում է դոկտորական կրթության միջազգային մոդելները Հայաստանի բարձրագույն կրթության համակարգում ինտեգրելու հրատապ անհրաժեշտությանը՝ վերլուծությունը կատարելով հետխորհրդային տարածքում երրորդ մակարդակի կրթության փոխակերպման վերաբերյալ ավելի լայն քննարկումների համատեքստում: Մինչ Հայաստանում ասպիրանտուրան հիմնականում արտացոլում է խորհրդային ակադեմիական ավանդույթից ժառանգված անհատական գիտական ղեկավարման մոդելը, առաջատար միջազգային համալսարաններն անցել են կառուցվածքային դոկտորական ծրագրերի: Այդ ծրագրերը, որոնք հաճախ կազմակերպվում են դոկտորական դպրոցների միջոցով, ներառում են համապարփակ կրթական բաղադրիչներ, բաշխված ղեկավարման պրակտիկա, առաջընթացի համակարգային մոնիթորինգ և ուսանողներին բազմաբնույթ կարիերայի պատրաստելու հստակ մեխանիզմներ:

Հետազոտությունը հիմնված է QS World University Rankings-ում («Կրթություն» ուղղությամբ) ընդգրկված լավագույն համալսարանների բաց առցանց տվյալների վերլուծության վրա, որը լրացվում է նաև վարվող քաղաքականության վերաբերյալ համապատասխան գրականության

ուսումնասիրությանը: Վերլուծությունը կենտրոնանում է ասպիրանտուրայի պատրաստման հինգ չափանիշների վրա՝ կազմակերպական մոդելներ, ընդունելության սկզբունքներ, ծրագրի բովանդակություն և ծանրաբեռնվածություն, մոնիթորինգի և ղեկավարման կարգավորումներ, ինչպես նաև պաշտպանության ընթացակարգեր: Արդյունքները բացահայտում են Հայաստանի պրակտիկայի և միջազգային չափանիշների միջև էական տարբերություններ: Մասնավորապես, Հայաստանում ընդունելությունը մնում է հիմնված քննությունների, այլ ոչ թե թեկնածուի կենսափորձի և հարցազրույցի վրա, կրթական բաղադրիչը մեծապես ձևական է, ղեկավարման պատասխանատվությունը կենտրոնացած է մեկ գիտական ղեկավարի վրա, ի տարբերություն բաշխված ղեկավարման մոդելների, իսկ միջգիտակարգայնությունը սահմանափակվում է կոշտ կարգավորումներով:

Համակարգային խոչընդոտները՝ ներառյալ ֆինանսական աջակցության ոչ բավարար մեխանիզմները, կառուցվածքային ծրագրեր իրականացնելու կազմակերպությունների սահմանափակ ներուժը և աշխատաշուկայի հետ թույլ կապը միջազգային ստանդարտներին համապատասխանելու հետ կապված լրացուցիչ մարտահրավերներ են առաջ բերում: Մյուս կողմից, ԵՄ-ի կողմից ֆինանսավորվող ծրագրերի շրջանակներում վերջին տարիներին կյանքի կոչված նախաձեռնությունները ցույց են տալիս աստիճանական առաջընթաց՝ հիմք նախապատրաստելով ավելի ընդարձակ բարեփոխումների համար:

Այսպիսով, Հայաստանում դոկտորական կրթության համապարփակ, պետական մասշտաբի ձևափոխումն անհրաժեշտություն է: Ելնելով միջազգային լավագույն փորձից՝ բարեփոխումները պետք է առաջնայնություն դարձնեն դոկտորական դպրոցների ինստիտուցիոնալացումը, կառուցվածքային ուսումնական պլանների ինտեգրումը՝ ընդգծելով և՛ գիտահետազոտական, և՛ փոխանցելի հմտությունները, ղեկավարման մոդելների բազմազանացումը և արտաքին շահագրգիռ կողմերի հետ կայուն կապերի հաստատումը: Նման միջոցառումները կարևորագույն նշանակություն ունեն Հայաստանի երրորդ մակարդակի դոկտորական կրթության մրցունակությունն ապահովելու, հետազոտողներին բարդ և զարգացող համաշխարհային ակադեմիական և մասնագիտական միջավայրերին պատրաստելու համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ասպիրանտուրա, դոկտորանտուրա, բարձրագույն կրթության բարեփոխումներ, կառուցվածքային դոկտորական ծրագրեր, ղեկավարման մոդելներ, Հայաստան:

Introduction

In recent years, the Armenian higher education system has been characterised by ongoing discussions about reforms. As a result, it is in constant search of a model for the effective functioning of third-level doctoral education. With the recently adopted Law (“On Higher Education and Science” 2025, Article 3), only PhD studies were included within the framework of higher education, while it was

considered postgraduate education (Mkhitarian & Tchughuryan, 2024, p. 143). In European countries, the transition to structured programs, typical of the United States, began in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Kehm, 2006). This was largely a response to the challenges faced by doctoral education worldwide: globalisation, massification, the growing proportion of young scientists entering non-academic labour markets, and the expanding range of competencies required of graduates (Nerad, 2006). According to the basic principles approved by the European University Association following the Bologna seminar in Salzburg (European University Association – EUA, 2005), doctoral education, in particular, should not be limited to conducting research but should also include a significant educational component aimed at developing both professional and general competencies (Mkhitarian & Begoyan, 2022).

Today, more than 20 years after joining the Bologna Process, the transition to structured doctoral programs in Armenia has either not yet taken place or, in some cases, has not been implemented effectively. This highlights the importance of carefully studying foreign experience in the context of adapting it to the institutional specifics of implementing PhD programs in Armenia.

Methodology

The analytical review presented below is based on data from open sources (primarily university websites) and publications that examine the specifics of implementing doctoral programs across different countries. The selection of universities was carried out as follows: first, the analysis included the websites of all universities ranked in the top 10 of the QS World University Rankings by Subject for Education (QS Rankings 2025). Second, to account for the diversity of national approaches to doctoral education systems, the analysis also included the websites of universities ranked in the top 100 of the same subject ranking (Mkhitarian & Želvys, 2025), representing different countries (covering all countries whose representatives appeared in the top 100 rankings).

The following topics were the focus of the study:

- a. The organisational model of doctoral education,
- b. Admission principles for doctoral programs,
- c. The educational program and academic workload,
- d. Principles and mechanisms for tracking doctoral students' progress,
- e. Principles and procedures for completing educational programs and defending dissertations.

The results

a) Model of Doctoral Education Organisation

The principles of organising the educational process in doctoral programs vary significantly across countries and universities under consideration. Overall, three main models for implementing doctoral programs can be identified:

- 1) A management and training model organised through doctoral schools,

which are independent structural units specifically created to organise and oversee doctoral students' activities,

- 2) A management and training model organised through the interaction of multiple structural units. (this typically involves an interdisciplinary approach with the involvement of specialists from various fields),
- 3) An individual academic supervision model.

This first model can be implemented in two ways: either as a school limited to the doctoral level (doctoral school) or as a school encompassing both master's and doctoral levels (graduate school). The latter is most common in American universities, Japan, and some European universities, such as those in the UK (Oxford, Cambridge), Germany (Free University of Berlin, Humboldt University), Denmark (Aarhus University), and Sweden (Stockholm University).

Doctoral and research schools, whether as independent structural units or as units based on multiple structural entities, typically involve the implementation of structured doctoral programs. These programs include a significant educational component, a distributed system of oversight for doctoral activities, clear benchmarks, and requirements for progress during the course of study. These include expectations related to dissertation preparation, conducting research, preparing publications, participating in seminars and conferences, and more. This approach to doctoral education emerged in response to the massification and globalisation of doctoral studies, as well as to labour market demands for a broader range of skills among graduates.

The individual supervision model is a historically earlier approach, where education is centred on the interaction between the doctoral student and their academic supervisor. In this model, there is no significant mandatory educational component, and the only oversight of the student's activities comes from the academic supervisor. This model is based on the mentorship phenomenon, where doctoral education is viewed as a source of talent primarily for academia, and the doctoral student is seen as an apprentice learning and gaining experience from a scientist supervisor. It should be noted that this model was mainly used in the USSR, including in Armenia.

The results of a large-scale study conducted across 250 European universities by the European University Association indicate that most universities have now adopted the model of doctoral training organised through doctoral schools (Hasgall et al., 2019). In 45% of the universities surveyed, the entire doctoral training process is organised through doctoral schools. Only one in five universities (19%) does not have doctoral schools as separate structural units, and only 4% implement doctoral training exclusively in the format of individual academic supervision.

b) Admission Principles for Doctoral Programs

At foreign universities, the admission procedure for doctoral programs often does not involve formal entrance exams, unlike in Armenia. Admission decisions are frequently made based on the review of an applicant's submitted documents,

and in-person interactions, if they occur, are usually in the format of an interview to get to know the candidate better. In some universities, the first year of doctoral studies serves as an extended selection period with an intermediate exam. Only after passing this exam does the student begin working on their dissertation. This approach can serve as an effective selective mechanism that allows doctoral students to determine whether this type of activity is of interest to them and, if so, to build a foundation for further work. For universities, it provides an opportunity to select the most successful students, which may positively affect doctoral program performance indicators of doctoral programs.

In many cases, admission to a doctoral program requires prior agreement with a supervisor. Sometimes, the chosen supervisor must be approved by the faculty administration. In some cases, the faculty itself seeks a supervisor for the applicant; if none is found, admission is denied. In any case, the scenario where a supervisor is assigned after the student is admitted is almost unheard of.

It is worth noting that admission strategies differ when doctoral students are treated not as students but as employees. In the first scenario, the admission campaign sets deadlines throughout the year, while in the second, there is no strict time frame, and students are recruited for specific projects. If doctoral students are treated more like employees and hired for a research project, they are required to demonstrate their professional skills (e.g., by providing a list of publications). This practice also applies to part-time doctoral programs, serving as a guarantee that students can independently manage their dissertation projects despite reduced engagement.

c) Educational Program and Academic Workload

Structured programs significantly increase doctoral students' academic workload, largely in response to the growing importance of not only research skills but also other competencies. This shift aligns with the trend of training highly qualified professionals for a broader labour market beyond academia. According to a study by the European Council for Doctoral Education, research skills are considered the most important (97%). Additionally, general academic competencies (e.g., grant writing, research ethics) are highly valued (82%), as are knowledge transfer skills and teaching abilities (47% and 45%, respectively) (Hasgall et al., 2019). Several objectives are addressed through coursework:

- **Familiarisation with the chosen field and professionalisation:** These courses are typically offered at the start of the program, serving not only to enhance the professional level of doctoral students but also to provide professional orientation for new applicants.

- **Preparation for conducting independent research:** These courses help doctoral students develop the skills necessary for research activities.

Research methods courses and courses specific to the field of study are mandatory in nearly all cases. Additionally, many universities offer courses aimed at promoting student well-being during their studies, such as communication

and academic writing, dissertation project management, and career planning. At some universities, an educational module dedicated to the principles of academic integrity and communication is a separate part of the program. This module includes a series of courses and workshops on Research ethics, intellectual property rights and data protection, research and project management, and scientific communication. Furthermore, universities strive to incorporate modern scientific trends by including courses on advanced methods and emerging research areas.

In some universities, doctoral students are required to acquire an additional specialisation (a minor), which is particularly relevant for those whose fields of study differ between their master's and doctoral programs. Typically, coursework and dissertation preparation are separated in time. Students begin their dissertation projects only after completing the required courses and, often, only after passing a milestone exam. Teaching practice (usually as a teaching assistant) is common at many universities but is not universally included in doctoral programs.

d) Monitoring the Progress of Doctoral Students

The traditional model of Third-level study implies interaction between a doctoral student and his/her supervisor. The transition to structured programs implies an expansion of the circle of those responsible for the success of the doctoral student, and the practice of distributed supervision is widespread in foreign universities. Our research shows that most universities follow the Salzburg Principles of shared responsibility for doctoral student progress. Thus, half of the universities studied use a model with more than one supervisor in all or most doctoral programs. Different options for distributed supervision are possible: two academic supervisors, a dissertation committee consisting of several scholars, or active involvement of supporting administrative structures of the university. In addition, some universities practice including representatives from industry as part of the academic supervisors. In such cases, the PhD student may be employed by an organisation outside the university, provided the job responsibilities align with the dissertation topic.

In supervisory teams, there is usually a division of responsibilities and accountability among the participants: one team member is designated as the principal supervisor, while the others serve as co-supervisors. It is the principal supervisor who bears the main responsibility for the doctoral student's training. This includes preparing annual (or quarterly) reports on the student's progress, providing a review of the readiness of the dissertation for defence, coordinating individual study plans, making proposals for the composition of the dissertation defence committee, etc. Typically, the interaction between the principal supervisor and the PhD student is strictly regulated in terms of the frequency and scope of meetings. Some universities have a dedicated scheduling system where the duration and regularity of meetings between the student and the principal supervisor are prearranged. The principal supervisor must be a staff member of the department that runs the doctoral program. Co-supervisors, in most cases, act as consultants

and can be staff from other departments within the university or even from other universities. The criterion for selecting a co-supervisor is their expertise in the dissertation's subject area. Different universities employ various models of work for supervisory teams. In most cases, interactions with team members occur in a parallel, individual mode. However, some universities enforce strict regulations requiring mandatory joint meetings with all team members to discuss the PhD student's progress. The outcomes of such meetings are documented in a formalised report, which records the completion of set tasks and outlines plans for the future.

Since coursework and dissertation writing are separated in time, after passing the qualifying exam, the PhD students fully focus on their dissertation project. Consequently, assessment activities primarily relate to progress on the dissertation. Doctoral students periodically (every six months to a year) submit a report on their completed work, plans, and other relevant details. The review of the report can be conducted either remotely or in person with the participation of the dissertation committee. Additionally, almost all universities require participation in research seminars. These seminars provide a platform for PhD students to present their research projects, including both the research plan and the results obtained.

e) Principles and Procedures for Completing Studies and Defending the Dissertation

At the final stage of their studies, PhD students must pass a specialty exam. Sometimes there may be multiple exams in different formats (oral and written), but the main purpose of such exams is to assess the candidate's knowledge in their professional field and in the specific area related to their dissertation project. The final defence can take place either in the traditional format of an oral presentation, where the PhD student presents the main results of the dissertation research and defends or clarifies them in response to audience questions, or in the format of remote review by experts in the dissertation's field. The evaluation of the dissertation text and its defence is conducted by a specialised committee consisting of experts in the dissertation's subject area. The size of the committee varies, ranging from two to ten members.

Universities adopt different approaches to forming committees and setting requirements for their members. The key differences relate to whether or not the student's academic supervisor participates in the committee's work. In some cases, the supervisor is required to be a member of the committee and participate fully alongside other members. In other cases, the supervisor may be part of the committee and participate in the defence by asking questions and providing comments, but without voting rights. Finally, the dissertation defence or its remote evaluation may take place without the involvement of the supervisor.

Another distinction concerns the institutional affiliation requirements for members of the dissertation committee. In all the universities reviewed, there is a requirement for the participation of at least one member external to the department responsible for the doctoral program. Some universities specifically

encourage the involvement of a faculty member from an international university. In certain cases, the entire committee must consist of individuals external to the university.

In some universities, in addition to the committee, opponents – experts in the relevant field – also participate in the defence. These opponents provide a review of the candidate's work but do not have voting rights; the final decision is made by the committee members through a vote. This setup resembles the traditional format in Soviet / Russian dissertation councils, where each candidate is assigned two opponents whose opinions are considered in the final decision, though the opponents themselves do not have voting rights.

The requirements for the final dissertation vary, but certain commonalities exist. In most of the universities reviewed, the dissertation is defended as a cohesive text of 70,000 to 100,000 words. Having published works at the time of the defence is not a mandatory requirement for many universities. If the PhD student has published works, the content may be included in the dissertation without verbatim duplication, preserving the cohesiveness of the text. The full text of the articles can be appended as supplementary material. Previously published articles by the doctoral candidate can only be incorporated into the dissertation text with the approval of the doctoral school director, and they must be integrated into a unified text. If the articles were co-authored, written consent from the co-authors is required, along with their acknowledgement in the text. Some universities allow dissertation defence based on a collection of articles, but the PhD student must either be the sole author of the research or have made the most significant contribution to it. In such cases, an additional text is required to explain how the articles are interconnected and the role of each.

Particular attention is given to conflicts of interest and authorship in foreign universities. When forming the dissertation committee, the presence or proportion of the candidate's co-authors in the committee is strictly regulated. For including co-authored articles (especially with the supervisor) in the dissertation text, confirmation of the student's contribution and an evaluation of his/her role are necessary. Furthermore, all works are thoroughly checked for plagiarism.

Opportunities and Limitations of Introducing International Experience in Armenia

Today's global agenda for organising doctoral education focuses on addressing several challenges:

- **Preparing researchers for diverse societal roles:** This includes expanding the educational component of the doctorate and emphasising the development of "soft" skills.
- **Shifting from a single career track to multiple career paths:** There is a particular emphasis on enhancing mechanisms to help young researchers transition to non-academic markets and providing university and supervisor support in career exploration during doctoral studies.

- **Strengthening interdisciplinary connections:** This reflects a broader trend of blurring boundaries between disciplines, aimed at increasing researchers' productivity and mobility.

Engaging with external stakeholders: To strengthen the practical relevance of research, universities are increasingly involving representatives from industry as supervisors or co-supervisors and including them in dissertation defence committees. Moreover, international institutions emphasise the importance of delivering research outcomes to those who can benefit from them and collaborating with the communities being studied or affected by the research results.

The practices of leading universities highlight a number of differences that we inherited from the Soviet/Russian system, particularly in terms of admission rules and procedures (Bekova & Terentev, 2020).

Unlike the model prevalent in the post-Soviet space today, which relies solely on entrance exams, most leading international universities place significant emphasis on applicants' portfolios. Additionally, the selection process often continues post-admission. For example, many institutions require candidates to pass a qualifying exam after one to two years of study. Only those who pass this exam proceed to their dissertation research. This differentiated approach helps avoid admitting "unknown quantities"—students who lack academic motivation and are at risk of failing to complete their doctoral education.

By integrating international best practices, Armenian third-level education can address these challenges while fostering innovation and global competitiveness. However, the successful implementation of these practices requires addressing systemic limitations and enhancing institutional flexibility (Mkhitarian & Begoyan, 2022). Secondly, the educational programs often implemented in Armenia formally repeat courses from previous levels of education or introduce new ones without a comprehensive curriculum design. Meanwhile, these courses should aim to level the playing field for doctoral students entering programs from different disciplines, universities, and countries, strengthening research skills and related competencies that are valuable for students' future careers. International doctoral programs place significant emphasis on developing soft skills, which are beneficial not only for those pursuing academic careers but also for those targeting broader job markets. Studies show that in Armenia, many doctoral students, especially in STEM fields, begin to engage in the external labour market while still in their studies. Therefore, fostering a wide range of skills, applicable both within and outside academia, is particularly relevant in the Armenian context. Thirdly, the responsibility for doctoral students' outcomes in most international universities is not limited to the pair of "student-supervisor." The progress of doctoral candidates often involves administrative departments, other researchers (as co-supervisors or committee members), and industry representatives. This approach reduces reliance on a single supervisor's individual qualities and qualifications of a single

supervisor. It also mitigates potential difficulties arising from differing perspectives between the PhD student and his/her supervisor. Additionally, it promotes greater integration of doctoral candidates into the academic community and helps address issues of research isolation.

Key Systemic Differences

One of the significant barriers to adopting international best practices lies in the systemic differences between Armenian doctoral programs and those abroad. Overcoming these inconsistencies is crucial for successfully integrating global experience into the Armenian context.

Finances. Despite the availability of state-funded places, PhD students are often practically deprived of financial support. The standard government scholarship ranges from 60000 to 75000 AMD, which cannot be considered a primary source of income. Most doctoral students have to work: they combine work with studies. Some research institutes of the National Academy of Sciences have support mechanisms (special scholarships, additional opportunities for academic mobility, etc.). In some universities, PhD students also lecture in parallel. However, these initiatives are not widespread, leaving doctoral students to seek sources of income independently or enter the external labour market, which leads to a high dropout rate and prolonged periods between enrollment and dissertation defence.

Formality of the educational component. This is likely partly due to the lack of resources to ensure a qualitative transition to structured programs. Particularly vulnerable are PhD programs in research organisations, where the lack of funding for implementing educational programs is most acute. This is also facilitated by the small number of PhD students in the certain specialty.

Limitations of the interdisciplinary. The specialty passport, which strictly regulates the thematic boundaries of work, along with the academic profile of the supervisor and the members of the dissertation council, imposes direct limitations on interdisciplinarity. It is almost impossible to implement the principle of co-supervision in Armenia because the regulations do not allow it. They have not changed since the 1990s.

Doctoral education remains academically oriented. This is the prevailing view among both administrators and doctoral students themselves. However, in reality, a significant portion of PhD students, both during their studies and after graduation, enter the non-academic labour market, often taking positions unrelated to research. Third-level education does not prepare them for such outcomes; moreover, this is often perceived negatively by universities and students alike. At the same time, salaries in the non-academic labour market are generally higher. However, there is no clear premium for holding an academic degree, nor is there demand for personnel of this level. The situation could be improved by involving external stakeholders in the doctoral education processes; however, there are significant disciplinary limitations, especially in the social sciences and humanities.

Additionally, the high risks associated with long-term planning and the lack of transparency in the benefits for enterprises make it difficult to find long-term partners.

Conclusion

Despite numerous limitations, several innovations have been implemented in the Armenian third-level education system. A notable recent development is the involvement of NAS RA and Armenian universities in EU programs that contribute to reforms in the management of doctoral education. Such projects include, in particular, the long-term VERITAS (ISEC of NAS RA, VERITAS, n.d.) and ARMDOCT (ARMDOCT, n.d.) projects, the institutional coordination of which was handled by the author of this manuscript. The International Scientific-Educational Centre of NAS RA and some universities have taken advantage of opportunities within the framework of international cooperation and are changing the approach to doctoral education. At the same time, these changes are mostly localised and fragmented. Moreover, there is a lack of studies examining the relationship between these changes and various indicators of doctoral education effectiveness. One thing is clear: Armenian doctoral education needs to be fundamentally and nationwide transformed. The experience of highly ranked universities (Mkhitarian & Želvys, 2025), international cooperation, and the newly launched joint doctoral programs can serve as a very good basis.

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RTS-RELATED IDIOMS AND EXPRESSIONS AS CULTURAL VALUES IN AMERICAN ENGLISH

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Abstract

Language is the mirror of national identity, cultural values, and common experiences of people, and one of the most evident examples of such interdependence is idiomatic expressions, especially those related to sports. This article focuses on sports idioms of American English as linguocultural realia that go well beyond the playing field and are actively used in business, politics, and everyday communication. The importance of the research is that it centres on sport-based metaphor as a culturally-based process that reflects not only the use of language, but also thought and socialising patterns in American society.

The paper emphasises the importance of sports idioms as transmitters of cultural memory, social norms and nationally specific value systems (competitiveness, teamwork, initiative and perseverance). It shows how these terms obtain metaphorical values through semantic shifts and enter non-sporting language where they play expressive, evaluative, and pragmatic roles.

The study is grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It uses a descriptive and interpretive approach to discuss sports idioms as signs of culture, particularly their origins in specific sports and how they have

changed in contemporary American English. The results suggest that sports idioms not only enrich daily and work communication but are also instrumental in the overall intercultural comprehension, because the appropriate interpretation of these idioms presupposes knowledge of the cultural structures within which they are formed.

Keywords: Idioms, linguoculture, sports metaphors, American English, cultural semantics, intercultural communication.

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Համառոտագիր

Լեզուն արտացոլում է ազգային ինքնությունը, մշակութային արժեքները և ժողովրդի կենսավորձը: Դրանք հատկապես լավ են երևում իդիոմատիկ արտահայտություններում: Յուրաքանչյուր բնագավառ, սպորտը ևս ունի իրեն բնորոշ իդիոմատիկ արտահայտությունները: Այս հոդվածը ուսումնասիրում է ամերիկյան անգլերենի սպորտային իդիոմները՝ որպես լեզվամշակութային դրսևորումներ, որոնք, բացի խաղաղաշտի սահմաններում կիրառվելուց, ակտիվորեն օգտագործվում են բիզնես և քաղաքական դիսկուրսում, ինչպես նաև առօրյա հաղորդակցման մեջ: Հետազոտության կարևորությունն այն

է, որ ընդգծվում են մշակութային հիմք ունեցող սպորտային իդիոմները, որոնք արտացոլում են ոչ միայն լեզուն, այլև ամերիկյան հասարակության մտածողությունը և սոցիալական փոխգործակցության ձևերը:

Ուսումնասիրությունն ընդգծում է սպորտային արտահայտությունների դերը մշակութային հիշողության, սոցիալական նորմերի և ազգային արժեհամակարգի (օրինակ՝ մրցունակություն, թիմային աշխատանք, նախաձեռնողականություն և համառություն) փոխանցման գործում: Այն ցույց է տալիս, թե ինչպես են այս արտահայտությունները իմաստային փոփոխման արդյունքում ձեռք բերում փոխաբերական իմաստներ և մուտք գործում ոչ սպորտային դիսկուրս, որտեղ կատարում են արտահայտչական, գնահատողական և գործաբանական գործառույթներ:

Հետազոտությունը հիմնված է հասկացութային փոխաբերությունների տեսության վրա (Լակոֆֆ և Ջոնսոն, 1980) և կիրառում է նկարագրական ու մեկնաբանական մոտեցում՝ սպորտային արտահայտությունները՝ որպես մշակութային նշաններ վերլուծելու համար: Այստեղ առանձնակի ուշադրություն է դարձվում դրանց ծագմանը հատուկ մարզաձևերին և դրանց վերափոխմանը ժամանակակից ամերիկյան անգլերենում: Ուսումնասիրությունները ցույց տվեցին, որ սպորտային արտահայտությունները ոչ միայն հարստացնում են առօրյա և մասնագիտական հաղորդակցությունը, այլև կարևոր դեր են խաղում միջմշակութային փոխըմբռնման գործում, քանի որ դրանց ճիշտ մեկնաբանությունը պահանջում է այն մշակութային համատեքստների իմացություն, որոնցից դրանք ծագել են:

Բանալի բառեր՝ իդիոմներ, լեզվամշակույթ, սպորտային փոխաբերություններ, ամերիկյան անգլերեն, մշակութային սեմանտիկա, միջմշակութային հաղորդակցություն:

Introduction

Language is a means of expression of one's identity. It is impossible to understand a foreign language unless you have at least some idea about the conditions the nation speaking the language lives in. In other words, the real use of linguistic elements in speech and the real productivity of speech are motivated by awareness of the socio-cultural life of the people speaking the language. Values, traditions, and customs are very closely connected to the language, as they form an important part of linguocultural realia (Edward, 1990).

Idioms make up a large part of our knowledge of language and, as such, are an integral feature of any language. The very simple definition of an idiom is that “a group of words in a fixed order that has a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own” (dictionary.cambridge.org). We can find idioms in almost every language, and learning them is very important for the mastery of a language.

Idioms are specific to one language because when we try to translate them, they either change their meaning altogether or become meaningless. When learning a language, an individual must learn its words and in what circumstances

they occur, and how to use them. Moreover, people need to learn the idioms of that language because they serve a strong communicative function. To interpret an idiom, it is sometimes necessary to be familiar with the culture in which it originates, which implies that cultural context is of utmost importance.

Representatives of different nations interpret and do things differently, which can make cooperation difficult. Shared cultural backgrounds enable members not only to access the same information but also to use varied methods for coding, storing, and retrieving it, with these methods differing across cultures. Barseghyan (2016) discusses sports idioms and expressions as the reflection of realia in his article, emphasising that various countries perceive and interpret games differently. Furthermore, the meaning the country assigns to the game and sports can be explained within the framework of the linguocultural traditions of the country. Our observations show that the frequent use of sports terms and expressions in non-sporting contexts, particularly in business and everyday speech, is, to a certain extent, motivated by their sociocultural origins and the new connotational meanings acquired in the course of language development. In fact, games and sports idioms and expressions also belong here and constitute an important part of a nation's linguoculture (Barseghyan, 2016).

American English is abundant with idioms which are widely used in everyday speech and conversations. Americans are sports lovers, and it is no secret that in everyday speech, one can easily hear numerous idioms related to sports. Sports idioms, which started with baseball, basketball, sailing, and other sports, have developed to have a meaning beyond their context. Even though they can still be used in sporting contexts, these expressions are becoming increasingly common in general speech, especially in the business world, indicating their wider cultural influence.

Americans in business depend on idioms and cultural references whenever they speak. Such expressions add colour, vitality, and liveliness to their speech and convey subtle meaning in ways not possible through formal language. The more one understands these expressions, the easier it is to participate in either fast-paced meetings or hallway conversations. And knowing how to use idioms will make one a more confident and influential speaker.

Imagine doing business in the U.S. and hearing someone tell you to “keep your eye on the ball” or to “step up to the plate”. “Where is the ball?” you might ask in the first instance, or wonder if you are being taken to dinner in the second. In this section, we will discuss some of the sports-related idioms frequently used in American English.

Theory and Methodology

The proposed study is placed in the context of linguocultural theory, according to which language is viewed as a store of shared cultural knowledge and a means by which social values, behavioural norms, and forms of experience historically formed are preserved and passed down. Idioms are not, therefore,

considered as fixed expressions, but as linguocultural units which encode culturally specific models of world cognition.

The research methodology is based principally on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980). This theory holds that metaphor is a key cognitive tool rather than a stylistic aspect of language. It allows speakers to understand the domains of experience that are abstract in nature using more concrete, embodied, and culturally familiar domains. This involves systematic mappings between source and target domains, in which knowledge from one domain is transferred to another. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

In the present study, sports serve as the source domain, while domains such as business, politics, and everyday social interaction serve as target domains. Idiomatic phrases such as **step up to the plate**, **drop the ball**, **carry the ball and throw in the towel** are examples of stable metaphoric correspondence where *competition*, *strategy*, *responsibility*, *success*, and *failure* in sports are applied to the description of similar situations in non-sporting situations. These phrases are manifestations of larger conceptual metaphors, such as life is a game and work is competition, which show how cultural manifestations of sporting activity shape patterns of thought and speech in American English (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

The source domain in the current study is sports, whereas spheres of business, politics, and everyday social interaction are relevant as target domains. Idiomatic phrases such as **step up to the plate**, **drop the ball**, **carry the ball**, and **throw in the towel** are examples of stable metaphorical correspondences in which the concepts of *competition*, *strategy*, *responsibility*, *success* and *failure* in sports are applied to conceptualise analogous situations in non-sporting contexts. These phrases are indicative of more general conceptual metaphors, like **life is a game** and **work is competition**, and they show that culturally salient experiences in sports influence thinking and communication patterns in American English (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Simultaneously, the study is informed by the anthropological linguistic tradition related to Franz Boas, who emphasised that language should be interpreted in the context of the cultural environment where it operates. According to Boas, linguistic forms are culturally specific modes of categorising and understanding experience, and language is central to the life, practices and worldview of a speech community (Boas, 1911). In this respect, sports idioms are considered to be verbal reflections of culturally meaningful practices which have acquired symbolic meanings within American society. Their metaphorical expansion into non-sporting spheres indicates the cultural preeminence of sports as an example of action, accomplishment, and socialisation.

Research Methods

The study is grounded on semantic, etymological, and contextual examination of sports idioms in American English. It contains idiomatic phrases based on baseball, football, basketball, golf, boxing and other sports, which have become

common in non-sport contexts in business communication and in conversation. Combining Conceptual Metaphor Theory with a Boasian concept of language as being culturally situated, the work considers sports-related idioms as cognitive-cultural paradigms. These frameworks indicate the way socially prized and popular experiences in sports are converted into linguistic resources to organise abstract thought, shape the way things are interpreted, and determine communicative practices within the American culture (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Boas, 1911). These expressions are examined from a linguocultural perspective in order to identify the cultural values and behavioural models they reflect.

Results

Baseball Idioms

Baseball is one of the most popular sports in America, and many phrases originated in the ballpark have found their way into common speech.

If something is **in the ballpark**, it means it is within a reasonable range. Likewise, **outside the ballpark** would mean beyond a reasonable range. Suppose you are interviewing for a position and the interviewer asks you how much you want to make. When you name a figure, she might reply that your desired amount was in or out of the ballpark. **A ballpark figure**, on the other hand, refers to a rough numerical estimate, an approximate guess.

The phrase out of left field refers to someone or something very unusual, uncommon or otherwise strange. A person who **plays hardball** is behaving in an extremely determined way to get what they want. For instance, if we are trying to make a deal with someone and they will not give in on their demands, we would say they are playing hardball.

Just like a pitcher would pitch or throw a ball during a baseball game, **to pitch an idea** is to make a proposal or a suggestion about something. This phrase is widely used in business; for instance, at a business meeting, one can pitch an idea about a new project or product.

To step up to the plate literally means for a player to move near home plate to prepare to hit the ball when it is pitched. Idiomatically, it means to accept a challenge, to prepare to do a task or to take up responsibility for doing something. It is not uncommon for a boss to ask her employees to step up to the plate, especially when there are important projects on tight deadlines.

To take a rain check is another very popular idiom which comes from the game of baseball. Back in the days before baseball stadiums had roofs, tickets to baseball games had a counterfoil entitling the spectator to see another game if the one for which the ticket was bought was cancelled because of rain or bad weather. That counterfoil, or receipt, was a rain check. Thus, the term to take a rain check has come to be used in everyday conversations and is used for saying that you are not going to accept an offer or a suggestion immediately, but you may accept it later.

In baseball, a strike is a legal pitch or ball which the batter fails to hit. The

batter or the hitter is out after three strikes. So the term "**three strikes and you are out**" has come to mean that a person gets only three chances to accomplish something.

If you **go to bat for someone**, it means that you give them your help and support. **To be off base** is another idiom originating in baseball, meaning to be incorrect, mistaken, or misinformed. On the other hand, the term **on the ball** is used to describe someone who is attentive, knowledgeable and quick to take action. It originated in the sporting arena and refers to runners' readiness. American sports writers referred to successful baseball pitchers as having **a lot on the ball**, meaning they were talented. In any case, the phrase **on the ball** became an idiom used in everyday conversation. Its companion phrase **get on the ball** means to be careful and get something done (phrases.org.uk).

Football Idioms

American football is one of the most popular sports in the United States, so it is only natural that many idioms have made their way from the stadium into everyday speech.

A game plan is a strategy, originally referring to the strategy to be played on the field during a football game. It is now used to refer to any strategy worked out in advance, especially in politics or business.

The kickoff, in a game of football, is when the ball is kicked to start the game. **To kick off something** or **kick something off** has thus come to mean to begin or undertake something. A presidential candidate, for example, might kick off his or her campaign with a large fund-raising event.

In a football game, the player would seize the ball that someone else had thrown to them and run with it. Hence, to run with something means to accept something, handle it, and develop it further. In American football, players tackle their opponents. From here, tackling a problem has entered the everyday speech to mean attacking a problem with much effort.

In American football, players literally hold the ball and protect it in order to maintain possession while attempting to advance it. So the expression **carry the ball** has acquired the figurative meaning of having a leading role in the competition, assuming responsibility or taking control of an activity.

Push it over the goal line means to complete the activity or project, finish the job. Work often has little value until it is completed. In American football, a team's drive to move the football down the field does not count until the ball crosses the goal line.

The expression drop the ball also comes from football, where a player who fails to catch a ball is charged with an error; thus, the term idiomatically means to fail in one's responsibilities or duties, to miss an opportunity or to make a mistake, especially at a critical point or when the result is very negative.

The idiom **to start the ball rolling** is frequently used to describe the beginning of an activity or series of activities. It is often used at the start of a

meeting, as in “Who would like to start the ball rolling?” meaning who would like to have the first word or bring up the first topic.

Basketball Idioms

Not only is basketball one of the most popular American sports, but it has also influenced everyday speech in the United States. Here are some popular expressions related to basketball commonly used in everyday American English.

Full court press is a strategy in basketball in which the defensive team applies pressure on the offensive team across the entire court. Idiomatically, it means aggressive or increased effort to win or accomplish something, or avigorousattack.

On the rebound is an American English phrase that has its origin in the language of basketball, where it is used to describe a process of picking up the ball after a failed shot. In a more general sense, it means something better or healed when one has gone through a difficult time.

A **jump ball** in basketball is used to refer to the start of the game by passing a basketball in the air between two opponents. Afterwards, each player jumps, hoping to strike the ball in the direction of a teammate. In speech, it refers to the inability to determine anything; for instance, if someone says, “It is a jump ball,” it means they are unable to choose between two things or have difficulty making a decision.

The ball is in your court is another common expression from the world of basketball, meaning it is someone else’s turn to act or make a decision. A shot that goes in just before the buzzer to end the game is a **buzzer beater**, so the expression is often used for anything that gets accomplished just before a deadline.

Golf Idioms

Golf is a game that is played in one form or another throughout the world. Because the game takes time and involves walking, it is often played while discussing business. It follows that business vocabulary would easily adopt golf idioms into its fold.

To make the cut means a golfer must match or better the score required to remain in the final two rounds of a tournament. Accordingly, the idiom means to meet the requirements necessary for an application to be successful or for a candidate to be selected from a group of candidates.

As golf has become more popular in the United States, more phrases from the game have become popular. A phrase that was relatively unheard of 10 years ago but is now used quite often is **to tee something up**. A tee is the short plastic or wooden stick upon which you place the golf ball before striking it. Therefore, **to tee up** has come to mean to make preparations before starting or launching something.

Boxing Idioms

While boxing is not so popular in America as it used to be, the practice of fistfighting is so deeply entrenched in their culture that their everyday lexicon is peppered with a number of idioms and expressions derived from boxing.

Boxing rings are typically enclosed by four ropes running around the four edges of the boxing platform. As a boxer, when your opponent has forced you against the ropes with their attack, you are in trouble, or on the ropes. In everyday use, someone on the ropes is in a state of nearcollapse or defeat, or otherwise is likely to fail.

A boxer is **down for the count** or defeated by his opponent when he is knocked to the canvas and fails to rise within ten seconds. The phrase now refers to being defeated or ruined more generally, as well as to someone who is soundly asleep or unconscious. On the other hand, the term **down but not out** refers to a fighter being knocked down, but being able to get up and continue with the fight. Thus, in everyday speech, this expression refers to someone who refuses to give up and continues to fight in order to achieve their aim.

To give up or to throw in the towel was based on the boxing tradition of the early 20th century, in which a fighter literally tossed a white towel into the ring to concede defeat. Whereas throwing in the towel means giving up, **throwing one's hat in the ring** is an indication that one is prepared to fight (phrases.org.uk). Although modern boxing does not incorporate hats, amateur boxing in the early nineteenth century sometimes did – in the form of accepting a challenge. When the crowd was called upon to provide a challenger for a boxer, someone might literally throw their hat into the ring to take up the call. Today, the phrase **throw one's hat into the ring** still refers to the taking up of a challenge.

Saved by the bell is an idiom that refers to being saved out of a bad situation just in time. Although it is thought to have developed out of the paranoia of the 17th century about being buried alive, it actually alludes to boxing, in which a losing boxer is rescued by a bell sounding the conclusion of a round. The correlation with the burial was brought about by the perception that a wrongly uttered dead man would come back to life and ring a bell connected to their coffin, thus showing the actual terror of being buried alive of that era (phrases.org.uk).

Any blow under the beltline is usually regarded as illegal in boxing. A **blow below the belt** is what is commonly referred to as a *low blow*. Both terms now have a wider meaning of any insulting, unfair or unsporting behaviour.

The expression **to roll with the punches** has an obvious connection with boxing; when a boxer **rolls with the punches**, they move their body away from the blows of their opponent, thus reducing the force of the impact. The figurative sense of the phrase means to adapt easily to unfavourable circumstances.

The corners in a boxing match are the two opposite angles of a boxing ring, on which the boxers take their breaks. A boxer typically has a *cornerman* (usually

their coach or trainer) who instructs them between rounds. This practice gave rise to the phrase *in one's corner*. Figuratively, having someone in your corner means having their support and help (Client Challenge, n.d.).

When you **lead with your chin** in boxing, you stick your neck out or leave yourself unprotected. Figuratively, this refers to speaking or behaving incautiously and carelessly. **To beat someone to the punch** means to do something before they do, to outperform someone, and is based on the notion of striking a blow before your opponent can (Tung, 2015). This boxing sense dates back to 1913, while the figurative meaning emerged just a couple of years later.

General Sports Idioms

Here are some common sports idioms used in today's casual conversations, with their definitions (Ammer, 2013).

Table 1.

Common Sport Idioms According to the Type of Sport and Their Meanings in Casual Conversation

at this stage in the game	any sport	at this time
across the board	cards	equal for everyone, applying to all
under the wire	horse racing	at the very last moment, at the last possible opportunity, just in time
bark up the wrong tree	hunting	You have got the wrong person or idea
blow the competition away	any sport	to defeat someone or something completely, especially in a sports competition
call the shots	billiards	make the decisions
chip in	gambling	help by donating money or time
down to the wire	horse racing	used to denote a situation whose outcome is not decided until the very last minute
front runner	track	one of the people who is expected to win
get a head start	horse racing	start before all others
get into the full swing	tennis	be comfortable doing something after some time
get off the hook	fishing	escape, have responsibility removed
give something or someone a fair shake	gambling	try for a while before giving up
get a second wind	sailing	have a burst of energy after tiring
give it your best shot	hunting	try your hardest
give one a run for one's money	horseracing	try one's hardest to defeat another person
go overboard	sailing	do or say more than you need to
have the upper hand	cards	have a better chance of winning or succeeding
hit below the belt	martial arts	do or say something that is very unfair or cruel
hit a snag	boating	come up against a problem
hold all the aces	cards	expected to win or succeed
thhome stretch	horse racing	almost the end
hot shot (big shot)	hunting	an important or very successful person
jump the gun	track	start too early

keep one's head above water	swimming	try not to fall behind in work or other duties
learn the ropes	sailing	understand new things
let her rip	boating	go ahead now
level playing field	any field sport	everyone has an equal chance
long shot	hunting	a very difficult thing to accomplish
make the cut	any sport	be chosen to be part of a team or group
neck and neck	horse racing	to be in a close tie with someone
no sweat	any sport	no problem
not playing with a full deck (of cards)	cards	not having full brain capacity
out of someone's league	team sport	not as good as someone
on target	darts	doing the right thing to succeed
plenty of other fish in the sea	fishing	there are many other men and women to date
race against time	track	there is almost no time left to accomplish something
settle a score with someone	any sport	get even with a person after a previous battle
shot in the dark	hunting	a guess
skate on thin ice	skating	do something risky, take a chance
take sides	any sport	choose a person or group to support
take the bull by the horns	bull fighting	accept the challenge and try your hardest
take the wind out of one's sails	sailing	make someone feel deflated
time out	any sport	break
under the table	gambling	illegally
win hands down	gambling	easy victory

Recent advances in the investigation of sports idioms demonstrate their ongoing change under the influence of digitalisation and globalisation. In modern communication, sports-related terms are not limited to traditional fields like business or politics; they also appear in digital media, technology, and global communication. They have become common on social media and in online journalism, and as real-time commentary, making their frequency, flexibility, and evaluative power greater. Meanwhile, numerous sports idioms have undergone semantic expansion and abstraction, with terms like game changer, level playing field, and move the goalposts gaining widespread application even out of context. Moreover, contemporary discourse tends to integrate sports metaphors with other areas of conceptual metaphor, including those of gaming or warfare, thus producing hybrid metaphorical systems that enhance persuasive and expressive capabilities. In that way, sports idioms in modern English may be regarded as dynamic linguistic-cultural units capable of reflecting both the preservation of old values and the adaptation to the communicative requirements of the digital era.

Conclusions

Idioms take the heavy responsibility of spreading culture and national traits. Each idiom presented in this work contains a small part of the customs of the local people. It can be stated that idioms are largely shaped by the people to whom they belong. In order to understand them properly, people should have reliable knowledge about the history and culture as well.

The examples presented above reveal a fundamental tone characteristic of the voice of people's feelings and thoughts, help capture the soul of a nation, and testify to the capacity of sport to provide metaphorical interpretations of objective reality across different spheres of activity. Our observations lead us to conclude that idiomatic expressions originating in sports will continue to feature prominently in American English for international communication.

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INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL AND LEGAL ORDER IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Abstract

The article is devoted to environmental legal relations formed in the course of implementing the state's positive obligations and goals enshrined in Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, entitled "Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development," as well as in the process of developing and implementing the state's environmental policy, as a type of legal relation. Based on the subject matter and method of legal regulation of environmental law, the features of the political and legal order in this field are discussed, which, in general, are determined by the specific characteristics of environmental legal relations.

The institutionalisation of the political and legal order is presented as a natural consequence of social development, since society demands the regulation of the totality of social relations through legal means. The political and legal order is formed and functions when state authority is established, which affirms and maintains it, protects it from violations, and, if necessary, enforces it by means of coercion. Scientific approaches to the concept of the legal order are analysed, and a conclusion is drawn that, in a broad sense, the legal order of the environment can be viewed as a system of legally enshrined means for implementing the guidelines of state environmental policy aimed at regulating relations between humans and nature.

The subjects and objects of environmental legal relations are presented. Environmental legal relations always appear in the form of a connection between subjects who are linked to each other by rights and obligations, the common feature of which is their volitional nature, since they are expressed in the form of the realisation of interests.

Keywords: Environmental relations, de-ecologization, environmental order, environmental legal relations, environmental security, institutionalisation.

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Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածը նվիրված է Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Սահմանադրության՝ շրջակա միջավայրի պահպանությունը և կայուն զարգացումը վերտառությամբ 12-րդ հոդվածում ամրագրված պետության պոզիտիվ պարտականությունների և նպատակների իրականացման ընթացքում, պետության բնապահպանական քաղաքականության մշակման և իրացման ընթացքում ձևավորվող բնապահպանական իրավահարաբերություններին՝ որպես իրավահարաբերությունների մի տեսակի: Ելնելով բնապահպանական իրավունքի իրավական կարգավորման առարկայից և մեթոդից՝ քննարկվել է այս ոլորտում քաղաքական-իրավական կարգի առանձնահատկությունները, որոնք, ընդհանուր առմամբ, որոշվում են բնապահպանական իրավահարաբերությունների առանձնահատկությամբ:

Քաղաքակիրավական կարգի ինստիտուցիոնալացումը ներկայացվել է որպես սոցիալական զարգացման բնական հետևանք, քանի որ հասարակությունը պահանջում է կարգավորել հասարակական հարաբերությունների ամբողջությունը, որը իրականացվում է իրավական միջոցներով: Քաղաքակիրավական կարգը ձևավորվում և գործում է, երբ ձևավորվում է պետական իշխանությունը, որը հաստատում և պահպանում է քաղաքակիրավական կարգը, պաշտպանում է խախտումներից և, անհրաժեշտության դեպքում, պաշտպանում է հարկադրանքի ուժով: Վերլուծվել են իրավակարգին վերաբերող գիտական մոտեցումները և եզրահանգում կատարվել այն մասին, որ լայն իմաստով, շրջակա միջավայրի իրավական կարգը կարելի է դիտարկել՝ որպես մարդու և բնության միջև հարաբերությունները կարգավորելու համար պետական բնապահպանական քաղաքականության ուղեցույցների իրականացման համար օրենսդրորեն ամրագրված միջոցների համակարգ:

Ներկայացվում են բնապահպանական իրավահարաբերությունների

սուբյեկտները և օբյեկտները: Բնապահպանական իրավահարաբերությունները միշտ հանդես են գալիս սուբյեկտների միջև կապի ձևով, որոնք միմյանց հետ կապված են իրավունքներով և պարտականություններով, որի ընդհանուր առանձնահատկությունն այն է, որ ունեն կամային բնույթ, քանի որ արտահայտվում են շահերի իրացման ձևով:

Բանալի բառեր՝ բնապահպանական հարաբերություններ, ապաեկոլոգիազացում, բնապահպանական կարգ, բնապահպանական իրավահարաբերությունների, բնապահպանական անվտանգություն, ինստիտուցիոնալացում:

Introduction

The relevance of the issue studied in the article lies in the fact that the legislation governing environmental relations in Armenia has been shaped of international environmental law. It should be noted that, in general, Armenian environmental legislation, corresponding to the main trends in the development of international environmental law, reflects the interests of individuals, society, and the state in the environmental sphere by guaranteeing the right to apply to state bodies with complaints, proposals, and demands regarding environmental protection; the right to unite and create public and other non-commercial environmental organizations; the right to participate in decision-making related to the environmental rights and obligations of individuals and citizens; as well as the right to participate in referendums, rallies, pickets, and marches devoted to environmental protection issues.

Object

The object is the legislative regulation of the political and legal order in the environmental sphere of the state.

Subject

The subject is the formation of legal relations in the course of shaping the political and legal order in the environmental sphere.

Purpose

The purpose is to formulate the institutional mechanisms of the political and legal order in the environmental sphere.

Relations between humans and nature constitute the general context of environmental relations, which should be considered as a type of social relations formed in the course of realising the needs and interests of individuals, society, and the state in the sphere of natural resource management and environmental protection. Since relations between humans and nature characterise the essence of human life activity, determining society’s main adaptive strategy at any stage of social development, it can be confidently asserted that environmental relations have fundamental significance within the system of social relations, especially in the context of an environmental crisis, when the threat of the destruction of

humans as a biological species becomes evident. Consequently, the entirety of environmental relations developing in society largely determines the nature and content of economic, political, legal, and other types of relations. The fact that modern states do not always recognise this environmental imperative does not mean that environmental relations play a less significant role. This is evidenced by environmental problems arising at local, regional, and global levels, which clearly demonstrate the fundamental nature of environmental relations to the existence of human civilisation, as the de-ecologization of the economy, politics, and law inevitably enters a new phase of environmental crisis.

The statements in the Rio Declaration concerning the necessity of building a global environmental order are not merely declarative assertions characteristic of this type of document, but rather a program of human activity, in which the environmental order is a necessary condition for ensuring sustainable development.

As discussed above, ecology is becoming an important factor in political processes at both the global and national levels. The necessity of establishing an environmental order clearly becomes a determining factor in the development of environmental rights and freedoms within the framework of international and national legal orders. The subject matter and method of legal regulation of environmental law make it possible to discuss the specific features of the political and legal order in this sphere, which, in general, are determined by the characteristics of environmental legal relations.

The institutionalisation of the political and legal order is a natural consequence of social development, since society demands the regulation of the totality of social relations, which, in a state governed by the rule of law, is carried out through legal means. The political and legal order is formed and functions where and when state authority is formed, which establishes and maintains the political and legal order, protects it from violations, and, if necessary, defends it by means of coercive power at its disposal. Without this, the implementation of state goals, the manifestation of the essence, form, and functions of power, and the resolution of state affairs are impossible.

The legal order should be regarded as the guarantee and realisation of subjective rights, as well as the fulfilment of legal obligations, by all citizens, officials, bodies, and organisations. In the literature, the legal order is usually defined as a system of social relations formed based on law and legality (Cerdantsev, 1996), as the organization of social life based on law and legality that reflects the qualitative state of social relations (Shaburov, 1997), or as the state of actual regulation of social relations expressing the real, practical implementation of the requirements of legality (Alekseev, 1981). Thus, M. N. Marchenko, defining the legal order, proceeds from its understanding as an “objectively conditioned state, a characteristic of social life, which is characterized by the internal coherence and regulation of the system of legal relations and connections, based on the implementation of the democratic and humanistic principles and normative

foundations of law and legality, with due regard to the rights, freedoms, and obligations of all subjects” (Marchenko, 1999).

According to some assessments, the legal order is “an objectively and subjectively determined state of social life, characterized by the regulation and internal coherence of the system of legal relations, based on normative requirements, the principles of law and legality, as well as democratic, humanistic, and moral requirements, the rights and obligations of all subjects of law, freedom, and responsibility” (Malko, 2001).

The essence of the legal order lies in its being the result of a political process, since its fundamental issue is the exercise of state power. Therefore, the legal order, which reflects economic interests, forms of ownership of the instruments and means of production, production itself, production relations and processes, and the forms and extent of distribution of products, has content with a political context. It institutionalises the organisation, structure, and powers of the state bodies of legislative, executive, and judicial authority. Consequently, the legal order, as a form of organisation of social life, should be regarded as a political and legal order.

Thus, according to some researchers, the following levels can be distinguished within the legal order: objective laws and trends of development; realities of life; social normativity and demand as a mandatory condition of the activity of society and the state; the legal formalization of people’s demands in real processes; and the legal normativity of the regulation of relations (Kozhevnikov, 1998).

Therefore, the establishment of a legal order in any sphere of social relations is one of the most important tasks of state policy. Taking into account the complexity and relevance of the goals of state environmental policy, the role and significance of forming a political and legal order in the environmental sphere cannot be underestimated. In a broad sense, the legal order of the environment can be viewed as a system of legally enshrined means for implementing the guidelines of state environmental policy aimed at regulating relations between humans and nature.

The subject matter of such regulation includes ownership of natural resources, the use of natural resources, protection of the environment from pollution, depletion, and destruction, as well as the protection of environmental rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities.

The constitutional basis of the environmental legal order is the set of rights and freedoms enshrined in Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, which stipulate that “The State promotes the protection, improvement, and restoration of the environment and the reasonable use of natural resources, guided by the principle of sustainable development and taking into account responsibility toward future generations. Everyone is obliged to care for the preservation of the environment” (Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, 2015).

By forming the foundation of the environmental legal order, these norms also

constitute the institutional basis of environmental legal relations. Environmental legal relations always appear in the form of a connection between subjects linked by rights and obligations. Like any legal norm, the norms of environmental law also have an empowering–obligatory character, since they always authorise one party to do something and obligate another party to do something. That is, as a rule, each participant in legal relations not only has certain rights but also bears corresponding obligations.

The subjects of environmental legal relations are the subjects of environmental law or the direct participants in the environmental process. As a rule, the subjects of law are individuals and their associations, which act as bearers of rights and obligations established by law, the scope of which is ultimately determined by the state. Thus, the environmental legislation of the Republic of Armenia classifies bodies of state power and local self-government (On June 9, 2023, HO-150-N “On Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise” as amended), economic entities and enterprises, as well as citizens, as subjects of environmental legal relations, since they are direct participants in environmental processes and, consequently, in environmental legal relations. According to the current legislation, the subjects of environmental legal relations include the Republic of Armenia, local self-government bodies, citizens, and legal entities. Participants in environmental legal relations also include foreign citizens, stateless persons, and foreign legal entities, provided that they operate in the Republic of Armenia on lawful grounds.

The general characteristic of environmental legal relations is that they have a volitional nature, since they are expressed in the form of the realisation of interests (On June 9, 2023, HO-150-N “On Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise” as amended). This volitional nature is inherent in all participants in legal relations—both citizens and the state, which form and regulate relations in the field of environmental protection—because both citizens and the state have corresponding interests in this sphere.

This is also explained by the fact that the state protects environmental legal relations. At the same time, they are always strictly personalised and individualised, since the rights and obligations expressed in the norms of environmental law are not abstract and are linked to specific bearers.

However, it should be noted that the environmental, political and legal order cannot be equated with environmental law, which is the totality of normative legal regulations established by the state that govern relations between humans and nature. The environmental order defines the procedure for realising the constitutional right to a favourable environment, which is of fundamental importance for human life, while indicating the values of state policy in this sphere.

Thus, the Fundamentals of the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia “On Nature Protection” define the principles of Armenia’s state policy in the field of

environmental protection. The system of environmental legislation of the Republic of Armenia includes: the RA Law “On Specially Protected Nature Areas,” the RA Law “On Atmospheric Air Protection,” the RA Law “On Environmental Impact Assessment,” the RA Law “On Environmental and Nature Use Fees,” the RA Law “On Flora,” the RA Law “On Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine,” the RA Law “On Fauna,” the RA Law “On Environmental Fee Rates,” the RA Law “On Granting Subsoil for Exploration and Extraction for the Purpose of Mineral Resource Exploitation,” the RA Law “On Environmental Education and Upbringing of the Population,” the RA Law “On Lake Sevan,” the Land Code of the Republic of Armenia, the RA Law “On Approving Annual and Comprehensive Programs for the Restoration, Protection, Reproduction, and Use of the Lake Sevan Ecosystem,” the Water Code of the Republic of Armenia, the RA Law “On Water Users’ Associations and Unions of Water Users’ Associations,” the Subsoil Code of the Republic of Armenia, the RA Law “On Waste,” the Forest Code of the Republic of Armenia, the RA Law “On Environmental Control,” as well as other normative legal acts of various levels that regulate relations concerning ownership of natural resources and nature use, control in the sphere of nature use and protection, liability for environmental offenses causing harm to the environment, and which, in general, can be divided by subject of regulation into environmental protection and its use.

Based on the above, we would like to identify the elements of the institutional structure of the environmental political and legal order, which are in fact determined by the structure of relations regulated by the totality of relevant legal norms and arising in connection with such legal phenomena as ownership of natural resources, nature use, control in the sphere of nature use and environmental protection, and liability for damage caused to the natural environment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the environmental, political and legal order is formed in accordance with the nature of social relations regulated by legal institutions. The system of environmental rights and freedoms of individuals and citizens forms the legal order in the environmental sphere. In our view, its basis is the legal institution regulating the right of individuals and citizens to a favourable environment. At the same time, other environmental norms are included in the mechanism for the realisation of this right.

- a) the right to apply to state bodies with complaints, proposals, and demands on issues of environmental protection (for example, to obtain environmental information). This group should also include the right of access to justice, which means the possibility of filing claims in court, for example, for compensation for environmental damage or for harm to citizens’ lives, health, and property of citizens.
- b) the right to associate and to establish public and other non-commercial environmental organisations;
- c) the right to participate in decision-making related to the environmental rights and obligations of individuals and citizens;

d) the right to participate in referendums, rallies, pickets, and marches on issues of environmental protection (Fokin A. V., 2006).

According to some assessments, the mechanisms of legal regulation of environmental relations should include the following legal norms that ensure the realisation of the entire set of the aforementioned environmental rights and freedoms:

- norms regulating economic activity and the labour and service relations developing in its course, ensuring the application of environmentally safe economic and legal regulations;
- norms regulating environmental protection and the use of natural resources;
- norms necessary in cases where subjects do not wish to enter into legal relations or fail to fulfil their obligations (Gate N. A., 2003).

As noted above, the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia proclaims everyone's right to a favourable environment, to reliable information about its condition, and to compensation for damage caused to health or property as a result of environmental offences (Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, 2015). The article under discussion of the Constitution reflects three positive obligations of the state:

1. The state is obliged to ensure the protection of the environment.
2. The state is obliged to ensure the restoration of a damaged environment;
3. The state is obliged to ensure the reasonable use of natural resources (Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, 2015).

In the context of the formation of the environmental, political, and legal order, the norms of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia constitute its foundation. At the same time, sectoral legislation serves the development and further institutionalisation of the relevant rights and freedoms. Therefore, the content of certain constitutional rights and freedoms is of great importance in the context of sectoral legislation.

The debate among constitutional law scholars over whether the Constitution enshrines three independent rights or different aspects of a single right has not been resolved and, in essence, is relevant to this article. Therefore, in our opinion, it is necessary to analyze the opinions of several well-known scientist.

According to one of these viewpoints, the Constitution enshrines three independent but interrelated human and civil rights: the right to a favourable natural environment, the right to obtain reliable information about its condition, and the right to compensation for damage caused to health or property by environmental violations. Thus, V. N. Kuzmin believes that these rights should be regarded as elements of the right to environmental security (Kuzmin, 2001). However, according to A. I. Lagunova, ensuring environmental security is an independent sphere that requires legal support, just like nature protection and nature use (Lagunova, 2004). Therefore, according to this viewpoint, reducing environmental security to nature protection is not justified, since environmental

protection is a more passive form of ensuring environmental security.

According to S. A. Dzeitov, environmental security and the right to a favorable environment should be identified with one another, since “the constitutional right of citizens to a favorable environment (environmental security) is a concretization of the fundamental, natural, and inalienable human right to life” (Dzeitov, 1994).

In our opinion, the answer to the questions raised in the discussion can be found only within the context of the legislation that institutionalizes the political and legal order in the environmental sphere. However, the environmental legislation of the Republic of Armenia does not provide a clear definition of environmental protection; however, it can be derived from a systematic analysis of the legislation, according to which it is understood as “the activity of state bodies of the Republic of Armenia, local self-government bodies, state and other non-commercial associations, legal entities, and individuals aimed at the preservation and restoration of the natural environment, the rational use and reproduction of natural resources, the prevention of negative impacts of economic and other activities on the environment, and the elimination of their consequences.”

Environmental security is the state of protection of the natural environment and vital human interests from possible negative impacts of economic and other activities, natural and man-made emergencies, and their consequences.

Agreeing with A. V. Fokin, we believe that the purpose of environmental protection is to ensure environmental security. M. M. Brinchuk shares this viewpoint, noting that “there is no basis for singling out relations ensuring environmental security as a separate group of social relations regulated by environmental legislation alongside relations related to environmental protection and the use of natural resources. Environmental security is a principle of environmental protection and nature use” (Brinchuk, 2008).

Nevertheless, we believe that environmental security, which under any interpretation is nothing other than a state of protection from environmental threats and risks, should be regarded as the goal of state environmental policy, which is based on environmental protection. It determines both the content of legality in the environmental sphere and the environmental legal order.

For example, the RA Law “On Public Health” stipulates that it regulates social relations related to the organisation and implementation of preventive and anti-epidemic measures, immunoprophylaxis of diseases, and the prevention of the impact of harmful and dangerous environmental factors on the human body (environmental hygiene) (Article 1). According to point 14 of Article 3 of the same law, an emergency event in the field of public health is interpreted as any event that may have negative consequences for public (human) health, or that includes phenomena which have not yet led to disease among people but have the potential to cause disease through contact with contaminated or infected food, water, animals, industrial products, or the environment.

Article 5 of the RA Subsoil Code stipulates that subsoil plots are granted for use to subsoil users, subject of compliance with the requirements established by legislation related to the protection of nature and the environment, and the protection of human life and health.

Therefore, it should be concluded that, according to the law, the right of citizens to a favourable environment includes protection from environmental threats, as well as a number of elements such as food, water supply, living conditions, work, and others, which are not directly related to the state of the environment. Consequently, in our opinion, the assertion that “it should be considered as the most important element of a broader natural human right—the right to a favourable environment” is incorrect (Gorbachev, 1995).

To confirm this view, let us turn to the analysis of the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Urban Development adopted on May 5, 1995. Conditions favourable for human life are defined in Article 2 of the law, which states that urban development in the Republic of Armenia is a set of actions by the state, individuals, legal entities, and their associations aimed at creating or transforming a spatial environment favourable for human life activity. One of the fundamental principles of urban development legislation is the responsibility of state bodies of the Republic of Armenia and local self-government bodies to ensure conditions favorable for human life (Article 2).

Measures to ensure sustainable territorial development include the development of urban planning standards, which must contain minimum design indicators for ensuring favorable living conditions for people, including social and urban structures, engineering infrastructure, landscape design, and others, as well as the holding of public hearings on master plan projects with the participation of residents of settlements and urban districts.

It is evident that in this context, the key concept is that of “favourable living conditions,” which is not defined in the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Urban Development. Nevertheless, the normative context of the document allows one to assert that this right has a legal basis.

Several arguments support this assertion. For example, the RA Law “On State Regulation of Ensuring Technical Safety” defines the territorial framework for the placement of various environmentally hazardous objects, such as industrial enterprises, energy facilities, and others, as well as protected natural areas. Moreover, local self-government bodies and the population of the relevant communities are granted the right to clarify the content of favourable environmental factors. In general, the above-mentioned laws provide for the right of individuals and citizens with the right to participate in decision-making regarding the siting of environmentally hazardous industries and the establishment of locally significant, specially protected natural areas.

In this context, the viewpoint that a person’s right to favourable living conditions is an integral part of the human right to a favourable environment,

and that the right to favourable living conditions is the right to a favourable state of the natural environment of a particular settlement or part thereof, appears convincing.

Summarising the analysis of environmental relations in the field of ecology and the institutionalisation of the political and legal order of Armenia, certain conclusions can be drawn. We believe that ecological relations are the totality of connections between people that arise in the course of interaction between humans and nature, which is a necessary condition for human life activity. Ecological relations are part of the system of social relations and are conditioned by the content of economic, political, legal, and cultural ties characterising social and state systems. Their main groups are nature use, environmental protection, and the maintenance of ecological balance. Participants in ecological relations include individuals, bodies of state power and public self-government, public, international, and intergovernmental organisations. The subjects of ecological relations are the individual, society, and the state, while the objects are natural resources, a favourable environment, and public health. Ecological relations developing in society constitute the basis of the ecological process, which represents the activity of the subjects of ecological relations, guided by the priorities of economic development, conceptualised by state social policy, implemented in accordance with the rule of law, and aimed at the realisation of ecological interests.

Environmental legal relations manifest of connections between subjects linked by rights and obligations. The subjects of environmental legal relations are the Republic of Armenia, local self-government bodies, citizens, and legal entities. Participants in environmental legal relations include foreign citizens, stateless persons, and foreign legal entities lawfully operating within the territory of the Republic of Armenia. The general characteristic of environmental legal relations is their volitional nature, since they are expressed through the realisation of interests. This volitional nature is inherent in all participants in legal relations who have corresponding interests in this sphere. Therefore, environmental legal relations are always strictly personalised and individualised, since the rights and obligations expressed in the norms of environmental law are not abstract and are linked to specific bearers.

The content of environmental relations consists of the environmental rights of humans and citizens, which represent the inalienable capacities of the individual, recognised by the international community and enshrined in national legislation, making it possible, as an element of sustainable development, to satisfy their needs in a favourable-quality environment, proceeding from the interests of present and future generations of people.

The environmental legal order, in the sphere of regulation of ecological relations, is a system of legally enshrined legal mechanisms aimed at implementing the guidelines of state environmental policy, where the subject of regulation includes ownership of natural resources, the use of natural resources, protection

of the environment from pollution, depletion, and destruction, as well as the protection of the environmental rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities.

The basis of the environmental legal order is the totality of rights and freedoms enshrined in Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, which defines its fundamental principles:

- the use and protection of natural resources as the basis of the life and activity of the people of the Republic of Armenia;
- ownership of natural resources must not cause harm to the environment;
- encouragement of activities that contribute to the protection of the environment and the well-being of the population;
- ensuring everyone’s right to a favourable environment, reliable information about its condition, and compensation for damage caused to health or property by environmental violations;
- the duty of everyone to protect nature and the environment, as well as to use natural resources prudently.

The analysis conducted in this article has shown that the environmental political and legal order of the Republic of Armenia requires improvement. The uncertainty of constitutional environmental norms and the underdevelopment of environmental legislation evidences this. In general, this affects the state of environmental legislation and the realisation of national environmental interests and demonstrates the underdevelopment of the state’s legal and environmental policy, as well as the incomplete realisation of human and civil rights and freedoms.

Thus, the conducted research leads to a number of provisions that have significant methodological importance for the further institutional and legal analysis of the environmental policy of the Republic of Armenia’s environmental policy. It has been clarified that the environmental sphere is an essential factor of social life, and that environmental problems arising in different regions of the world today have global significance. Taking into account the growing anthropogenic pressure on nature, the thresholds of ecological balance in many regions of the world are approaching a crisis point. Therefore, ecology often becomes a priority in the policy of modern states, which, in addressing environmental problems, brings together international institutions, treaty relations, and international legal norms. The consolidation of the international community and readiness to overcome the environmental crisis jointly have made it possible to form systems of principles of environmental policy, the implementation of which should ensure the sustainable development of national states.

The analysis of modern environmental threats and risks, the principles of international environmental policy, the norms of international law, and state environmental activity has enabled the definition of environmental policy, which is important for further analysis. We conclude that environmental policy should be regarded as the purposeful activity of state bodies and other institutional

actors aimed at regulating relations between society and nature. The goal of environmental policy should be to influence the formation of a balance between these relations that is desirable for society, by preserving the natural environment and ecological systems, controlling the use of natural resources, maintaining conditions favourable for human life, and ensuring sustainable development.

Legal environmental policy is a component of environmental policy and represents the totality of legal mechanisms for implementing the goals of state environmental policy; it also constitutes law-making, law-enforcement, and rights-protection activity aimed at regulating environmental processes in accordance with national interests, including relations of ownership of natural resources, nature use, control over the use and protection of nature, as well as liability for damage to the natural environment.

Environmental legal policy is aimed at creating normative and legal foundations that make it possible to regulate environmental processes taking place in society in the interests of individuals, society, and the state, ensuring sustainable development. In order to develop political and legal solutions corresponding to the environmental situation prevailing in society, an environmental strategy, and a legal order that ensures the full realisation of rights and freedoms, it is necessary to clarify the social and legal nature of environmental legal relations and the specific features of the legal order in this sphere, which has been accomplished in this work.

Conclusion

As a result of the analysis, we come to the following conclusions:

1. Environmental relations constitute the totality of connections between people that arise in the course of interaction between humans and nature, which is a necessary condition for their life activity. Such relations are part of the system of social relations and are conditioned by economic, political, legal, and cultural ties that characterise social and state systems. Their main groups are nature use, environmental protection, and the maintenance of ecological balance.
2. Participants in environmental relations include individuals, state bodies and local self-government bodies, as well as public, international, and intergovernmental organizations. The subjects of environmental relations are the individual, society, and the state, while the objects are natural resources, a favourable environment, and public health. Environmental relations developing in society form the basis of the ecological process, which represents the activity of the subjects of environmental relations, guided by the priorities of economic development, conceptualised by state social policy, implemented of accordance with the law, and aimed at the realisation of environmental interests.
3. Environmental legal relations are manifested in the form of connections between subjects who are linked by rights and obligations. The

subjects of environmental legal relations are the Republic of Armenia, local self-government bodies, citizens, and legal entities. The parties to environmental legal relations also include foreign citizens, stateless persons, and foreign legal entities operating lawfully within the territory of the Republic of Armenia. The general characteristic of environmental legal relations is their volitional nature, since they are expressed through the realisation of interests. This volitional nature is inherent in all parties to legal relations who have relevant interests in this sphere. Therefore, environmental legal relations are always strictly personalised and individualised, since the rights and obligations expressed in environmental legislation are not abstract and are linked to specific subjects. The content of environmental legal relations consists of the environmental rights of humans and citizens, which represent the inalienable capacities of the individual, recognised by the international community and enshrined in national legislation, enabling them to satisfy their needs in a favourable-quality environment as an element of sustainable development, taking into account the interests of present and future generations of people.

4. The environmental legal order is based on legally regulated environmental relations. It represents a system of legal methods enshrined in legislation for implementing the guidelines of state environmental policy in the field of regulation of environmental relations. The subject of regulation includes relations concerning the ownership and use of natural resources, the protection of the environment from pollution, depletion, and destruction, as well as relations related to the protection of environmental rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities. The basis of the environmental legal order is the totality of constitutional rights and freedoms, which establish the use and protection of natural resources as the foundation of the life and activity of the people of the Republic of Armenia; ownership of natural resources that excludes harm to the environment; encouragement of activities that promote the environmental and sanitary-epidemiological well-being of the population; ensuring everyone's right to a favorable environment, reliable information about its condition, and compensation for damage caused to health or property by environmental violations; and everyone's duty to protect nature and the environment and to care for natural resources.

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GENERAL THEORETICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PARLIAMENTARISM AND THE PRINCIPLE OF POWER SEPARATION

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Abstract

The study of the general theoretical characteristics of parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers is currently of particular scientific interest and has practical significance on the path of development of our state, since in this topic we touch on parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers.

In the article, the author puts forward the idea that the principle of separation of powers in the Republic of Armenia and the influence and role of the legislative body in the formation of parliamentarism in modern conditions can be included among the important issues in terms of theoretical and methodological foundations. The development of parliamentarism, its essence, is also largely determined by the legal status of the head of state in the country, and the form of government.

Having studied the general theoretical characteristics of parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers, the author of the article proposed his definition of parliamentarism, according to which parliamentarism is a special system of organising and exercising state power, formed through free elections with the participation of political parties, and based on the principle of the rule of law and the separation of powers.

Keywords: Parliamentarism, constitutional amendments, democracy, principle of separation of powers, public relations.

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ՆԱԻՐԱ ԱԼԱՎԵՐԴՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ փիլիսոփայության, սոցիոլոգիայի և իրավունքի
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Համառոտագիր

Պառլամենտարիզմի և իշխանությունների բաժանման սկզբունքի ընդհանուր տեսական բնութագրի ուսումնասիրությունը ներկայումս առանձնահատուկ գիտական հետաքրքրություն է ներկայացնում և գործնական նշանակություն ունի մեր պետության զարգացման ճանապարհին:

Հոդվածում հեղինակն առաջ է քաշում այն գաղափարը, որ տեսամեթոդաբանական հիմքերի առումով կարևոր հիմնահարցերի թվին կարելի է դասել Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում իշխանությունների բաժանման սկզբունքը և ժամանակակից պայմաններում օրենսդիր մարմնի ազդեցությունն ու դերը պառլամենտարիզմի ձևավորման գործում: Պառլամենտարիզմի զարգացումը, նրա էությունը մեծապես պայմանավորված է նաև երկրում պետության գլխի զբաղեցրած իրավական դրությունից՝ կառավարման ձևից:

Ուսումնասիրելով պառլամենտարիզմի և իշխանությունների բաժանման սկզբունքի ընդհանուր տեսական բնութագիրը՝ հոդվածի հեղինակն առաջադրել է պառլամենտարիզմի իր սահմանումը, ըստ որի՝ պառլամենտարիզմը քաղաքական կուսակցությունների մասնակցությամբ, ազատ ընտրություններով ձևավորված, պետական իշխանության կազմակերպման և իրականացման հատուկ համակարգ է, որը հիմնված է օրենքի գերակայության և իշխանությունների բաժանման սկզբունքի վրա:

Բանալի բառեր՝ պառլամենտարիզմ, սահմանադրական փոփոխություններ, ժողովրդավարություն, իշխանությունների բաժանման սկզբունք, հասարակական հարաբերություններ:

Introduction

Parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers are of particular importance in the process of forming and developing a democratic and legal state. The mentioned principle is intended to ensure the effectiveness of the organisation of state power, the rule of law, political responsibility, and the limitation of power within the framework of democratic values.

The principle of the separation of powers aims to ensure functional separation among the branches of state power.

From a legal perspective, the separation of powers is viewed as a method of organising state power, determined by a society's social structure of society, political culture, and level of legal awareness.

Parliamentarism, in turn, is viewed in the theory of state and law as a special function of the exercise of power, based on the idea of representation and the formation of the legitimacy of political power. Parliamentarism appears as a legal and political phenomenon that combines the theoretical elements of the organisation of state power, political responsibility, and legal regulation. In this context, it is considered an important indicator of the degree of development of the relationship between society and the state.

In the modern era, the theoretical study of parliamentarism and the principle of the separation of powers is gaining new relevance due to globalisation, constitutional reforms, and the transformation of public governance models. The experience of various states shows that the effective application of the above principles requires not only legal codification but also their in-depth theoretical understanding and comprehensive scientific analysis.

The purpose of this article is to present the general theoretical characteristics of parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers, to reveal their essence, ideological foundations, and interrelationship as legal and political phenomena.

Theory and Methodology

The highest state representative body in the Republic of Armenia is the National Assembly, which, in accordance with Article 88 of the Constitution, exercises legislative power.

Since legislative activity is not the only function of a representative body, the collective expression “parliament” is used.

Since legislative activity is not the only function of representative bodies, the collective expression “parliament” is used to refer to them.

It comes from the Latin word “Parlare” (to speak), which means a body where people speak (in Armenian, it is called a parlour or parliament).

The prototypes of parliament were formed in ancient Greece and Rome as law-making bodies, known in the history of law as the “Council of 400” and the “Council of 500”.

An example of a classical parliament and parliamentarism is the English Parliament (1215) and its activities, which was the first state body with independent legislative authority in the world.

In terms of theoretical and methodological foundations, important issues include the principle of separation of powers in the Republic of Armenia and the influence and role of the legislative body in the formation of parliamentarism in modern conditions.

The analysis of the scientific, theoretical, and methodological foundations of the organisation and activities of the National Assembly shows that the parliament is a body formed by the people, develops general rules for the people and society, and exercises a certain degree of control over the executive branch. Thus, the people directly or through their representatives participate in the exercise of state power. Democratic constitutions are based on the methodology of the principle of separation of powers, which mainly implies an equal division of governmental powers, and, if necessary, the application of a system of checks and balances to prevent the concentration of powers in one branch of government and to ensure the stable, harmonious development of society.

Parliamentarism is a special system of organising and functioning of state power, based on the principle of the separation of powers and the rule of law, with a formally privileged position of the parliament, elected through free elections with the participation of political parties.

Among the most important elements of parliamentarism, we distinguish:

- adherence to the principle of separation of powers,
- the unconditional supremacy of law,
- the existence of a legislative and representative institution in society, namely, the parliament,
- the democratic process of forming a parliament and its publicity.

In this context, the issue of the separation of powers is being viewed anew and in a new light today (Harutyunyan et al., 2020, p.36).

One of the founders of the theory of the principle of the separation of powers was the French philosopher Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755). He was the first to propose the principle of separation of powers in the state. Based on Montesquieu's ideology, the state is like a human organism: the heart of a person is the legislative body, the brain is the executive, and the judiciary is the blood vessels. They must act in concert; otherwise, that organism, the state, cannot function normally and naturally, and this will lead to various arbitrariness.

The separation of powers implies three separate functions: legislative, executive, and judicial.

The problem of ensuring a clear separation of powers and an operational balance is most difficult to solve in the so-called semi-presidential systems of government, where disputes over constitutional powers are most frequent and acute. This system is mainly dualistic in nature: it is a parliamentary system with two executives: the president and the government. It contains elements of both a presidential and a parliamentary republic, as well as features that are not characteristic of either.

This form works well when the president, parliament, and government share the same political orientation; however, a political crisis may arise if they do not. It is noteworthy that in recent years, many of the states that abandoned

totalitarian regimes – Armenia, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Portugal – have adopted this form of governance. However, effective solutions have also been found in such systems.

From the study of the international practice of the new constitutions of the mentioned states, the following stable trends can be concluded:

- the operational powers of the branches of power are being further clarified, they are being harmonised with the functions of the given branch of power and the guarantees of the independent exercise of these powers are being strengthened,
- the counterbalancing and restraining powers are being clarified and strengthened,
- the cooperation of the authorities is to a greater extent anchored on the principle of cooperation and solutions ensuring dynamic balance,
- the importance of the principle of the rule of law in the sphere of normative-judicial activities of the branches of power is evident.

In modern scientific literature, the meaning of the phrase «separation of powers model» varies among researchers.

For example, in states with a federal form of state structure, the model of separation of powers is sometimes understood in a broad sense as the delimitation of subjects of jurisdiction between the state and its constituent parts (Tarkhanov, 2011; Cherepanov, 2004), considering the vertical separation of powers. Some authors determine the specific model of the separation of powers primarily by the peculiarities of the form of government of the state (Cheprasov, 2013, p. 134; Maksimova, pp. 101-104). In our opinion, the model of separation of powers should be understood as the social relations enshrined and regulated by legal norms, governing the procedures for defining the jurisdiction of bodies belonging to different branches of state power and the methods of their interaction. The model of separation of powers is conditioned by a number of factors, including the form of state governance, the form of state structure, and the system of checks and balances operating between the branches of state power.

According to V. S. Shevtsov, the separation of powers implies the division of the unified state power into branches in the process of their interaction. The separation of powers does not imply merely the division of state power bodies. It is the division of qualitatively predetermined functional manifestations of the unified state power into such main branches, each of which is conventionally called a separate “power” of the unified state power (legislative, executive and judicial) (Shevtsov, 2004).

In terms of content, the expression “separation of powers” is closely related to the expression “branch of state power”, the perception of which is subject to a variety of approaches. According to some authors, a branch of state power should be understood as the relevant sphere of state activity, within the framework of which state authorities independently and in a prescribed manner solve the problems set before them, and carry out specific functions (Bezrukov, 2009, p. 4).

Some authors believe that state power is not itself divided among state bodies. Its implementation is conditioned by the division of certain functions and powers among the legislative, executive and judicial bodies, which (these bodies) are independent in carrying out the functions of state power assigned to them by the Constitution and laws (Vedyakhina, 2002). According to another group of authors, the separation of powers implies not the separation of government bodies, but, first of all, the separation of powers that constitute the content of state power (Maly, 2001). Taking into account the views available in legal literature, by saying “branches of state power”, perhaps, one should understand the totality of the three traditional groups of state power bodies (legislative, executive and judicial), which are endowed with state functions, are characterized by their specific order of formation, specific ways and methods of activity, are endowed with relative independence, as well as a supervisory relationship with each other (Pakhomov & Mayorova, 2016) (with powers of a restraining and counterbalancing nature). It should also be noted that the expressions “separation of powers” and “balance of powers” can be viewed in the context of their unity, since the mere separation of powers without constitutional and legal mechanisms for balancing them has a completely different semantic meaning. In this regard, it is no coincidence that, as a result of the 2005 constitutional amendments, the expression “separation of powers” enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia was replaced by the expression “separation and balance of powers”, the content of which is incomparably broader.

In search of the most perfect model of the structure of power, humanity has strived and strives to create the most effective system of checks and balances between the branches of state power, which today has become an integral part of the rule of law. In this regard, the question of the priority of the author(s) who formed the principle of separation of powers remains controversial in modern constitutional law, in connection with which the existing approaches can be conditionally divided into three groups:

- a) in this matter, the priority belongs to the thinkers of antiquity (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, etc.), whose views were based on the idea of the separation of powers based on the functional principle,
- b) the fundamental ideas of the separation of powers and the independence of the courts are set out in the Book of Books, the Bible (P. D. Barenboim),
- c) J. Locke and C. L. Montesquieu are recognised as the “founding fathers” of the theory of the separation of powers (Nikolenko, 2006, p. 14).

The idea of the functional separation of state power, which ancient thinkers accepted, acquired the status of a classical theory in the 17th–18th centuries. If it originated in ancient times, then during the reign of J. Locke and C. L. Montesquieu, its demand was substantiated, and the logical connections between the theory of the separation of powers and the sources of the legitimacy and unity of state power were revealed.

The priority in the practical implementation of the separation of powers as a constitutional principle belongs to the “founding fathers” of the US Constitution of 1787: T. Jefferson, A. Hamilton and D. Madison, who distinguished between the constitutional principles of “separation of powers” and “checks and balances”. In the USA, the system of checks and balances between state authorities has been revised many times, but the principle of the separation of powers has remained in place continuously. The latter, initially implemented at the level of separate administrative–territorial units, soon became an integral element of democracy.

Currently, there are significant differences in perceptions of the theory of the separation of powers. The opinions on it often differ fundamentally, sometimes to the point of excluding each other. For example, disputes do not cease on the issue of the place and role of the concept of separation of powers in the theoretical and practical spheres. In this regard, an opinion has been expressed in legal literature, according to which the principle of separation of powers is not the result of the works of any thinker or any of the trends in political thought of any era. Different legal principles and political concepts of the separation of state powers, with varying degrees of theoretical and practical formulation, can be encountered at any point in the history of the development of the theory of state and law and of political and legal doctrines. In this regard, according to some authors, there is no doubt about the need to form a unified, universally recognised theory of the separation of powers even now, during the period of constitutional fixation of the mentioned principle (Ivanov, 2000).

According to another position, a “pure”, “classical”, universally recognised and logically complete version of the theory of the separation of powers has never existed. Moreover, if we consider the theory of Ch. L. Montesquieu, as a classical theory of the separation of powers, we should not forget that his theory has never been implemented in the form in which he imagined it and has always been interpreted quite freely, taking into account the historical, political, and other features of a particular state. At the same time, it is obvious that the principle of the separation of powers must be in harmony with the specific historical, political, ideological, cultural and other features of the state where this principle is implemented. And not at all because it is required to take into account the mentioned features, but because the principle of the separation of powers in a “pure”, classical, “equivalent” to its name form has never existed and, perhaps, cannot exist (Marchenko, 2004).

The theory of separation of powers has undergone significant changes since its formation, and perhaps this is why the issue of its revision is being raised in legal literature, given the new approaches proposed (Chirkin, 2008; Stanskikh, 2004).

The principle of separation of powers can be considered from the perspective of its place in the system of constitutional law science and its practical implementation. In the first case, the mentioned principle is considered as the beginning of the theory of separation of powers. The task of the theory is to

reveal the content of this principle, its explanation and justification. As a result, the mentioned principle is raised to a higher level of theoretical generalisation, merging with reality (Bogdanova, 2001, p. 167).

In the second case, the principle of separation of powers does not constitute the best solution to the constitutional–legal problem. However, it is given concrete embodiment in the legal source. In the process of such legal formulation, a significant role is played by the constitutional control bodies, in the practice of which, when examining specific cases, the need to address the issue of separation of powers often arises.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has recognised the principle of separation of powers as a fundamental part of Europe’s constitutional traditions, Council of Europe standards and «an inherent feature of a democratic institutional system.» (PACE Resolution No. 1154 (1998) “Democratic functioning of national parliaments”). The universality of the aforementioned principle is increasingly emphasised by both theorists and practitioners.

In the modern world, almost all democracies build the infrastructure of their central bodies of power on the principle of the separation of powers (Garlicki L., 2001). In every country, issues of interaction between key state institutions are of cornerstone importance (Anthony Bradley, 2003). However, the principle of separation of powers has not been recognised in the constitutional doctrine and practice of all states. Moreover, in those states where the mentioned principle has been enshrined and recognised, approaches to its perception differ.

However, at different times, theorists have developed universal and specific provisions that form the basis of the theory of the separation of powers.

Research Methods

The methodological basis of the work is the comparative–legal method. Given the research’s goals and objectives, general methods of cognition (dialectical, historical, logical), general scientific cognition (analysis, systemic structural analysis), and special methods of jurisprudence (comparative–legal, formal–legal) were used.

Results

Parliament and parliamentarism are constantly evolving. In the context of the progress of society, numerous issues constantly arise that require practical solutions and legislative justifications.

Constitutional amendments lead to the improvement of the theoretical foundations of the parliament. The logic of developments in the Republic of Armenia led to the adoption of constitutional amendments that had matured through the Constitution’s legal practice. On the other hand, our state, having joined the Council of Europe, assumed obligations that necessarily had to be reflected in the basic law. As a result, constitutional amendments lead to the improvement of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the parliament.

Moreover, today it is already a reality that the constitutional reforms adopted by referendums on November 27, 2005 and December 6, 2015, were serious progress in terms of balancing the powers of state bodies, introducing effective mechanisms of checks and balances, and enshrining the constitutional foundations of the activities of the National Assembly.

Over the past thirty years in the Republic of Armenia, the oversight powers of the parliament have gradually expanded, as constitutional reforms have led to an increase in the powers and functions of the parliament in the system of state power bodies (Hakobyan et al., 2025, p. 286).

Conclusion

As a result of the research, it can be concluded that the legal study of parliamentarism and the principle of separation of powers is of great importance for the development of a general theory of the organisation of state power. The mentioned principles act not only as organisational solutions of state governance, but also as fundamental categories of legal and political thinking, which reflect the deep patterns of the relationship between power and law.

The correct implementation of the principle of separation of powers is of great importance for every state, since the establishment of democracy depends on this principle. The principle of separation of powers is the correct organisation of state power in a democratic state, in the presence of which mutual control and interaction of the highest bodies of the state are carried out through a system of checks and balances. The essence of this principle lies in the fact that state power, divided into branches through mutual checks and balances, is limited, overcoming the danger of centralisation of power and creating the necessary prerequisites for the establishment of democracy. The starting point for the application of the latter is that the only source and bearer of power is the people, which has received its constitutional enshrinement in Article 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, according to which: “In the Republic of Armenia the power belongs to the people” ((Constitution of the Republic of Armenia as amended (amended 06.12.2015)).

The legal literature also identifies several mandatory requirements for the content of the principle of separation of powers. In particular, it is noted that this principle is implemented differently in a particular state. However, in all its diversity, the separation of powers exists only where the law is endowed with the highest legal force and is adopted by the legislative (representative) body. The main mission of the executive branch is the implementation of laws; it is limited to sub-legislative norm-making activities and is accountable to the head of state or the legislative body. Viable legal structures that provide for the clearest separation of the restraining powers of state power and ensure the counterbalance of the latter.

A necessary condition for a proper understanding of the implementation of the principle of separation and balance of powers in a particular state is the

proposal of systematic solutions based on the results of the study of its form of government, since it is through the form of government that the features of the functioning of the state mechanism become visible. In this regard, we consider it necessary to note that although the main representative of the theory of separation of powers is Ch. Montesquieu, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the latter's works were written in the conditions of the realities existing in the 19th century. Meanwhile, today, the functions of the state, the tasks set before it, public relations, political and economic realities, and current problems and challenges are fundamentally different. Nevertheless, Montesquieu's fundamental political and legal ideas remain relevant and are reflected in the Basic Laws of many democratic states.

The analysis carried out in this article contributes to the enrichment of scientific understanding of parliamentarism and the principle of the separation of powers and can serve as a basis for further theoretical studies of these issues within the framework of the theory of the state and law.

Thus, a new definition of parliamentarism is proposed, according to which parliamentarism is a special system of organising and exercising state power, formed through free elections with the participation of political parties, and based on the principle of the rule of law and the separation of powers.

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VARDAN AREVELTSI AND HIS “ASHKHARHATSOYTS”

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Abstract

The medieval period of Armenian history is perhaps the most complex, yet also the most interesting and least studied, and still needs to be illuminated. Perhaps Medieval Armenia is rich in historians who not only authored historical works and left a rich heritage, which are indispensable sources for future generations to discover the Middle Ages, but who, to this day, are outstanding historians whose lives, activities, and legacies we are only partially familiar with. One of these outstanding historians is Vardan Areveltsi, whose life and activities are highly contradictory, but very important. He authored not only historical works but also geographical works, which are valuable sources for studying the administrative–territorial divisions of medieval Armenia. It not only studies the system of administrative–territorial division of medieval Armenia, but also provides information on a number of monasteries previously unknown in Armenian history. “Ashkaratsoyts” sometimes provides important source information that is no longer mentioned anywhere else. In this regard, it draws on not only the sources known to us but also on oral narratives and written sources that have not reached us, such as the historiographical works of Hovhannes Sarkavag, Mkhitar Anetsi, Vahram Tigranakertsi, and Hovhannes Vanakan. Its importance also lies in the fact that it is not only an important source for the study of the historical geography of Armenia but also of Asia Minor as a whole.

Thus, the topic of the research is “Vardan Areveltsi and his ‘Ashkharhatsoyts’,” the study of which may have a turning point for Armenian medieval historiography.

Keywords: Vardan Areveltsi, Vanakan vardapet, Khor Virap, “Ashkharhatsoyts”, brief and extensive originals, Hayk Perperyan.

ՎԱՐՂԱՆ ԱՐԵՎԵԼՅԻՆ ԵՎ ԻՐ «ԱՇԽԱՐՀԱՑՈՅՑ»-Ը

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Երևանի պետական համալսարանի
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Համառոտագիր

Հայոց պատմության միջնադարյան ժամանակաշրջանը թերևս ամենաբարդ, սակայն ամենահետաքրքիր և մասամբ չուսումնասիրված ժամանակաշրջաններից է, որն առ այսօր ունի լուսաբանման կարիք: Միջնադարյան Հայաստանը հարուստ է պատմիչներով, ովքեր ոչ միայն հեղինակել են պատմական աշխատություններ և թողել են հարուստ ժառանգություն, որոնք հետագա սերունդների համար միջնադարը բացահայտելու անփոխարինելի սկզբնաղբյուրներ են, սակայն առ այսօր կան ակնավոր պատմիչներ, որոնց կյանքին, գործունեությանը և թողած ժառանգությանը մենք մասամբ ենք ծանոթ: Այդ ակնավոր պատմիչներից է Վարդան Արևելցին, ում կյանքի և գործունեության մասին տեղեկությունները խիստ հակասական են, սակայն շատ կարևոր: Նա հեղինակել է ոչ միայն պատմական, այլև աշխարհագրական աշխատությունների, որոնք արժեքավոր սկզբնաղբյուր են միջնադարյան Հայաստանի վարչատարածքային բաժանումներն ուսումնասիրելու գործում: «Աշխարհացոյց»-ը ոչ միայն ուսումնասիրում է միջնադարյան Հայաստանի վարչատարածքային բաժանման համակարգը, այլև տեղեկություն է տալիս մի շարք վանքերի մասին, որոնք մինչև այժմ անհայտ էին հայոց պատմությանը: Այն երբեմն այնպիսի կարևոր աղբյուրագիտական տեղեկություններ է տալիս, որոնք այլևս ոչ մի տեղ չեն հիշատակվում: Նա այս առնչությամբ տեղեկություններ է քաղում ոչ միայն մեզ ծանոթ սկզբնաղբյուրներից, այլև բանավոր պատմություններից և մեզ չհասած գրավոր այնպիսի աղբյուրներից, որոնցից են Հովհաննես Սարկավագի, Մխիթար Անեցու, Վահրամ Տիգրանակերտցու, Հովհաննես Վանականի պատմագրական երկերը: Սույն աշխատությունը կարևոր է նաև նրանով, որ կարևոր սկզբնաղբյուր է ոչ միայն Հայաստանի, այլև ամբողջ Փոքր Ասիայի պատմական աշխարհագրության ուսումնասիրման դիտանկյունից:

Այսպիսով՝ այս հոդվածի թեման է «Վարդան Արևելցին և իր Աշխարհացոյցը», որի ուսումնասիրությունը կարող է շրջադարձային նշանակություն ունենալ հայ միջնադարյան պատմագրության համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Վարդան Արևելցի, Վանական վարդապետ, Խոր Վիրապ, «Աշխարհացոյց», համառոտ և ընդարձակ բնագրեր, Հայկ Պերպերյան:

Introduction

Vardan Areveltsi is one of the most prominent representatives of medieval Armenia, but his biographical information is scarce. Only contemporary historians provide fragmentary information about his life and activities. There is no accurate information about his birthplace. According to M. Chamchyan, Vardan Areveltsi was born in Gandzak (Chamchyan, 1984), but he is rarely referred to as “Gandzaketsi”. According to H. Voskryan, Vardan Areveltsi was born in Armenian Aghvank or its surroundings, since in many places “Vardan Vardapet Aghvanets” is mentioned (Voskian, 1922), and the forms “Areveltsi” or “Aghvanits” are also found. Gh also expresses this opinion. Alishan, noting that Vardan’s homeland, that is, his place of birth, is not remembered, but he is called Areveltsi like Kirakos, and to distinguish him from the Vardans of the same time, he is called Metsn (Vardapet) (Alishan, 1901, vol. A). In any case, Vardan Areveltsi is one of the outstanding figures of medieval Armenia, who enriched Armenian medieval historiography not only with historical, but also with geographical works. One such masterpiece is his “Ashkharhatsoyts”, which, in terms of the territorial and chronological coverage of its materials and its historical and geographical value, is the second among all works of this nature that have come down to us from the Middle Ages, after the famous “Ashkharhatsoyts” of the 5th century. However, from the point of view of source studies, Areveltsi’s “Ashkharhatsoyts” is a unique work and is very rarely related to the “Ashkharhatsoyts” of the 5th century.

Discussion

To this day, there are disagreements about Vardan Areveltsi’s birth date, death date, grave, the publication of “Ashkharhatsoyts”, and the author. The prevailing view in philology is that Areveltsi must have been born in 1200–1210, since in 1238, or more precisely, in 1239–1240. leaves for the Holy Land, and in 1240–1241 for Cilicia, where he receives the patronage of the Catholicos and Hetum I. This could have been at the age of maturity (30–40). However, one more speech is known from the manuscripts that have come down to us, and according to its extensive original, which was extracted from various books by the hand of Vardan Areveltsi, it is said: “The example was translated from the forgotten script into the Armenian script in the year 1221.” It is undeniable that Areveltsi was fluent in Greek, Assyrian, Hebrew, Turkish, and, probably, Persian. In addition, the title mentions the full name of Vardan Areveltsi, along with the nickname “Areveltsi.” Most likely, he translated this speech and sent it to Hromkla. If this is the case, then it must be assumed that Vardan Areveltsi must have been at least 25 years old to be able to translate this speech. Therefore, he must have been born between 1197 and 1200 and not later (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A).

He must have received his primary education in his birthplace. He certainly studied under Hovhannes Vanakan in Tavush, from whom he learned the art of writing. The monk Vardapet was Vardan’s main teacher, about whom we learn

from the following words: “What the nation of Netoghac has done, our glorious father, the monk Vardapet, and our kinsman Kirakos, have written in detail” («Ձոր ինչ արարին ազգն Նետողաց գրեալ են մանրամասնաբար փառավորեալ հայրն մեր Վանական վարդապետն և հարազատ մեր Կիրակոս») (Voskian, 1922). He probably studied at the school in Nor Getik, where he became friends with Kirakos Gandzaketsi in 1210–1214.

1225 To escape Jaleddin’s persecution, Hovhannes Vanakan moved to an isolated place in the southern parts of Tavush, founded a new church there, and continued his teaching. Among the students, who were mainly his former students, Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Vardan Areveltsi are also mentioned. When Hovhannes Vanakan was released from captivity after paying a large ransom, the Mongols did not release Kirakos Gandzaketsi so that he could serve of their translator–scribe. Vardan Areveltsi was also well–suited for such work, as he was fluent in the relevant languages, but Kirakos Gandzaketsi does not mention Vardan Areveltsi or their subsequent relations. There is no doubt that Vardan Areveltsi was not with them in captivity. What happened to him at that time is unknown. He probably founded the Kayenaberd area with a group of Hovhannes Vanakan’s students from the Khoranashat monastery in Tavush, following the example of his teacher’s example. school and engage in teaching. This was probably accomplished by 1225.

He taught until 1240–1241, when he left for Jerusalem and Cilicia. In 1243, Vardan Areveltsi participated in the church council of Sis in Cilicia, which was headed by Catholicos Constantine of Bardzraberdti (1220–1268). However, Areveltsi was present at the national–church council held in Sis not as an ordinary observer, but as one of the authoritative participants. He was also in close contact with the royal house and palace. He authored a very remarkable work, “Zhghlank”, for King Hetum I.

The Eastern Catholicos Constantine brought the “Letter of the Circular” to Eastern Armenia in 1246. According to this, he stayed in Jerusalem for one year and in Cilicia for five years. However, in 1247–1248, he left again for Cilicia, where he stayed until 1251.

In 1251, he finally returned to Armenia from Cilicia and settled in the monastery of St. Andrew in Kayenaberd. This time, he stayed here until the end of the 1250s. He was engaged in “vardapet” teaching in the monastery of St. Andre in Kayenaberd, which means that he was entrusted with the most complex and responsible material of the church, because it is known that the one who held the vardapetakan staff or authority had such a right canonically. Vardan Areveltsi, Kirakos Gandzaketsi and other students received the vardapetakan staff from the Vanakan vardapet (Kirakos Gandzaketsi, 1961). In the monastery of Andre, he had 40 students, of whom only Gevorg Skevratsi, Nerses Mshetsi, Grigor Baluetsi, and Hovhannes Yerznkatsi are known (Voskian, 1922).

Then we see him at Khor Virap, but the motives for his move here are unknown to historians. Only Garegin Hovsepyan testifies that Vardan Areveltsi

taught in Khor Virap for many years (Hovsepyan, 1944). Here, people from Cilicia, Erznka, Balu, Mush and other places came to study with him. Among his students were Hovhannes Erznkatsi (Pluz), Grigor Baluetsi, Gevorg Skevratsi, Nerses Mshetsi, Grigor Bjnetsi, and Sargis (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A).

The Khor Virap school enjoyed fame during the teaching of Vardan the Easterner; it was considered “Space-famous”, where he himself “shone like the rising sun” («իբրև զարեգակն փայլեր»), otherwise, people from Far Cilicia, Bardzr Hayq, Balu, Mush would not have come here to study. Therefore, Vardan Arelveltsi must have come to Khor Virap at least a few years before 1260, probably in 1257–1258 (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A).

In 1264, a memorable event occurred in the life of Vardan Arelveltsi. At the invitation of Hulavu Khan, he, as a representative of Eastern Armenia, together with the archpriests Sargis and Grigor, and the elder of Tphghis, traveled to Tabriz to participate in the festivities of the Elkhanate and was honored with great honors (Alishan, 1901, vol. B). King Hetum, the Georgian king David, the Persian sultan, and others were also there. Here, Arelveltsi asked Hulavu for mercy for his nation (Voskian, 1922), and after that, Hulavu Khan ordered his agents to soften the tax policy in Armenia.

Gevorg Lambronatsi (Skevratsi) reports that in the spring of 1267, Vardan Arelveltsi, together with his students, moved to Saghmosavank, Aghjots St. Stepanos and Tegheniats monasteries. Then, in the memoir attached to the “Interpretation of Daniel”, Vardan Arelveltsi reports that he began writing the aforementioned work in 1267 at Khor Virap, continued it at Saghmosavank, and finished it in 1268 at the monastery of Aghjots St. Stepanos. Thus, he was absent from Khor Virap in 1267–1268, but at the end of 1268 he returned and resumed his pedagogical activities. He was probably absent from Khor Virap because of the Mongol raids. In addition, he wanted to be close to the relatively safer Proshyan house, especially to Prince Kurd.

In the autumn of 1267, Arelveltsi completed his work “The gathering of history” («Հավաքումն պատմութեան») in Khor Virap. Here, he also composed the “Interpretation of Daniel”. There is no doubt that he also wrote his “Ashkharhatsoyts” (1268–1270) and some of his other works here, because until the end of his life, Khor Virap was his permanent place of residence (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A).

There are also differences of opinion about the date of death of Vardan Arelveltsi. Several dates are mentioned in historiography, of which 1271 is the most accurate. First, in the minor chronicles, the year “ՉԻ” (1271) is also mentioned. In addition, according to the testimony of one of his students, Grigor Aknertsis (Maghakia), “Ի թուականին ՉԻ (1271) փոխեցան ի Քրիստոս փառաւոր վարդապետքն Հայոց՝ Վարդան և Կիրակոս” (Grigor Aknertsis, 1974) and finally, in G. Hovsepyan’s work “The Khaghbakians and Proshians in the History of Armenia” the autograph memoir of Vardan Arelveltsi, written in Khor Virap and dated ՉԻ (1271) (Hovsepyan, 1944).

The burial place of Vardan Areveltsi has not been specified to this day. From written monuments, it is possible to trace 3 main places: the monasteries of St. Andre of Kayenaberd, Haghpat, and Khor Virap. Accordingly, historians are also divided into 3 parts. Those who consider Vardan Areveltsi buried in the monastery of St. Andre of Kayenaberd are based on the conclusions that he worked there for a very long time. However, this point of view is not proven. Those who point to the monastery of Haghpat also proceed from the assumption that Vardan Areveltsi carried out more or less literary and pedagogical activities here. In addition, literary sources state that the grave of Vardan Vardapet is located in Haghpat and, in their view, it is that of Vardan Areveltsi. However, this is not specified in the sources. Khor Virap remains, where Vardan Areveltsi is supposed to be buried. This is evidenced not only by the fact that he spent the last years of his life here or by the fact that he had connections with the Prosh and Kurd princes, but also by the fact that there are several accurate written testimonies about this: the autograph memoir of Vardan Areveltsi, written in 1271 in Khor Virap, which is the most recent information about his life, in addition, there is a report in the “Ashkharatsoys”, which is the result of an interpolation at the end of the 13th century: “ And at the entrance of Virap are the tombs of the deceased and famous people, and of the three great ones, the cosmically luminous Vardapet Vardan...” («և՛ ի բերան Վիրապին հանգուցեալ կան շիրիմ մեծամեծք և մեծահռչակ, և եռամեծին՝ տիեզերալոյս վարդապետին Վարդանայ...») The interpolation should have made such an addition when he was convinced that it was not only important, but also a correct and well-known fact. In addition, the end of the 13th century is not so far from his death in 1271 that traditions could not have arisen showing his grave in several places at the same time. This point of view is also supported by the kondak of David Virapetsi, written in 1669. It is described here that during the renovation of Khor Virap, several of the graves there were excavated, knowing in advance that one of them was that of Vardan Areveltsi, and the other that of the vardapet Nerses Mshetsi (Antapyan, 1989, vol. B). David Virapetsi lived in Khor Virap, and not as an ordinary monk. Therefore, it is impossible that he was not familiar with the historical past of the monastery and the biography of the people who lived and worked there, especially with the biography of a person like Vardan Areveltsi. All this confirms beyond a doubt that Vardan Areveltsi died in 1271 and was buried at the Khor Virap monastery (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A).

Methods

To conduct this study, we used research, comparative, and analytical methods, since, to study the medieval period, one must examine a sufficient number of manuscripts and analyse the opinions of contemporary and later historians about Vardan Areveltsi and his “Ashkharatsoys”. The comparative method is also important for comparing available information and drawing accurate conclusions.

Results

Vardan Areveltsi is one of the prominent figures of medieval Armenia, enriching Armenian medieval historiography not only with historical but also with geographical works. Thus, a remarkable geographical work by Vardan Areveltsi has been preserved in the Armenian manuscript heritage. In terms of the territorial and chronological coverage of its materials and its historical and geographical value, it is the second among all works of that nature that have come down to us from the Middle Ages, after the famous “Ashkharatsoyts” of the 5th century. However, from the point of view of source studies, Areveltsi’s “Ashkharatsoyts” is a unique work and is very rarely related to the “Ashkharatsoyts” of the 5th century.

Vardan Areveltsi supplements his historical and geographical reference material on Armenia and neighbouring countries with detailed analysis in “Ashkharatsoyts”. He presents perhaps the most important part of the border, administrative, and nominal changes that took place on the territory of Armenia during the 11th and 12th centuries and thereafter, until the 1270s, which are reflected here in considerable detail (Antapyan, 1989, vol. B).

“Ashkharatsoyts” sometimes provides important source information that is no longer mentioned anywhere else. It is an important basis for studying the territorial changes that occurred in various administrative units at different times, since from the middle of the 11th century to the 30s of the 13th century, the administrative–political system of Armenia underwent radical changes several times, and this was the result not of shifts in internal economic life, but of external conquerors. Thus, when Byzantium conquered Armenia, it introduced its administrative and tax system, dividing the country into 3 katapanies. The Seljuks who followed it applied their administrative–political system; during their reign, Armenia was already divided not only into small kingdoms and principalities but also into emirates. From the end of the 12th century onward, in northeastern Armenia, which was liberated from the Seljuk yoke with the help of the strengthened Georgian state, the Armenian authorities of the previous period regained strength. New authorities emerged, among them the most powerful was the Zakaryan dynasty. However, in 1220, the Mongol invasions into Transcaucasia began, and four khanates were created, of which Armenia was included in the Western khanate.

In addition to the above circumstances, there is also mention here of numerous monasteries that are now unknown and have disappeared. The names of numerous figures of Armenian culture, who played a very important role in the life of the Armenian people, are associated with these monasteries. Vardan Areveltsi’s information also acquires great importance for the study of the Seljuk invasions, destructions, and socio–economic policies in Armenia. In this regard, he draws on not only primary sources familiar to us but also on oral narratives and written sources that have not reached us, such as the historiographical works

of Hovhannes Sarkavag, Mkhitar Anetsi, Vahram Tigranakertsi, and Hovhannes Vanakan.

Its importance also lies in the fact that it is not only an important source for the study of the historical geography of Armenia, but also of all of Asia Minor.

“Ashkarhatsoyts” has been published several times: first in 1728 in Constantinople, in conjunction with the Dictionary of Yeremia Meghrets; second, in 1819 in Paris; and third, in 1887 in Venice (Antapyan, 1989, vol. B). However, none of the above-mentioned ones presents the critical-comparative original of “Ashkarhatsoyts”. However, the French-Armenian Armenianist H. Perperian undertook a new, fourth edition, published in 1960 in Paris. In addition to the above-mentioned editions, he subjected 24 manuscripts to critical comparison. He included them, which are kept in the archives of Jerusalem, Venice, the National Museum of Paris and the British Museum in London.

“Ashkarhatsoyts” has come down to us only in later copies, the earliest of which is from 1565. It has come down to us in two editions: brief and expanded. Information about Armenia is included in both the abridged and expanded editions, and information about foreign countries is included in the expanded edition (Antapyan, 1987, vol. A). It was widely distributed and apparently used as a teaching manual. It was most likely composed in 1269–1271 by Vardan Areveltsi.

Saint-Martin, in a footnote to his translation, states that publishers and writers attribute this work to Vardan Vardapet of Bardzraberdtsi, who enjoyed great fame in Armenia in the 13th century and died in 1271 (Perperyan, 1960). However, Saint-Martin, in his description of the Khor Virap church, mentions that the tomb of the famous Vardan is located here. It is assumed that this author was one of Vardan’s disciples, and that is why the book was attributed to him.

M. Chamchyan has a well-founded objection to attributing the authorship of “Ashkarhatsoyts” to the historian Vardan, who writes that the author of “Ashkarhatsoyts” is a later Vardan, whose student was Hovhannes Erzknatsi (Chamchyan, 1984).

H. Voskryan brings a strong argument to reject the authorship of Vardan Areveltsi (Voskryan, 1922). The point is that the death of Vardan Vardapet is mentioned in “Ashkarhatsoyts”. If the author of “Ashkarhatsoyts” is Vardan Areveltsi, then he could not have written about his death. However, all the above-mentioned authors did not pay attention to another mention in “Ashkarhatsoyts”, which could attribute the editing of “Ashkarhatsoyts” to an author who lived after the first thirty years of the 14th century, since some of the manuscripts mention where Khachatur Kecharetsi, who died around 1330–1331, was buried.

Ashot Hovhannisyanyan also finds new evidence against Vardan’s authority, who dates the time of the editing of “Ashkarhatsoyts” to the end of the 14th century or the beginning of the 15th century (Hovhannisyanyan, 1957). The point is that Vardan Areveltsy considers Samarkand “the seat of the Netoghats nation”, which could have been during the time of Lenk Temur in 1370, and Moscow the centre of the

Russian nation, which could have been in 1389. However, “Ashkarhatsoyts” was written before 1453, because K. Polis is mentioned as a Greek city. However, all the above-mentioned references are found only in the extensive edition and do not constitute evidence against Vardan Areveltsy’s authority, since they could be the result of interpolation. In addition, the manuscript tradition recognises the author of “Ashkarhatsoyts” as the “new translator and second Enlightener” Vardan Vardapet, who could only be Vardan Areveltsi. Naturally, Vardan, different from Vardan Areveltsi, could use these adjectives for Vardan Areveltsi.

G. Hovsepyan, speaking about Vardan Vardapet, also mentions “Ashkharhatsoyts”, saying that its origin is no later than the second half of the 13th century, except small innovations that were introduced later (Hovsepyan, 1944).

All this shows that Vardan Areveltsi was specifically engaged in geography. In fact, in this regard, he is the second figure in the entire Middle Ages after Movses Khorenatsi, the author of the 5th century “Ashkarhatsoyts”. This is already a serious circumstance for assessing him as a geographer.

Conclusion

Thus, we can state that Vardan Areveltsi is one of the most prominent representatives of Armenian medieval historiography, who was highly appreciated by his contemporaries during his lifetime, and “Ashkarhatsoyts” is unsurpassed in its importance, since it is the second most important in all medieval historiography after the famous “Ashkarhatsoyts” of the 5th century. It is, first of all, a very important source for getting acquainted with the situation in Armenia in the 13th century. The study of this period is perhaps of key importance for medieval Armenian historiography. This was a period when both the administrative-territorial, economic and demographic picture of Armenia underwent radical changes. “Ashkarhatsoyts” not only provides important information about the above-mentioned changes, but is also an important source for studying a number of settlements and monasteries that existed during this period, many of which have not even been preserved today.

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TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION FROM 2015 TO 2025

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Abstract

Trade and economic mutual interests between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015–2025, the nature of relations, structural features and the outcomes are studied in this article. The choice of chronological framework of the topic is conditioned by the fact that the mentioned period was a turning point in the relations between the two countries due to a number of significant political and economic processes. After Armenia became a full member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in 2015, the interstate relations between the two countries, including trade and economic relations, changed qualitatively, transiting from declarative allied cooperation to institutionally consolidated cooperation in various fields.

When considering the Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations of the specified period, the transformation of the foreign trade environment, the institutional changes implemented within the EAEU, as well as the influence of regional and global political and economic factors, were taken into account. The gradual development of trade and economic cooperation between the two states, as well as the role change of the Russian Federation in the system of foreign trade priorities of the Republic of Armenia, is focused on.

The relevance of the study is conditioned by the need for an in-depth analysis of trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in the context of pressure of economic sanctions by Western countries against Russia, the pandemic and post-pandemic consequences, which allows to identify both the trends in the sustainable development of bilateral relations and structural irregularities. This work is aimed at analysing the trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015–2025, the main factors, trends and common factors of their development, identifying their role and importance in the process of forming a stable foreign economic policy in the Republic of Armenia, as well as assessing the prospects for bilateral economic cooperation.

Keywords: Goods turnover, trade and economic relations, export, EAEU, bilateral cooperation, import.

ՀՀ – ՌԴ ԱՌԵՎՏՐԱՏՆՏԵՍԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՐԱԲԵՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ 2015–2025 ԹԹ.

ԱՐԱՄՈ ՀԱԽՎԵՐԴՅԱՆ

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Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում վերլուծված են 2015–2025 թթ. Հայաստանի Հանրապետության և Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության առևտրատնտեսական փոխադարձ հետաքրքրությունները, հարաբերությունների բնույթը, կառուցվածքային առանձնահատկությունները և արդյունքները: Թեմայի ժամանակագրական շրջանակի ընտրությունը պայմանավորված է նրանով, որ նշված ժամանակահատվածը շրջադարձային եղավ երկու երկրների հարաբերություններում մի շարք առանցքային քաղաքական և տնտեսական գործընթացների շնորհիվ: 2015 թ. Հայաստանի Եվրասիական Տնտեսական Միության (ԵԱՏՄ) լիիրավ անդամ դառնալուց հետո երկու երկրների միջպետական հարաբերությունները, այդ թվում՝ նաև առևտրատնտեսական կապերը, որակապես փոխվեցին՝ դեկլարատիվ դաշնակցային համագործակցությունից տարբեր ոլորտներում ինստիտուցիոնալ ամրագրում ստացած համագործակցության անցմամբ:

Նշված ժամանակահատվածի հայ-ռուսական առևտրատնտեսական հարաբերություններն ուսումնասիրելիս հաշվի են առնվել արտաքին առևտրային միջավայրի փոխակերպումը, ԵԱՏՄ շրջանակներում իրականացվող ինստիտուցիոնալ փոփոխությունները, ինչպես նաև տարածաշրջանային և գլոբալ քաղաքական ու տնտեսական գործոնների ազդեցությունը: Ուշադրության կենտրոնում են երկու պետությունների առևտրատնտեսական համագործակցության աստիճանական զարգացման ընթացքը, ինչպես նաև ՌԴ դերի փոփոխությունը ՀՀ արտաքին առևտրային առաջնահերթությունների համակարգում:

Ուսումնասիրության արդիականությունը պայմանավորված է Ռուսաստանի նկատմամբ Արևմուտքի երկրների տնտեսական պատժամիջոցների ճնշման, համավարակային և հետհամավարակային հետևանքների պայմաններում ՀՀ – ՌԴ առևտրատնտեսական հարաբերությունների խորքային վերլուծության անհրաժեշտությամբ, ինչը թույլ է տալիս բացահայտել ինչպես երկկողմ հարաբերությունների կայուն զարգացման միտումները, այնպես էլ կառուցվածքային անհամաչափությունները: Աշխատանքի նպատակը 2015–2025 թթ. ՀՀ – ՌԴ առևտրատնտեսական հարաբերությունների, դրանց զարգացման հիմնական գործոնների, միտումների և օրինաչափությունների վերլուծությունն է, ՀՀ կայուն արտաքին տնտեսական քաղաքականության ձևավորման

գործընթացում դրանց դերի և նշանակության բացահայտումը, ինչպես նաև երկկողմ տնտեսական համագործակցության հեռանկարների գնահատումը:
Բանալի բառեր՝ ապրանքաշրջանառություն, առևտրատնտեսական հարաբերություններ, արտահանում, ԵԱՏՄ, երկկողմ համագործակցություն, ներկրում:

Introduction

Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation are based on the long-standing historical, stable economic, industrial, and institutional ties between the Armenian and Russian peoples. After the collapse of the USSR in the 1990s and the formation of independent states in its territory, the Armenian– Russian trade and economic relations gradually settled into interrelations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. Dozens of agreements signed between the two countries during the 1990s and 2000s served as a solid ground for moving trade and economic relations of the two countries to a new level (Collection of Treaties and Agreements, Vol. I, 2022; Vol. II, 2022).

Since the mid-2010s, the economic cooperation between the two countries has risen to a qualitatively new level in the context of the EAEU. Back in late 2013, the desire to join the EAEU, officially announced by the political leadership of the Republic of Armenia, became a reality when Armenia became a full member of the EAEU on January 1, 2015 (Armenpress; Official website of the EEC). EAEU membership was not only a political and economic turning point for the foreign policy of the Republic of Armenia, but it also had an important strategic significance for the bilateral relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation.

Trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015–2025 are characterised in favour of the EAEU according to the foreign economic orientation of the Republic of Armenia, the transformation of the mechanisms of Eurasian integration, as well as the increasing influence of external geoeconomic factors on bilateral cooperation. Under such circumstances, the trade and economic relations between the two countries have undergone significant changes, in particular, the flows of commodities from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia, financial transfers and the role of the logistics and transit functions of the Republic of Armenia have sharply increased.

Parallel to this, Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations in 2015–2025 are also characterised by an increase of external challenges. In the context of destabilization of the international situation, the Ukrainian crisis and sanctions imposed on Russia by Western countries as a result of the Russian–Ukrainian war and the structural transformation of regional markets, trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation are changing in terms of quality not only in quantitative and statistical but also in qualitative, institutional and historical aspects.

As a result of the “Velvet Revolution” in Armenia in April–May 2018, Serzh Sargsyan, who had held the post of Prime Minister for a short term, resigned. The new authorities, represented by the Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, declared that they were not going to worsen relations with any state, including the Russian Federation, in order to serve the interests of another state or power center, however, in 2018–2020, a certain tension and an increase in disagreements in the political relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation was observed. The arrests of military and political figures of the former Armenian authorities, the summoning of Yuri Khachaturov, the CSTO Secretary– General, for questioning and his dismissal (Hetq), and provocative statements by John Bolton, the National Security Advisor to the US President, about a change in the course of Armenia’s foreign policy made during his visit to Armenia, led to an increase in tension in the relations between the two countries (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty).

The military and political events that took place in the region in the early 2020s, i.e. the 44–day war in 2020, the outbreak of the Russian–Ukrainian war in February 2022, the September military aggression in 2023 and the complete depopulation of Artsakh, have significantly affected not only political but also trade and economic relations between Armenia and Russia leading to the suspension of cooperation in various integration processes (such as in the case of the CSTO) and casting doubt on the prospects for further cooperation (such as in the case of the EAEU).

Although from the late 2023, Armenia began to deepen cooperation in the Euro–Atlantic direction by activating the political dialogue and economic cooperation with the US and the EU, on January 14, 2025, during the security forum of the Armenian Institute for International and Security Affairs (AIISA), the Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan announced: “The Republic of Armenia will remain a member of the EAEU as long as compatibility is possible” (Armenia News). The response from Russia was not long in coming. Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister, once again reminded that Armenia cannot adopt EU standards without leaving the EAEU (Kommersant). Time will tell how trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation will develop after Armenia withdraws from the EAEU and what economic consequences such a turning point will have in favour of the EU.

Theory and methodology

The interstate contracts and agreements on trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation for the period from 2015 to 2025, official materials of state departments, official statistical data of the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia, scientific works of Armenian and foreign authors on trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation serve as a basis for study in

terms of theory and methodology.

Armenian–Russian economic relations in the post–Soviet period are analysed by historian Vachagan Cholakhyan in his article on promoting trade and economic cooperation between Armenia and Russia, where the integration process between the two states is emphasised.

The author emphasizes in his work that in the modern period, Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations are developing in the context of complex historical, geopolitical and institutional processes, when not only economic factors but also political developments have an impact thereon within the framework of the EAEU or international agreements signed with other countries (Cholakhyan, 2024).

Economists Mariam Voskanyan and Ani Galstyan analyse the current state of Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations, as well as the internal and external factors hindering their development. The authors emphasise the dominant position of the Russian Federation as an important trade partner of the Republic of Armenia. The authors also consider the export and import structure of Armenia for the period from 2015 to 2022, the batches and volumes of goods exported to the Russian Federation and other countries, as well as imported from those countries, the specific features of Armenian–Russian trade and economic cooperation within the framework of the EAEU (Voskanyan, Galstyan, 2025).

Economists Armen Hakobyan and Zaven Margaryan, in their turn, study the impact of the Russian–Ukrainian war on the financial indicators of the Armenian banking system in 2020–2023. The study emphasises that, unlike the restrictions of the COVID–19 pandemic, which had a severe impact on the Armenian economy and banking system, the Russian–Ukrainian war and anti–Russian sanctions have the opposite effect on the Armenian economy, particularly on the banking system. Due to international visitors from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the Armenian banking system has recorded an unprecedented increase in the volume of financial transactions (financial transfers, Russian ruble conversion, opening of deposits, etc.) (Hakobyan & Margaryan, 2025).

Two other researchers, economists Victoriya Hayrapetyan and Elen Santrosyan, note that Armenia’s membership in the EAEU and institutional transformations have had a positive impact on Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations. The authors emphasise that the reform of tax tariffs adopted within the framework of EAEU, the reduction of trade barriers, the revision of regulatory norms and the harmonisation of the Union’s regulatory and legal acts with their legislation by the member–states have had a significantly positive impact on Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations (Hayrapetyan & Santrosyan, 2025).

Thus, theoretical and methodological bases of Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations represent a combination of the classical model of international trade, institutional analysis of integration processes and expert approaches, reflected in scientific research works and publications of various authors. They have

fundamental importance for the analysis of the structural features, development dynamics and cooperation prospects of the trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015–2025.

Research methods

Methods of document and statistical data analysis, as well as historical–comparative and mathematical modelling, were used during the study. By the Document Analysis Method, bilateral and international agreements, regulatory and legal acts, reports of various state institutions, publications of international organisations, and scientific research related to the trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation were studied.

The application of the Statistical Analysis Method allowed for the quantitative description of the dynamics of goods turnover between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, the assessment of its structural changes, the identification of short–term fluctuations and long–term development trends, and the analysis of the correlation of those indicators. By *Historical – Comparative Method*, the sequence of stages of development of trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in the modern period was analysed, institutional changes were contrasted, and it was revealed how historical events, geopolitical processes, economic and pandemic crises affected the goods turnover of the two countries. *The mathematical modelling method helped reflect the dynamics of mutual trade between the two countries, using quantitative indicators as a basis.*

Results

The trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation are multi–layered and develop in different directions (trade, agriculture, industry, energy and logistics, tourism, services, etc.). At that, in these fields, the two countries cooperate not only bilaterally but also within the framework of the EAEU. Find below the results of cooperation between the two states in the above–mentioned economic sectors for 2015 to 2025, the dynamics of indicators and development prospects.

Commercial sector. Foreign trade is one of the key and significant directions of the Armenian–Russian economic cooperation. It is Russia that receives the vast majority of revenues not only from trade with EAEU member states but also from total foreign trade (**Diagram 1**).

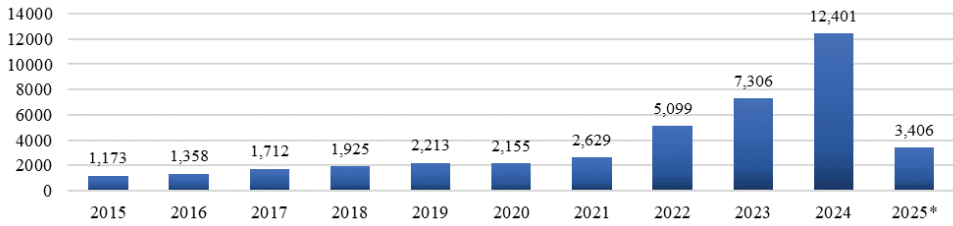


Diagram 1. Foreign trade turnover between Armenia and Russia in 2015–2025, in billion USD (Statistical Committee RA)

**Only the indicators for the three quarters of 2025 are presented.*

In 2015–2019, trade turnover between Armenia and Russia recorded dynamic growth; the decline in 2020 was mainly due to the COVID–19 pandemic restrictions, which dealt a heavy blow to the economies and trade turnover of both countries. Besides, in 2024, the historical maximum indicator not only in the last ten years but also in the history of trade turnover in the entire post–Soviet period was recorded between the two countries, amounting to 12 billion 401 million US dollars. In the study, we see the indicator of 2025 as of the 3rd quarter, which amounted to approximately 3 billion 406 million US dollars and did not even exceed the indicator of 2022.

The export volumes from Armenia to Russia recorded dynamic growth from 2015 to 2019, however the decline in 2020 was mainly due to COVID–19 pandemic restrictions. Since 2021, foreign trade indicators between the two countries have again recorded positive dynamics. In 2023, exports from Armenia to Russia amounted to 3.5 billion US dollars. The highest import indicator, according to the exporting country, was recorded in 2024 at 9.4 billion USD, and imports by the country of origin of the product were estimated at 9.2 billion USD in the same year (**Table 1**).

Table 1.

The structure of bilateral foreign trade between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015– 2025, in million USD (Statistical Committee RA)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*
Export	244	371	557	666	742	675	840	2 410	3 540	3 161	2 725
Import <i>(by countries of consignment)</i>	647	740	1 269	1 394	1 649	1 638	1 997	2 875	4 543	9 434	4 148
Import <i>(by countries of origin)</i>	942	995	1 173	1 257	1 490	1 479	1 785	2 622	4 383	9 239	3 991

**Only the indicators for the three quarters of 2025 are presented.*

These high indicators recorded as a result of cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in the commercial sector in 2015–2025 once again emphasise the role of Russia not only as an important economic partner for Armenia but also the primary importance of the Russian market for Armenian goods and services.

Energy and logistics sector. Energy and logistics sectors are among the key directions of Armenian–Russian trade and economic cooperation in the modern period, where the cooperation between the two states is built and developed on the basis of the agreements and contracts adopted from the 1990s to the 2010s. Although Armenia is mainly self-sufficient in terms of electricity supply for its population, the republic’s gas supply of the republic is handled by the Russian company “Gazprom Armenia”, which holds an exclusive monopoly. It should be noted that under the “gas agreement” signed by the parties in Yerevan in 2013, Armenia guaranteed that, up to 2043, the rights and interests of “Gazprom” would not be subject to change or reduction without prior agreement with Russia. Although in the mid–2000s an attempt was also made to build an alternative gas pipeline from Iran, this initiative did not achieve serious success. Russia remains the main gas supplier to Armenia (Davtyan, 2016).

According to some statements, the interests of Russia in the South Caucasus and especially in Armenia did not allow the Iranian gas pipeline to be laid across the entire territory of the republic, otherwise Armenia would be supplied with several times cheaper Iranian gas from neighboring Iran, which would force the Russian gas supplier out of the Armenian market (Korotishev & Tyumenkova, 2012). Besides, the economic sanctions imposed on Iran by the West also hindered the complete launch of the Iranian gas pipeline (Davtyan, 2017).

Gas supply from Russia to Armenia is carried out through the territory of Georgia since there is no direct land-based connection between the countries. For said purpose, Armenia pays Georgia an additional amount for gas transit. In this context, Armenia becomes dependent not only on Russia for gas supply, but also on Georgia. Accidents of the Russian gas pipeline are often recorded in the territory of Georgia, which disrupts the normal supply of Russian gas to Armenia for a short period. It should be noted that, after becoming a member of the EAEU, the Armenian leadership is actively seeking to revise the Russian gas tariff and equalise it across all member states within the framework of the EAEU. Despite this step, the Russian side is still in no hurry to make such a concession, noting that it requires unifying tax legislation and creating a unified currency within the framework of the Union (Terzyan, 2018). However, the price of Russian gas does not have a tendency to decrease; moreover, vice versa, from 2024 it will gradually increase in price, reaching 355 USD per 1m³ of gas in 2036 from the current 165 USD (Davtyan, 2025).

The Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant is also one of the priority directions of Armenian–Russian economic cooperation. Armenia and Russian companies,

including “Rosatom”, regularly conduct inspections at the Metsamor NPP, trying to extend the further exploitation of the nuclear power plant through repair and re-equipment works. The nuclear power plant is not only of great economic importance in terms of supplying electricity to the population of Armenia, but it is also important in terms of strategic and energetic safety (Markarov, Davtyan) 2025.

An essential achievement between Armenia and Russia in the energy sector was signing the “Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on the provision of a state export loan to the Government of the Republic of Armenia for financing the extension of the exploitation term of the nuclear power plant in the territory of the Republic of Armenia” dated February 5, 2015, which was aimed at promoting the development of nuclear energy in the Republic of Armenia and modernization of nuclear infrastructure (Collection of Treaties and Agreements, on Vol. III; Sputnik Armenia). Under this Agreement, Russia was to provide Armenia with 300 million USD, from which 270 million USD was a loan and 30 million USD was financial assistance. However, on June 11, 2020, it became known that the Armenian Government was refusing the Russian loan, considering it reasonable to carry out crediting with its own financial resources (Public Radio of Armenia).

Since 2026, the second stage of the Metsamor NPP operation extension will start (the first stage was in 2016–2026). It is planned that the operation of the Metsamor NPP will be extended for another ten years, until 2036 (Sputnik Armenia). At the same time, the Russian side has repeatedly expressed its willingness to finance and provide technical assistance in the construction of a new nuclear power plant in the south of Armenia (in the Syunik region) (Davtyan & Khachikyan, 2023). However, in recent years, the Armenian authorities have been mostly interested in the construction of modular nuclear power plants and the installation of solar power plants in Armenia with the help of the United States and France, thus diversifying the deficit that may arise as a result of the cessation of the Metsamor NPP operation. This suggests that the West is seeking to reduce Russian influence in the Armenian energy system as well.

Armenia and Russia are also actively considering the expansion of logistics cooperation. On December 22, 2025, during their separate meeting in St. Petersburg within the framework of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council and the informal summit of the CIS, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan highlighted the active development of energy and logistics projects between the two countries, the positive indicators of goods turnover as well as steps aimed at modernizing the logistics system, the purpose of which is to create new routes for supplies and investments. The leaders of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia agreed to further deepen economic cooperation in all directions (Official website of the President of Russia).

Financial and banking sector. Over the past decade, Armenia and Russia have cooperated quite actively, especially in financial and banking sector. An

important indicator in assessing Armenian–Russian trade and economic relations is transfers, in particular **(Table 2)**.

Table 2.

Transfers of individuals through the Armenian banking system between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015-2025, in million USD (Central Bank of Armenia)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Inflow	1 554	1 008	1 064	1 049	1 055	824	865	3 598	3 945	3 821	3 878
Outflow	252	286	376	471	425	459	401	452	641	688	749
Net influx	711	722	688	578	629	364	463	3 145	3 304	3 132	3 128

During the period under review, the highest inflow indicator of individual transfers through the Armenian banking system was recorded in 2023, amounting to more than 3.9 billion USD. The highest outflow indicator of individual transfers was recorded in 2024, amounting to 688 million USD. In 2025, inflows of individual remittances amounted to USD 3.878 billion, while outflows reached USD 749 million, the highest level recorded during the observed period.

The highest net inflow indicator of individual transfers (the difference between inflow and outflow) during the period under review was recorded in 2023, amounting to 3 billion 304 million USD.

The dynamics of transfers by individuals through the Armenian banking system between Armenia and Russia in 2015–2025 show that individual transfers have significantly decreased in 2020–2021 as compared to previous years, which could, first of all, be due to the COVID–19 pandemic restrictions. As a result of the introduction of a severely restricted regime due to the global pandemic, the economies of many countries around the world, including the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, suffered significant damage, as a result of which transfers also decreased sharply. Only since 2022, a sharp increase has been recorded, when 3 billion 598 million USD was transferred from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia, compared to 865 million USD of the previous year; it was approximately. 4 times more than in the previous year **(Diagram 2)**.

It is also worth noting that over the past ten years, the highest indicator of transfers from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia was recorded in 2023, amounting to 3 billion 945 million USD. And the highest indicator of transfers from the Republic of Armenia to the Russian Federation was recorded in 2024, amounting to 688 million USD. It should be noted that during the period under review, the largest source of money transfers from abroad to Armenia was Russia (Hetq). At the end of 2024, individuals from abroad transferred 5.8 billion USD to Armenia through banks, of which only 65.5% (3.8 billion USD) was from Russia. As for January–November 2025, individuals from abroad transferred 5.2 billion USD to Armenia through banks, of which 64% (3.3 billion USD) was from Russia (Central Bank of Armenia).

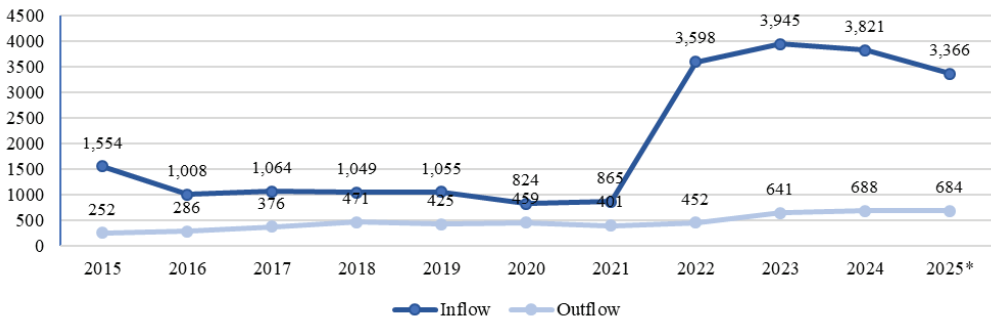


Diagram 2. Transfers of individuals through the Armenian banking system between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation in 2015-2025, in million USD

** The indicators of transfers of individuals through the Armenian banking system, only for January-November 2025, are presented.*

The comparative specific weights of transfers from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia in 2015 and 2025 show that the threshold of 64–65% was mainly maintained during the period under review; thus, it proves once again that the Russian Federation is the largest economic partner of Armenia (**Diagram 3**).

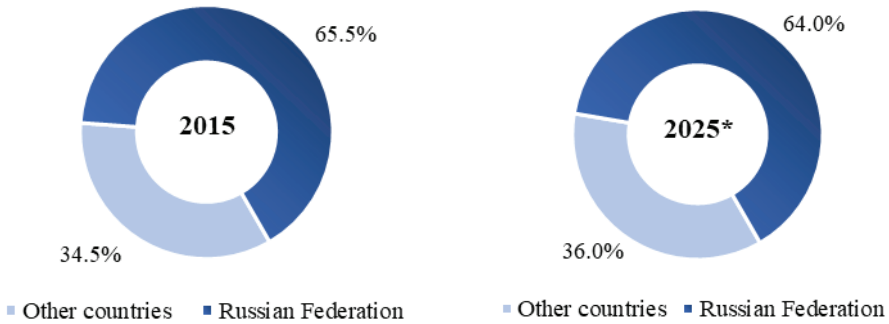


Diagram 3. Comparative specific weights of transfers from Russia and other countries to Armenian individuals in 2015 and 2025, % (Central Bank of Armenia)

** The indicators of transfers of individuals through the Armenian banking system, only for January-November 2025, are presented.*

The economic influence of Russia in Armenia is conditioned by the active operation of companies with Russian capital. Until the beginning of 2024, the communication and telecommunication sector of Armenia was under the influence of Russian capital companies: “Viva Cell MTS”, “Veon Armenia” (formerly “Beeline”, currently “Telecom Armenia”) and “Rostelecom”. However, in 2020, “Team” CJSC purchased 100% shares of “Veon Armenia” CJSC and renamed the company to “Telecom Armenia” CJSC. In early 2024, “Viva Armenia” ceased to be part of the Russian “MTS” group, officially announcing that the Company’s shares are fully owned by the Cypriot “Fedilco Group Limited”. As for the subsidiary company of the other leading Russian company “Rostelecom” in the communication and telecommunication sector of Armenia, the latter was rebranded as “Ovio” in 2024, and in July 2025 the Company’s shares were purchased by “Viva Armenia”. The transaction is expected to be completed in the beginning of 2026 (Hraparak). Although the Russian presence and influence in the communication and telecommunication sector of Armenia has significantly decreased in recent years, many companies with Russian capital continue to be major taxpayers of the Republic of Armenia (**Table 3**). At the end of 2024, three companies with Russian capital were in the list of the top ten largest taxpayers of the Republic of Armenia: “Zangezur Copper Molybdenum Combine” CJSC, “Gazprom Armenia” CJSC and “Wildberries” LLC.

Table 3.

The position of Top 10 companies with Russian capital in the list of 1000 largest tax-paying companies of the Republic of Armenia in 2024-2025 (State Revenue Committee of the Republic of Armenia)

№	Company	2024 annual report		2025 Q3 report	
		Place	General access (thousand AMD)	Place	General access (thousand AMD)
1	Zangezur copper-molybdenum combine	1	101 967 621	4 ↓	36 171 155
2	Gazprom Armenia	4	46 860 354	5 ↓	34 884 746
3	Wildberries	8	21 319 296	29 ↓	8 074 142
4	Electric Network of Armenia	19	12 255 290	18 ↑	11 709 128
5	Agarak copper molybdenum combine	25	10 320 021	35 ↓	7 245 174
6	Armenian Nuclear power plant	34	7 810 813	42 ↓	5 819 570
7	Transgas	52	5 596 787	57 ↓	4 496 343
8	VTB Bank (Armenia)	54	5 363 601	58 ↓	4 396 646
9	Aeroflot - Russian Airlines	82	3 765 144	80 ↑	3 333 736
10	South Caucasus Railway	157	2 069 141	137 ↑	1 926 467

However, all three companies have lost their positions as for the 3rd quarter of 2025. “Zangezur Copper Molybdenum Combine” dropped from the 1st place of the last year to the 4th place; “Gazprom Armenia” from the 4th to the 5th place, and “Wildberries” from the 8th place to 29th place. However, these indicators are not final, and everything will be clarified after the publication of the annual report of 2025 by the State Revenue Committee of the Republic of Armenia. It should be noted that in recent years, the list of large taxpayers in the Republic of Armenia has been unexpectedly topped by “Mobile Centre,” which is the largest mobile phone sales network in Armenia, and it reached such a position due to large re-exports to Russia under anti-Russian sanctions after the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Tourism sector. One of the key directions of Armenian-Russian economic

relations is the tourism sector which stimulates economic cooperation between the two states, increases goods turnover as well as attracts investment funds. It is important to emphasise that Russia is the primary tourism market for Armenia, and it provides significant tourist flows annually. The statistical data published by the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia evidence the importance of the role of Russian tourists for Armenia (**Table 4**).

Table 4.

The number of tourists arrived in Armenia in 2015-2025, people
(Statistical Committee RA)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Russian Federation*	263 459	273 346	303 440	346 874	430 024	137 602	350 569	790 397	1 137 005	937 823	921 704
Overall	1 192 120	1 259 657	1 494 779	1 651 782	1 894 377	375 216	870 308	875 772	2 316 210	2 208 179	2 263 642

* The indicators presented for 2015 - 2019 reflect the tourists who arrived from the Russian Federation and registered in the facilities of the RA hotel industry (hotels, hotel-type facilities, sanatoriums, rest homes, etc.).

In 2023, a record flow of tourists was recorded in Armenia: approx. 2.3 million tourists, of whom Russian tourists made up a significant number: approx. 1.1 million.

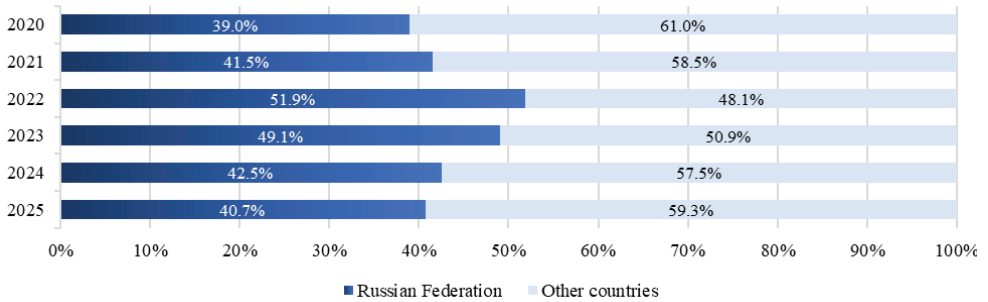


Diagram 4. Specific weight of tourists arrived from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia in 2020-2025, % (Statistical Committee RA)

The specific weight of tourists arriving from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia in 2020–2025 is reflected in **Diagram 4**, which also shows the growth of the role of Armenia as a tourist destination among Russian tourists.

Thus, during the period under review, the trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation are characterised as stable and multi-layered, which is conditioned both by historically formed ties and by the Eurasian institutional framework. Russia has a significant presence in various sectors of the Armenian economy. The Russian capital is represented in the energy, logistics, banking, communication and telecommunication as well as tourism sectors, which increases the dependence of the Armenian economy on the Russian economy, as well as significantly contributes to maintaining the macroeconomic stability of Armenia.

Conclusions

The period from 2015 to 2025 holds an important place in the history of trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. It was during this period that both new opportunities and disagreements emerged in the trade and economic cooperation of the two states. If at the beginning of 2015–2018, trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation were developing with a positive trend, then in 2018, after the “Velvet Revolution”, this trend was maintained, however it was accompanied by an increase in disagreements between the two countries in the political field, by cooperation in some sectors and by termination of some agreements.

Rather unpredictable developments are taking place, especially within the framework of the EAEU. Although Armenia has not suspended its membership here, as Armenia did in the case of the CSTO, in recent years, the official discourse of the RA government has been circulating the view that it is possible to take steps towards EU integration while being a member of the EAEU. The Russian side has repeatedly noted at the highest level what economic benefits Armenia derives from membership in the EAEU and what serious consequences may follow in case Armenia withdraws from the EAEU.

Thus, trade and economic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation are currently at a turning point, where each development is conditioned by the influence of both internal and external factors. Will the Armenian authorities embark on an adventure? Will they worsen the centuries-old Armenian-Russian trade and economic relations for the sake of EU integration? Do the Armenian authorities and the Armenian society realise what consequences will follow if Armenia withdraws from the EAEU, thus deteriorating trade and economic relations with Russia? Time will tell the answers to all these questions.

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MODERN ISSUES OF BANKING SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

To develop principles and procedures for effective regulation and supervision of the banking system, it is first necessary to analyse trends in the global restructuring of the banking system. To identify such trends, it is necessary to study and analyse the experiences of countries with developed, stable banking systems.

The classical banking system is a two-tier banking system. However, as a result of the development of financial markets and infrastructure in recent decades, an objective need has arisen to review a number of approaches related to the classical two-tier banking system. Some countries are trying to introduce approaches to forming a multi-tiered banking system, while others are trying to introduce a hybrid system, where central banks open and service bank accounts not only for depository institutions (banks), but also for systemically important financial market infrastructures. In such a situation, a number of conceptual questions arise, to which this research work is dedicated.

Keywords: Banking system, central bank, bank account

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Համառոտագիր

Բանկային համակարգի արդյունավետ կարգավորման և վերահսկողության սկզբունքների ու ընթացակարգերի մշակման համար նախ և առաջ անհրաժեշտ է վերլուծել բանկային համակարգի կառուցվածքում համաշխարհային մակարդակով տեղի ունեցող վերափոխումների

միտումները: Նման միտումները բացահայտելու համար անհրաժեշտ է ուսումնասիրության և վերլուծության ենթարկել զարգացած և կայուն բանկային համակարգեր ունեցող երկրների փորձը:

Դասական բանկային համակարգը երկնակարգակ բանկային համակարգ է: Սակայն վերջին տասնամյակներում ֆինանսական շուկաների և ենթակառուցվածքների զարգացման արդյունքում օբյեկտիվ անհրաժեշտություն է առաջացել վերանայել դասական երկնակարգակ բանկային համակարգի հետ կապված մի շարք մոտեցումներ: Որոշ երկրներ փորձում են ներդնել բազմամակարդակ բանկային համակարգի ձևավորման մոտեցումները, որոշները՝ հիբրիդային համակարգի մոդելն են առաջադրում, որտեղ կենտրոնական բանկերը բանկային հաշիվներ են բացում և սպասարկում ոչ միայն ավանդային հաստատությունների (բանկերի) համար, այլ նաև ֆինանսական շուկայի համակարգային նշանակության ենթակառուցվածքների համար: Նման իրավիճակում առաջ են գալիս մի շարք հայեցակարգային բնույթի հարցեր, որոնց պատասխանների որոնմանն էլ նվիրված է սույն հետազոտական աշխատանքը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ բանկային համակարգ, կենտրոնական բանկ, բանկային հաշիվ:

Introduction

In order to develop principles and procedures for effective regulation and supervision of the banking system, it is first necessary to analyse the trends in the transformations taking place in the structure of the banking system at the global level. To identify such trends, it is necessary to study and analyse the experiences of countries with developed, stable banking systems. Therefore, the banking systems of the European Union, the United Kingdom, the USA, South Korea, Singapore, and a number of other countries were considered as the object of study.

Theoretical and methodological Bases

The classical banking system is a two-tier banking system (Keynes, Friedman, Samuelson, Mankiw, McConnell, Dolan, Mishkin and others). The central bank, which implements monetary policy, is at the top level. Banks serving the real economy and the needs of the population are at the second level. In order to implement monetary policy, central banks open and maintain correspondent (current) bank accounts for banks operating at the second level. These accounts are used both to meet mandatory reserve requirements and to carry out payment and settlement operations within the framework of additional reserves exceeding the mandatory reserve requirement. Central banks do not open accounts for other individuals. Their bank accounts are opened exclusively by second-tier banks. The existence of a fractional reserve banking system, the issuance of national currency, the provision of a multiplier effect between the money base and the

money supply, and the mechanism for implementing monetary policy are based on this model.

Research methods

As a result of the development of financial markets and infrastructure in recent decades, an objective need has arisen to review a number of approaches related to the classical two-tier banking system. Some countries are trying to introduce approaches to forming a multi-tiered banking system, while others are trying to introduce hybrid systems, where central banks open and service bank accounts not only for depository institutions (banks), but also for systemically important financial market infrastructures. In such a situation, a number of conceptual issues arise, including:

- is it necessary to preserve the two-tier model of the banking system or to shift to a hybrid or multi-tier model?
- should central banks open accounts for non-bank institutions?
- what criteria should be used to select non-bank institutions for which central banks are willing to open accounts?
- what type of accounts should be opened for non-bank institutions so as not to jeopardise financial stability and the logic of implementing monetary policy?
- may correspondent accounts of banks, intended to meet reserve requirements, be used for making payments, or may separate payment (settlement) accounts be necessary?
- should funds in the payment (settlement) account be included in the calculation of the reserve requirement?
- should payment (settlement) accounts be only in the national currency of the given country, or may they also be in foreign currency.

In such a situation, it is important to set out clear principles for opening and managing accounts at the central bank. Currently, different countries are taking different approaches to the above issues. The methods of comparative analysis, abstraction, induction and deduction were used to study the aforementioned issues.

Results

Is it necessary to preserve the two-tier model of the banking system or to shift to a hybrid or multi-tier model? Currently, many countries, such as the European Union, the United Kingdom, South Korea and Singapore, are introducing hybrid banking models, in which central banks retain elements of the classic two-tier banking system and open payment accounts for customers who meet certain criteria (e.g. for operators and participants of systemically important payment systems). Moreover, central banks of many countries are also considering the possibility of providing direct or indirect account services of the broader public. In addition, a multi-tier model of banking system is being formed

in a number of countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States and some European Union member states. In the case of a multi-tier model, central banks open nominee (omnibus) accounts for operators of payment and settlement systems, and the latter, in turn, maintain accounts for the accounting of their clients' funds. The transformation of structural models of the banking system in the studied countries is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Transformation of structural models of the banking system in the studied countries

	Classic two-tier model	Two-tier model with elements of a single-tier model	Multi-tier model
European Union countries		v	v
United Kingdom			v
USA			v
South Korea		v	
Singapore		v	
India		v	
Australia		v	
Mexico		v	

As shown in Table 1, none of the countries studied currently maintains the classical two-tier model in its entirety.

Should central banks open accounts for non-bank institutions, and on what criteria should the selection of the latter be made? According to the Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures (PFMI), a financial market infrastructure should conduct its money settlements in central bank money where practical and available (Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures, Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems, Bank for International Settlements, Technical Committee of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions, 2012, 182p.). These principles are designed to apply to systemically important payment systems. When studying the policies of central banks across countries regarding the opening of payment and correspondent accounts, it becomes clear that final settlement through accounts opened at the central bank is carried out only for payment systems that are important to the financial market of a given country

(e.g., systemically important systems). In the countries studied, the decision to open and service payment accounts is left to the discretion of the central bank (Bank of England Settlement Accounts, Policy paper, London, 2021, 13p.; Bank of England Omnibus Accounts – Access Policy, London, 2021, 9p.).

What type of accounts should be opened for non-bank institutions so as not to jeopardise financial stability and the logic of implementing monetary policy? Best practice study shows that currently, there are two main approaches to opening payment accounts in the world:

- opening payment accounts with the central bank for operators and participants of systemically or publicly important payment systems,
- opening of nominee (omnibus) accounts with the central bank for operators of systemically or publicly important payment systems and opening of cash accounts with the system operators for system participants.

Best-practice studies show that both approaches are widespread worldwide (Considerations and Lessons for the Development and Implementation of Fast Payment Systems, Part of the World Bank Fast Payments Toolkit, Main Report, September 2021, 113p.). The first approach is more widespread and is used in countries such as the European Union member states, Australia, India, Singapore, and Mexico. The second approach is used in countries such as the United States and Poland. The United Kingdom uses both the first and second models (See Table 2).

May correspondent accounts of banks, intended to meet reserve requirements, be used for making payments, or may separate payment (settlement) accounts be necessary? Best practice study shows that payment accounts are opened and maintained at the central bank for payment system operators and certain participants. Central banks open payment accounts for banks, payment and electronic money institutions. However, in many countries, opening a payment account is not required for banks (such as in the UK or Japan), as they already have correspondent accounts with the central bank. In this case, the correspondent accounts of banks also function as payment accounts (Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures, Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems, Bank for International Settlements, Technical Committee of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions, 2012, 182p.). At the same time, in other countries, banks must open payment accounts in addition to the reserve account to participate in payment systems. The accounts used for settlement at the central bank in the countries studied are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Accounts used for final settlement at the central bank in the countries studied.

	Current (correspondent) accounts with the central bank	Separate payment (settlement) accounts with the central bank for the payment system operators and participants	Nominee (omnibus) accounts with the central bank for payment system operators
European Union countries		v	v
United Kingdom	v	v	v
USA	v		v
South Korea		v	
Singapore		v	
India		v	
Australia		v	
Mexico		v	

As shown in Table 2, unlike the UK, banks in the European Union member states, South Korea, Singapore, and a number of other countries open payment accounts in addition to reserve accounts to participate in payment systems.

Should funds in the payment (settlement) account be included in the calculation of the reserve requirement? There is no single approach to this issue. In the European Union countries, the balance on the payment account at the end of the day is also included in the calculation of the reserve requirements. In Singapore, the balance of the payment account is not included in the calculation of the reserve requirements. Still, funds can be deposited into the payment account from the reserve account only in amounts exceeding the minimum reserve requirements. In the UK, this problem is absent because, first, banks can use their reserve accounts as payment accounts. And secondly, even if a separate payment account is opened for a bank at the discretion of the central bank, that account is an account that is almost zeroed out at the end of the day (the central bank sets a maximum threshold, which is usually a small amount due to ensuring financial stability and monetary policy). As for the nominee (omnibus) account, there is no requirement to have a zero balance at the end of the day, but only persons who are authorised to open accounts with the central bank may have funds in such an account.

Should payment (settlement) accounts be only in the national currency of a given country, or may they also be in foreign currency? As mentioned, according to the Principles of Financial Market Infrastructures, a financial market infrastructure should conduct its money settlements in central bank money where practical and available (Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures, Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems, Bank for International Settlements, Technical Committee of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions, 2012, 182p.). However, the requirement for the implementation of final settlement through accounts with the central bank is based on two main reasons:

- the central bank has lower credit risk,
- the central bank is the source of liquidity (the issuer of money).

The emphasis on the second factor indicates that we are talking about the currency issued by the specific central bank.

Best-practice studies (in particular, the European Union member states, the United Kingdom, South Korea, and Singapore) show that, in general, each country's central bank opens payment accounts in its own currency. Opening foreign currency payment accounts with the central bank not only cannot mitigate liquidity risk, but also creates additional risks for the central bank, since the latter is not the issuer of the foreign currency (Payment, clearing and settlement systems in the CPSS countries, Volumes 1 and 2, Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems, Bank for International Settlements, 2012, 552 p.; Information Disclosure Based on the Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures: The BOJ-NET Funds Transfer System, Bank of Japan, 2025, 79p.; Payment and Settlement Systems Report, Bank of Korea, 2024, 123p.

The account-opening policies of central banks across countries were studied.

The account-opening policies of the central banks in the countries studied are presented below.

European Union member states: The payment and securities settlement infrastructure in the European Union is based on TARGET Services, operated by the Eurosystem. The Eurosystem is the body responsible for monetary policy in the Eurozone, consisting of the European Central Bank and the national central banks of the EU member states. TARGET Services includes the following financial market infrastructures:

- T2 for payment settlements,
- T2S for securities settlements,
- TIPS for instant payment settlements.

The following persons are authorised to open an account in T2:

- credit institutions (banks) established in the territory of the European Union,

– branches of credit institutions (banks), established outside the territory of the European Union, operating in the territory of the European Union.
The central bank may also, at its discretion, open accounts for the following persons:

- for treasuries of governments or local authorities of the member states of the European Union,
- for public sector entities of the member states of the European Union which are authorised to conduct customer accounts,
- for investment firms established in the European Union,
- for branches of investment firms, established outside the European Union, operating in the European Union,
- for operators of payment systems and securities settlement systems.

Two types of accounts are opened in T2: a main cash account and dedicated accounts for settlement in the RTGS, TIPS or T2S.

Main cash accounts are used for:

- centralised liquidity management,
- access to credit lines,
- minimum reserve requirements,
- participation in central bank operations (open market operations, standing facilities),
- cash inflows and outflows transactions (TARGET Services, Annual Report, European Central Bank, 2024, 77p.).

To perform final settlement in separate payment and securities settlement systems, it is necessary to have dedicated accounts for final settlement in the given systems. Funds are deposited from the main cash accounts to payment accounts, after which the final settlement can be carried out in the corresponding system.

As described in the model, in EU countries, accounts intended to meet the reserve requirement and payment accounts are separated. However, the balance in the payment account at the end of the day is also included in the calculation of the reserve requirement.

The United Kingdom: Reserve accounts with the Bank of England are opened for banks, building societies, central securities depositories (CCPs), international central securities depositories (ICSDs) and investment firms (The Bank of England’s Sterling Monetary Framework, Bank of England, 2025, 46p.). Although reserve and settlement accounts serve different purposes, entities that have reserve accounts may also use them as settlement accounts. When settlement accounts are not also reserve accounts, no interest accrues on them, and the end-of-day balance is limited to the maximum amount set by the central bank. It is usually set at a small amount to ensure monetary policy and financial stability. In fact, settlement accounts are almost zero-based accounts. It is the account holder’s obligation to withdraw funds from the account at the end of each day (to an almost zero balance).

Electronic money issuers and payment institutions are not authorised to open reserve accounts with the central bank. Therefore, the latter may only open settlement accounts.

Funds in settlement accounts may only be used to make customers' payments and may not be used for any other purpose.

The advisability of opening a settlement account with the Central Bank is considered from the perspective of mitigating two main types of risks: credit risk of the final settlement agent and risk associated with interruption of operations. When assessing the efficiency of mitigating these risks and cost-effectiveness, the central bank is concerned with the following criteria:

- the volume and number of transactions performed in the payment system.
The greater the volume and number of transactions, the greater the risks associated with the operation of the payment system.
- the nature of the transactions carried out through the payment system.
This criterion assesses the relative importance of transactions to the economy and society, regardless of their volume.
- the authority of participants of the payment system to open settlement accounts with the central bank.

The decision to open a settlement account is under the sole discretion of the central bank. The following entities are authorised to open settlement accounts with the central bank:

- banks or building societies that have reserve accounts with the central bank,
- investment firms that have reserve accounts with the central bank,
- central securities depositories (CCPs) that have reserve accounts with the central bank,
- international central securities depositories (ICSDs), which have reserve accounts with the central bank,
- financial market infrastructure (FMI) operators that do not have reserve accounts with the central bank, but which perform systemically important functions, and the central bank believes that the implementation of final settlement with central bank money may significantly contribute to improving financial stability. The decision to open a settlement account for each system is made at the discretion of the central bank, based on the specifics of that system. These institutions cannot open reserve accounts with the central bank (Bank of England Settlement Accounts, Policy paper, London, 2021, 13p.).

In addition to the above, a mandatory condition for opening a settlement account with the central bank is that the potential account holder is a participant in the final settlement of a system whose final settlement is performed by the central bank, and has the operational capabilities to participate in the central bank's RTGS system.

The Bank of England also offers the opening of omnibus (nominee) accounts for payment system operators, so that they can hold their customers' funds in an aggregated form at the central bank. This allows payment system operators to fully settle the wholesale settlement of transactions on their platforms with central bank money. Funds can be held in such accounts both during the business day and after its end (the accounts are not zero-base accounts). Omnibus accounts are also settlement accounts. Omnibus accounts may be opened only for operators of systemically important payment systems (Bank of England Omnibus Accounts – Access Policy, London, 2021, 9p.).

Each of these models has a different level of complexity and therefore carries a different level of operational risk for the central bank as a settlement service provider and as a payment and settlement ecosystem provider. Therefore, the use of more complex models, such as those based on omnibus (nominee) accounts, requires more in-depth justifications from the perspective of ensuring financial stability. The choice of model for each specific case is within the competence of the central bank. The choice depends on the results of a thorough analysis of monetary policy and financial stability, as well as operational risks.

South Korea: The cornerstone of the payment and settlement system in South Korea is the BOK-Wire+ system, the South Korean central bank's RTGS system. Members of the system include local banks, branches of foreign banks, investment and insurance companies, the Korea Exchange (KRX) and the Korea Securities Depository (KSD). The system provides for the settlement of wholesale payments between financial institutions, as well as the settlement of net positions of transactions in retail payment systems, securities transactions on the Korea Exchange (KRX) and the Korea Securities Depository (KSD), and foreign exchange transactions.

Institutions that wish to participate in the BOK-Wire+ system must open a current (correspondent) account with the Bank of South Korea. In addition to the existing general current account, the South Korean central bank has introduced a new type of account – the current account for settlement. Depending on the nature of the transaction, the final settlement of the transaction is carried out either through current (correspondent) accounts or current settlement accounts.

Current (correspondent) accounts with the Central Bank of South Korea may only be used for transfers between the Central Bank and participants within the framework of monetary policy and ensuring financial stability, transfer of the Treasury funds and operations related to the issue and redemption of the government bonds and central bank securities, as well as for transfers between the head office and branches of a given financial institution. In all other cases, the current settlement account is used.

In the BOK–Wire+ system, all transfers between current (correspondent) accounts and current settlement accounts are carried out in the national currency, regardless of the nature of the transfer.

The sole operator of retail payment systems in South Korea is the Korea Financial Telecommunications and Clearings Institute (hereinafter referred to as KFTC). KFTC is the operator of 12 retail payment systems, as well as other financial infrastructure. It calculates the net settlement positions for each retail payment system and transmits them to the Bank of South Korea, which performs the final settlement every day at 11 a.m. in the BOK–Wire+ system. In South Korea, the most widely used retail payments include transfers between bank accounts, card payments and checks. When a payment card is used at a point of sale whose bank account is maintained by a bank other than the bank that issued the payment card, the transactions are settled through the KFTC retail payment system in accordance with the procedure outlined above (Payment and Settlement Systems Report, Bank of Korea, 2024, 123p.).

Singapore: The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) is the authority responsible for regulating and supervising financial market infrastructure in Singapore. It serves as a settlement agent for banks operating in Singapore, enabling funds transfers between banks' settlement accounts with MAS. For this purpose, before the start of the operating day, banks transfer the relevant funds from their current account with MAS to the settlement account. If a reserve requirement is set, only the amount exceeding the minimum daily balance can be transferred to the settlement account and used to make payments (Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), Annual Report 2024/2025, 125p.).

Conclusions

The comparative analysis of banking systems across developed and developing economies demonstrates that the transformation of classical two-tier models into hybrid or multi-tier frameworks has become a dominant global trend. While the traditional two-tier banking structure, separating central banks from commercial banks and other depository institutions, remains the conceptual foundation of most modern systems, practical developments have required the integration of new institutional and operational layers. These transformations have been driven primarily by the expansion of financial market infrastructures, technological innovation, and the emergence of systemically important non-bank financial intermediaries.

The experience of the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, South Korea, and Singapore confirms that central banks increasingly engage directly with financial market infrastructures by opening of settlement and payment accounts. This diversification of account types, including correspondent,

settlement, and nominee (omnibus) accounts, has allowed central banks to balance efficiency, financial stability, and monetary policy transmission. However, it also introduces new regulatory and operational challenges that require consistent governance and clear eligibility criteria for access to central bank accounts.

Despite the advantages of these hybrid and multi-tier arrangements, the classical two-tier structure continues to ensure monetary control, liquidity management and risk containment within the financial system. Therefore, rather than a complete replacement, the current stage of evolution should be viewed as a functional diversification of the two-tier model, allowing it to adapt to modern financial realities.

In summary, the transformation of the global banking architecture reflects an adaptive response to the complexity of modern financial ecosystems. The gradual evolution toward hybrid and multi-tier systems does not undermine the theoretical integrity of the two-tier model but rather reinforces its resilience through innovation and diversification. Ensuring regulatory clarity, operational prudence, and cross-institutional coordination will be key to maintaining financial stability and effective monetary governance in this new environment.

Suggestions: Based on the conducted analysis, the following suggestions have been made:

- 1. Development of Unified Regulatory Principles:** International and national regulatory bodies should develop a standardised framework defining the conditions under which central banks may open and maintain accounts for non-bank institutions. This framework should be aligned with the Principles for Financial Market Infrastructures (PFMI) to ensure consistency and mitigate systemic risk.
- 2. Strengthening Risk Management Mechanisms:** Central banks introducing hybrid or multi-tier account structures must establish robust risk assessment systems to evaluate credit, liquidity, and operational risks associated with granting access to central bank money to non-bank entities.
- 3. Differentiation of Account Types and Functions:** It is advisable to maintain a clear distinction between reserve, payment, and settlement accounts to preserve the effectiveness of monetary policy implementation. Central banks should ensure that the use of each account type corresponds strictly to its intended regulatory and operational purpose.
- 4. Promotion of Technological and Infrastructural Integration:** The introduction of digital payment platforms and potential central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) should be integrated within the evolving multi-tier framework. This will enhance efficiency while ensuring alignment between technological innovation and prudential stability.

5. **Enhancement of Cross-Border Coordination:** Given the increasing interconnection of global financial systems, international cooperation among central banks is essential to harmonise policies on account opening, settlement arrangements, and oversight of financial market infrastructures.
6. **Further Research and Monitoring:** Future studies should focus on assessing the long-term impact of hybrid and multi-tier banking models on monetary transmission mechanisms, financial inclusion, and systemic stability. Empirical evaluation of pilot projects (e.g., omnibus accounts and digital settlement models) would provide valuable insights for policy design.

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DEVELOPMENT PATHS AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ESG AND GREEN IT AUDITS

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Abstract

This paper explores the growing importance of non-financial reporting as a critical challenge for modern organisations. As global standards for transparency evolve, the reliability of these disclosures is increasingly validated through specialised auditing practices, including ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and “Green” IT auditing. While both are emerging as essential tools for sustainable development, they differ significantly in their operational scope and technical execution.

Through a comparative and systematic analysis, this study identifies the fundamental synergies between these two auditing types. The research finds that while the ESG audit provides a broad strategic framework for organisational sustainability—encompassing human resources and governance—the Green IT audit offers the necessary quantitative depth by focusing on the environmental performance of digital systems.

The paper concludes that these two approaches are profoundly complementary: the ESG audit defines the overall corporate vision, while the Green IT audit serves as its technological engine, ensuring that empirical data backs sustainability claims. By integrating both audit types, organisations can develop more resilient management systems and enhance the credibility of their non-financial reporting in a digitalised global economy.

Keywords: ESG audit, “green” IT audit, environmental friendliness, IT systems, corporate responsibility, digital technologies.

ESG ԱՌՈՒԴԻՏԻ ԵՎ «ԿԱՆԱՀ» IT ԱՌՈՒԴԻՏԻ ԶԱՐԳԱՅՄԱՆ ՈՒՂԻՆԵՐԸ. ՀԱՄԵՄԱՏԱԿԱՆ ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ

ՌԻՄԱ ՄԱՐԳԱՐՅԱՆ

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Համառոտագիր

Այս հոդվածն ուսումնասիրում է ոչ ֆինանսական հաշվետվողականության աճող նշանակությունը՝ որպես ժամանակակից կազմակերպությունների առջև ծառայած հիմնարար մարտահրավեր: Թափանցիկության համաշխարհային չափանիշների զարգացմանը զուգընթաց՝ հրապարակվող տվյալների արժանահավատությունն ավելի ու ավելի հաճախ է հաստատվում մասնագիտացված աուդիտորական գործունեության միջոցով, մասնավորապես՝ ESG (բնապահպանական, սոցիալական և կառավարչական) և «կանաչ» SS աուդիտների տեսքով: Չնայած երկու ուղղություններն էլ դիտարկվում են որպես կայուն զարգացման անհրաժեշտ գործիքներ, այնուամենայնիվ դրանք էապես տարբերվում են իրենց գործառնական շրջանակով և տեխնիկական իրականացման առանձնահատկություններով:

Համեմատական և համակարգային վերլուծության միջոցով սույն հետազոտությունը վեր հանեց տվյալ աուդիտորական մոտեցումների միջև առկա հիմնարար սիներգիաները: Հետազոտության արդյունքները փաստում են, որ եթե ESG աուդիտն ապահովում է կազմակերպչական կայունության լայն ռազմավարական շրջանակը՝ ներառելով մարդկային ռեսուրսների կառավարումն ու կորպորատիվ կառավարումը, ապա «կանաչ» SS աուդիտն ապահովում է անհրաժեշտ քանակական խորությունը՝ կենտրոնանալով թվային համակարգերի բնապահպանական արդյունավետության վրա:

Հոդվածում եզրահանգում է արվում, որ այս երկու մոտեցումները խորապես փոխլրացնող են. ESG աուդիտը սահմանում է ընդհանուր կորպորատիվ տեսլականը, մինչդեռ «կանաչ» SS աուդիտը հանդես է գալիս որպես դրա տեխնոլոգիական հիմք (շարժիչ)՝ երաշխավորելով, որ կայուն զարգացման վերաբերյալ հայտարարությունները հիմնավորված լինեն էմպիրիկ տվյալներով: Աուդիտի այս երկու տեսակների ինտեգրման միջոցով կազմակերպությունները կարող են ձևավորել առավել դիմակայուն կառավարման համակարգեր և բարձրացնել ոչ ֆինանսական հաշվետվողականության վստահելիությունը թվայնացված գլոբալ տնտեսության պայմաններում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ESG աուդիտ, «կանաչ» SS աուդիտ, էկոարդյունավետություն, SS համակարգեր, կորպորատիվ պատասխանատվություն,

թվային տեխնոլոգիաներ:

Introduction

Currently, the need for society, investors, and international organisations to achieve not only economic efficiency from business but also social and environmental responsibility has increased worldwide. Recent events are driven by new challenges caused by the depletion of natural resources, climate change, social inequality, and increased corporate opacity. In this context, the international business community has begun to actively embrace the principles of sustainable development as pillars of long-term competitiveness and trust.

In these changing conditions, the ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) concept was formed, which covers the assessment of an organisation's activities not only based on financial indicators, but also in terms of environmental impact, social policy, and management system effectiveness. The ESG audit is aimed at assessing the organisation's compliance with three key areas, identifying risks and opportunities in the context of sustainable management and responsible work style.

On the other hand, rapid technological development and the growing role of IT systems across all sectors have raised new challenges, including the impact of information technology on the environment, energy consumption, environmental efficiency, and carbon emissions. To answer these questions, the concept of "Green" IT was developed, which combines the principles of sustainability of the IT sector. "Green" IT audit is aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of IT infrastructure and processes from an environmental point of view, from server power consumption to hardware processing, digital data management and digital efficiency policy.

Even though ESG audit and "green" IT audit serve a common goal—to increase the sustainability and responsibility of the organisation, they have developed in different directions and are often used in separate models. However, modern approaches and experience show that these two processes can complement each other.

Research methods

To evaluate the convergence of ESG and Green IT auditing, this study employs a qualitative research framework centred on conceptual and comparative analysis.

The core of the methodology lies in a systematic review of contemporary auditing standards and academic discourse. Rather than viewing these two audit types in isolation, a system analysis approach was used to understand how Green IT functions as a critical technical component within the broader ESG governance structure.

The comparative analysis evaluated both audit types against three primary

benchmarks: data source reliability, regulatory compliance (specifically the GRI and ISO frameworks), and their overall contribution to corporate transparency.

To ensure the findings remain relevant to current trends, the study synthesised data from international auditing guidelines and recent industry reports (2020–2025). Finally, inductive and deductive reasoning were applied to bridge the gap between general sustainability theory and the specific technical requirements of IT infrastructure auditing, leading to the practical conclusions presented in this paper.

Theory and Methodology

The theoretical foundation of this research is built upon the convergence of modern sustainability principles and the evolving environmental efficiency of information technologies. At its core, the study adopts the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) framework, which remains deeply rooted in the broader theory of sustainable development.

To understand this evolution, one must look back to the landmark 1987 Brundtland Report. By defining sustainable development as progress that meets “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Sanjay, 2022), the United Nations set the stage for modern corporate accountability. This research, however, moves beyond these foundational definitions to explore how they are operationally verified through auditing.

In this context, an ESG audit functions as a multidimensional diagnostic process. Unlike a traditional environmental audit, which focuses narrowly on ecological compliance, the ESG audit serves as a holistic evaluation of an entity’s governance structures and social impact (Prodanova et al., 2023). Our analysis suggests that the true value of an ESG audit lies in its ability to identify systemic risks and uncover hidden efficiencies within an organisation’s internal subsystems.

A critical, and often overlooked, component of this framework is the integration of “Green IT” auditing. As digital infrastructure expanded rapidly at the start of the 21st century, the environmental footprint of data centres and electronic waste became impossible to ignore (Murugesan, 2008). This study argues that Green IT auditing is not merely a technical sub-discipline; it is the technological engine of the ESG framework. By bridging the gap between high-level sustainability goals and the technical reality of IT operations, this integrated approach provides the empirical rigour necessary for modern corporate transparency.

Results

ESG audits come in many forms and serve different use cases. In general, an ESG audit is a systematic evaluation of a company’s performance and practices across environmental, social, and governance factors (Dqsglobal, 2025). It assesses how well a company aligns with sustainability standards and evaluates its impact

on stakeholders, including employees, communities, customers, investors, and our planet and its ecosystems. It also confirms the ESG-related risks an organisation may be exposed to.

Effective Internal Auditing is essential for managing ESG risks and validating controls to mitigate them (KPMG report, 2023). In addition, Internal Audit is critical in providing objective assurance and advice on ESG reporting and wider sustainability matters. By taking on this critical role, Internal Audits can help shape a more sustainable and responsible business future. Further, in doing so, they can mitigate reputational risks and ensure that the organisation's ESG goals and objectives align with stakeholder needs. Internal Audit should be critical in providing objective assurance and advice on ESG reporting and, more broadly, sustainability matters.

ESG issues are increasingly relevant for all organisations. As a result, ESG has gone from a nice-to-have to an integral piece of long-term financial success. The recent white paper from the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), 'Internal Audit's role in ESG reporting', highlights several driving factors that are hastening this change, such as the increasing expectations of stakeholders and the public for companies to manage ESG risks and consider the ESG impact of their initiatives.

Sustainability, and specifically ESG, have become increasingly important considerations for organisations for various reasons. One of the primary factors is the growing awareness of environmental and social issues such as climate change, pollution, social inequality, unethical labour practices, human rights, diversity and inclusion, and corruption.

ESG audits go beyond compliance, helping companies manage critical risks in environmental, social, and governance areas (Nirpendra, 2024). Climate risks, like resource shortages, supply chain issues, and extreme weather, threaten long-term business resilience. The 2023 World Economic Forum Global Risks Report highlights climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion as top risks to businesses and economies. ESG audits help companies systematically assess these threats, enabling better risk management and informed decision-making.

ESG audits have become indispensable for companies committed to ethical, transparent, and sustainable operations. As transparency requirements increase, regulatory frameworks grow stronger, and ESG-related risks grow, companies should integrate ESG audits into their core strategy. By adopting best practices and embracing technology, organisations can enhance their ESG audits to secure compliance, build stakeholder confidence, and gain a competitive advantage in a values-driven global marketplace.

When significant frameworks are compared, they are seen to have at least some achievement and recurrent variation. GRI Standards are concerned with inclusivity for stakeholders and universal applicability, as well as environmental and social impacts, irrespective of their financial materiality. The SASB Standards, on

the other hand, are market-based and focus on specific industry-based financially material ESG risks. The TCFD Framework focuses more on governance, strategy, and risk management related to climate disclosures. In contrast, the IFRS S1 and S2 standards issued by the ISSB are designed to integrate these strategies into a universally consistent framework (Fagbemi et al., 2025).

Artificial Intelligence holds significant potential to transform ESG auditing from a reactive reporting function into a dynamic, predictive, and proactive management system (Okojiev et al., 2023). AI can ingest, process, and analyse vast volumes of structured and unstructured data from a wide array of sources—IoT sensors, satellite imagery, utility logs, social media, legal documents, and financial disclosures—far beyond human capacity. In environmental auditing, machine learning models can detect emissions anomalies, forecast energy usage, and simulate climate impacts with greater precision and granularity than manual evaluations. For social metrics, AI-driven geospatial analysis and natural language processing can map community vulnerability, track inclusivity in service delivery, and monitor sentiment around development projects. In governance audits, algorithms can parse through corporate filings, procurement records, and public policy databases to identify corruption risks, transparency gaps, or policy inconsistencies. Moreover, AI systems can automate real-time compliance checks against ESG standards, flagging deviations and generating adaptive recommendations. This continuous monitoring improves risk management, enhances stakeholder trust, and ensures timely interventions. Explainable AI frameworks also allow for transparency in decision-making, a core requirement in governance-focused ESG domains. AI's predictive capabilities empower planners and regulators to anticipate ESG failures before they occur, enabling infrastructure that not only meets today's standards but remains resilient to future challenges. When integrated with digital twins and urban analytics platforms, AI transforms ESG metrics into actionable intelligence that guides the sustainable design, construction, and operation of smart infrastructure in rapidly evolving urban environments.

Global standards and regulatory frameworks provide the foundation for consistent ESG evaluation in infrastructure development, particularly in cross-border urban projects and investor-backed initiatives. Regulatory expectations for ESG compliance have evolved from voluntary reporting to mandatory disclosures in many jurisdictions. Frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), and International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) offer structured guidelines for ESG metrics reporting (Imoh P., 2023). These standards encompass environmental impact (e.g., greenhouse gas emissions, water use), social indicators (e.g., diversity, human rights, health and safety), and governance measures (e.g., executive accountability, corruption control, board structure). Governments and financial institutions increasingly mandate adherence

to these standards in procurement, permitting, and funding processes for urban infrastructure projects. In the European Union, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) requires large companies to disclose detailed ESG performance data, which directly influences infrastructure financing. Similarly, green bond frameworks, such as the ICMA Green Bond Principles, are ESG-linked and demand transparency on fund allocation to sustainable infrastructure. Local regulatory bodies are also establishing ESG-oriented building codes, transportation planning laws, and environmental permitting systems. These standards ensure comparability, traceability, and auditability across different projects and geographies. However, fragmentation among standards, lack of interoperability, and vague definitions remain challenges. As AI increasingly integrates into ESG auditing, aligning algorithmic assessments with these evolving regulatory expectations becomes crucial. Ensuring compliance in real time, across diverse metrics, requires both technological sophistication and legal harmonisation (Ogunsola K., 2021).

The resources used in information technology (IT) are infrastructure, applications, information and people (Guideline for Audit of IT, 2011). An IT system designed for use in financial and management reporting will include procedures and databases for initiating, recording, processing, and reporting transactions (as well as events and conditions), and for maintaining accountability for the corresponding assets, liabilities, and equity.

The methodology for auditing in an IT environment varies depending on whether the objective is a financial, performance, or IT audit. For illustrative purposes, this guideline focuses on the task of financial audit in an IT environment in accordance with the Court's Audit Policies and Standards (CAPS).

The audit of controls on IT systems should have specific objectives, including verification of the accounts or other data produced by the system (e.g. data extracted for sampling purposes). The evaluation of internal controls should vary according to the type of audit and the degree of reliance the auditor wishes to place on them (INTOSAI Auditing Standards ISSAI 300, 3.2).

A "green" IT audit uses standards to evaluate the environmental impact of an organisation's enterprise technology (Kirvan, 2024). This type of audit assesses tech's energy use, carbon footprint, water usage, e-waste, infrastructure sustainability and other factors that affect the planet.

More stringent than a green IT assessment, a green IT audit uses standards, regulations and other guidance to validate that the IT department complies with relevant benchmarks. For example, green IT audits can help organisations stay current with and prepare for national and global regulations such as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive of 2023, and the SEC's impending climate-related disclosures rule.

While there are many ways to organise and conduct an audit, the key activities are identifying the relevant controls, gathering evidence through

interviews and researching various data sources. From there, auditors will analyse the evidence versus the controls and prepare a report with findings and recommendations. For example, ISACA provides considerable guidance on the IT audit process. The organisation also offers a governance framework called COBIT.

After determining the appropriate audit framework, IT leaders should consider including relevant environmental attributes to refine the control framework.

Once the process ends, the auditor delivers a report with recommendations (Kirvan, 2024). Thoroughly reviewing the results is crucial to getting meaningful insights. Stakeholders should be part of the process to determine the next steps for implementing the auditor’s recommendations.

The structure of the audit and the selected controls can help the company further understand the IT team’s environmental performance.

CIOs and IT leaders should consider performing annual green IT audits to gather data that can enhance the organisation’s long-term sustainability strategy. Periodic assessments can supplement green IT audits and evaluate the effectiveness of new and existing sustainability-focused policies and procedures.

DASCIN is advancing Data Best Practices through education, certification and community.

Since its founding in 2017, DASCIN has been at the forefront of empowering organisations, governments, and individuals to harness the power of data (DASCIN, 2025). Over the years, DASCIN has grown into a global leader in data science education, certification, and knowledge sharing, enabling smarter and more sustainable decision-making across industries.

The DASCIN Green IT Audit is an assessment framework designed to evaluate an organisation’s IT sustainability practices based on the Green IT Framework (DASCIN, 2025). This audit helps organisations measure and improve their energy efficiency, carbon footprint, and environmental impact by analysing their IT infrastructure, operations, and policies. By undergoing a Green IT Audit, businesses can identify opportunities to reduce waste, optimise resource consumption, and implement eco-friendly technologies. The audit also provides a structured approach for aligning IT strategies with global sustainability goals, ensuring compliance with industry regulations and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

Green IT spans two overlapping but distinct conceptual domains (Patón-Romero et al., 2009):

- Green in information technology (green in IT)— As a producer of goods and services, enterprise IT itself has an impact on the environment: It consumes energy and technology artefacts (including both hardware and software), produces emissions, etc. Therefore, IT departments can implement green IT internally to produce more efficiently and consume more sustainably.

- Green by information technology (green by IT)— As an enabler of efficient and sustainable practices, information and technology (I&T) can provide tools—the number and scope of which are virtually limitless—that facilitate sustainability outside the IT department, across the enterprise and beyond.

Enterprises today often audit green IT from a business perspective rather than operational and/or technical perspectives. It is critical to distinguish between these approaches: representing the business to customers and/or the general public in terms of sustainability is often a primary goal (i.e., sustainability reputation), compared with optimising green IT practices at the operational and technical levels. Enterprises often regard reputation as a primary driver of business benefit.

If the audit evaluates sustainable practices implemented and/or executed in IT intended to reduce the negative environmental impact of IT itself, the audit reflects a green in IT audit, and the scope is reduced to the IT department.

If the audit evaluates sustainable practices implemented or facilitated by IT and intended to reduce the negative environmental impact of other systems or business disciplines, the audit reflects a green-by-IT audit. Furthermore, the scope will encompass the information and technologies used for these purposes, as well as the systems and disciplines affected by them.

The scope of green IT audits is determined by the nature of the audit, whether green by IT or green in IT. If the audit evaluates sustainable practices implemented and/or executed in IT intended to reduce the negative environmental impact of IT itself, the audit reflects a green in IT audit, and the scope is reduced to the IT department.

If the audit evaluates sustainable practices implemented or facilitated by IT and intended to reduce the negative environmental impact of other systems or business disciplines, the audit reflects a green-by-IT audit. Furthermore, the scope will encompass the information and technologies used for these purposes, as well as the systems and disciplines affected by them.

Harmon and Auseklis (2009) emphasise that, for organisations to be sustainable, green IT initiatives should be developed through a “co-creation” process, working with customers and relevant stakeholders. When asked about consultation with customers during the development of green IT projects, none of the organisations, unfortunately, included customers in the process, except Company D, which operates as a consultancy and is therefore closer to and understands the requirements of their clients better (Chang, 2016). Understandably, this fosters a mutually beneficial relationship in the development of green IT solutions, which are in both the firm's and consumers' interests.

Environmental, social and governance controls also apply to the IT organisation. The IT-focused portion of the ESG audit focuses on the following issues (Kirvan, 2024):

- **Environment for IT audit.**This focuses on the IT department's policies, procedures, and culture regarding energy use, waste management, and carbon emissions. These elements might complement related green IT audit controls.
- **Social for IT audit.**This focuses on the IT department's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, particularly in its hiring practices and employee involvement in the company.
- **Governance for IT audit.**This focuses on operational policies, procedures, and practices, as well as risk management.

To better understand how sustainability goals translate into technical reality, this study compares ESG and Green IT auditing through two distinct lenses: their strategic alignment and their operational execution.

Let's present the similarities and differences in the form of a table.

Table 1.

Similarities between ESG audit and "green" IT audit¹

Characteristic	Similarity
Audit type	Both are varieties of modern auditing.
Goal	Both are aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
Scope of regulation	Both are regulated by relevant international standards (e.g., GRI, SASB for ESG; ISO 14001/50001 for Green IT).
Relationship to corporate strategy	Both are related to corporate strategy.
Result	Both help external users of information make the right decisions in terms of sustainability.

The similarities outlined in Table 1 suggest that ESG and Green IT auditing are not merely parallel processes but are fundamentally interconnected through the lens of corporate accountability. Our analysis indicates that both disciplines serve as a ‘single source of truth’ for stakeholders. By aligning with international standards and UN Sustainable Development Goals, these audits move beyond simple compliance; they function as a strategic shield against ‘greenwashing,’ providing investors with the verifiable transparency needed in today’s ESG-driven market.

Now, let us look at the differences.

¹ All tables built by the author

Table 2.

Differences between ESG audit and “green” IT audit²

Characteristic	ESG audit	«Green» IT audit
Audit object	The organisation’s activities in the fields of the environment, the social sphere, and management.	Environmental sustainability of IT infrastructure and technologies.
Orientation	This is based on social responsibility.	It is based on technological efficiency and energy saving.
Technological depth	A general audit without an in-depth technical check.	In-depth technical assessment: servers, programs, and various computer equipment.
The management component	Focuses on corporate responsibility.	Focuses on technological issues.
Scope of application	All organizations.	Only IT organisations.

The distinctions presented in Table 2 provide a clearer understanding of the operational roles each audit plays. While the ESG audit offers the ‘qualitative vision’ and broad social responsibility of an organisation, the Green IT audit provides the ‘quantitative backbone.’

A key takeaway from this comparison is the shift in technical depth: the Green IT audit translates abstract environmental goals into measurable data—such as server efficiency and energy-saving metrics. Furthermore, although Table 2 notes that Green IT has traditionally been focused on IT-centric firms, this study argues that in the era of digital transformation, this distinction is fading. For any modern enterprise, the IT infrastructure is now a primary driver of its overall carbon footprint, making the Green IT audit an indispensable component of a credible ESG framework.

The organisation is trying to address its problems by leveraging the opportunities offered by modern auditing. Being audit types, they are actually very different. Different types of audits may complement each other at some point.

The ESG audit and the Green IT audit together form a multi-level sustainability audit system in which strategic and operational assessments complement each other, providing a more objective and in-depth assessment of organisations’ performance.

² All tables built by the author

Conclusion

The comparative analysis conducted in this study leads to several pivotal conclusions regarding the future of sustainability auditing. In an era when digital transformation and environmental accountability converge, the traditional boundaries of auditing are being redefined. Our research demonstrates that ESG and Green IT audits have emerged as indispensable tools for navigating the dual demands of corporate responsibility and technological efficiency.

First, this study confirms that while an ESG audit provides the necessary “strategic vision”—encompassing environmental, social, and governance pillars—it often lacks the granular technical data required for total transparency. We argue that Green IT auditing acts as the critical “missing link” or the quantitative backbone of this framework. By providing empirical evidence—such as energy optimisation metrics, hardware lifecycle data, and digital waste management—Green IT auditing validates an organisation’s broader ESG claims. It mitigates the growing risks of “greenwashing.”

Second, a significant finding of this research is the shifting scope of Green IT. We conclude that Green IT auditing should no longer be viewed as a niche requirement limited to the technology sector. In today’s digital-first economy, where data centres and digital infrastructure are primary drivers of carbon emissions, Green IT auditing must be integrated as a standard, operational component of any robust ESG governance system, regardless of the industry.

Ultimately, for modern organisations, these two approaches are not competing methodologies but deeply complementary ones. ESG defines the overall sustainability strategy, while Green IT ensures its technological implementation. We conclude that the simultaneous application of both audits is essential for ensuring that sustainable digital transformation is not just a strategic intent, but a verifiable reality. This synergy leads to more informed management decisions and strengthens long-term corporate resilience in a rapidly changing global regulatory environment.

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THE ROLE OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATION IN CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT OF NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

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Abstract

In the modern world, ensuring national security is one of the priority tasks of states. The security system is not limited only to military capabilities or legal mechanisms. Rather, it requires trusting relations between society and the state. The essential tool for forming these relations is public communication. Transparent, systematic and accountable communication makes it possible to strengthen public trust, ensure control over state structures and promote civic participation.

For the Republic of Armenia, the current issue is especially relevant in the post-war period, when the level of trust in state institutions has noticeably decreased, and the security system is facing multi-layered challenges. In such conditions, the functions of civilian oversight can be fully implemented only when state structures consistently apply effective communication strategies. Such strategies not only ensure an open and accurate flow of information but also prevent the spread of disinformation, strengthen the participation of civil society, and form an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Public communication encompasses a number of functions: information management, public opinion formation, ensuring constructive dialogue, coordinating media and public relations, information protection, and strategic communication. All these functions complement each other and contribute to the formation of an environment where ensuring national security becomes the result of joint efforts not only of state structures, but also of the entire society.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in treating public communication not only as a means of transmitting information but also as an institutional mechanism for ensuring national security and civil control. The study combines international experience with the realities of the Republic of Armenia, revealing a direct correlation between communication effectiveness and public trust. The

presented analyses can serve to improve communication policies in the public administration system and enhance the oversight functions of civil society.

Thus, the aim of the research is to analyse the role of public communication in the process of ensuring civilian oversight of the national security system of the Republic of Armenia, showing its theoretical foundations and practical applications.

Keywords: National security, civilian oversight, public communication, information, civil society, strategy.

ՀԱՆՐԱՅԻՆ ՀԱՂՈՐԳԱԿՑՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԴԵՐԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՔԱՂԱՔԱՑԻԱԿԱՆ ՎԵՐԱՀՍԿՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՈՒՄ

ԱՆԱՀԻՏ ՇԱՀՈՒՄՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Գիտակրթական միջազգային կենտրոնի
ընդհանուր բաժնի գլխավոր մասնագետ,
ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Փիլիսոփայության, սոցիոլոգիայի
և իրավունքի ինստիտուտի հայցորդ

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Համառոտագիր

Ժամանակակից աշխարհում ազգային անվտանգության ապահովումը պետությունների առաջնահերթ խնդիրներից է: Անվտանգության համակարգը չի սահմանափակվում միայն ռազմական կարողություններով կամ իրավական մեխանիզմներով. այն պահանջում է նաև հասարակության և պետության միջև վստահելի հարաբերություններ: Այդ հարաբերությունների ձևավորման առանցքային գործիքը հանրային հաղորդակցությունն է: Թափանցիկ, համակարգված և հաշվետու հաղորդակցությունը հնարավորություն է տալիս ամրապնդելու հանրային վստահությունը, ապահովելու պետական կառույցների նկատմամբ վերահսկողությունը և խթանելու քաղաքացիական մասնակցությունը:

Հայաստանի Հանրապետության համար այս հարցը հատկապես արդիական է հետպատերազմյան շրջանում, երբ պետական ինստիտուտների նկատմամբ վստահության մակարդակը նկատելիորեն նվազել է, իսկ անվտանգության համակարգը կանգնած է բազմաշերտ մարտահրավերների առաջ: Նման պայմաններում քաղաքացիական վերահսկողության գործառնությունները կարող են լիարժեք իրագործվել միայն այն դեպքում, երբ պետական կառույցները հետևողականորեն կիրառում են արդյունավետ հաղորդակցական ռազմավարություններ: Դրանք հնարավորություն են

տալիս ոչ միայն ապահովելու տեղեկատվության բաց և ձշգրիտ հոսք, այլև կանխելու ապատեղեկատվության տարածումը, ամրապնդելու քաղաքացիական հասարակության մասնակցությունը և ձևավորելու փոխվստահության մթնոլորտ:

Հանրային հաղորդակցությունն ընդգրկում է մի շարք գործառույթներ՝ տեղեկատվության կառավարում, հանրային կարծիքի ձևավորում, կառուցողական երկխոսության ապահովում, մեդիա և հասարակական կապերի համակարգում, տեղեկատվության պաշտպանություն և ռազմավարական հաղորդակցություն: Այս բոլոր գործառույթները փոխլրացվում են միմյանց և նպաստում այնպիսի միջավայրի ձևավորմանը, որտեղ ազգային անվտանգության ապահովումը դառնում է ոչ միայն պետական կառույցների, այլև ամբողջ հասարակության համատեղ ջանքերի արդյունք:

Սույն ուսումնասիրության գիտական նորույթն այն է, որ հանրային հաղորդակցությունը դիտարկվում է ոչ միայն որպես տեղեկատվության փոխանցման միջոց, այլ նաև որպես ազգային անվտանգության ապահովման և քաղաքացիական վերահսկողության ինստիտուցիոնալ մեխանիզմ: Հողվածում համադրվել են միջազգային փորձն ու Հայաստանի Հանրապետության իրականությունը՝ բացահայտելով հաղորդակցության արդյունավետության և հանրային վստահության միջև ուղղակի փոխկապակցվածությունը: Ներկայացվող վերլուծությունները կարող են օգտակար լինել պետական կառավարման համակարգում հաղորդակցական քաղաքականությունների բարելավմանը ինչպես նաև քաղաքացիական հասարակության վերահսկողական գործառույթների կատարելագործման համար:

Այսպիսով, սույն հոդվածի նպատակն է վերլուծել հանրային հաղորդակցության դերը Հայաստանի Հանրապետության ազգային անվտանգության համակարգում քաղաքացիական վերահսկողության ապահովման գործընթացում՝ ցույց տալով դրա տեսական հիմքերը և գործնական կիրառելիությունը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ազգային անվտանգություն, քաղաքացիական վերահսկողություն, հանրային հաղորդակցություն, տեղեկատվություն, քաղաքացիական հասարակություն, ռազմավարություն:

Introduction

In every democratic state, government bodies strive to implement public communication and its management in the most open and transparent manner possible. This aspiration stems from the state's accountability to its citizens and the recognition that maintaining citizens' trust and support for the public communication system is necessary. Considering these two factors, public

communication theory currently prioritises the consolidation and widespread application of transparency and accountability principles in the security system (Cole, 2015, p. 14).

Experience shows that distrust in society mainly arises from a lack of information or limited access to it. When citizens receive incomplete information about an incident, they often make assumptions that may not correspond to reality. The situation becomes more complicated when media outlets, taking advantage of the absence of official sources, in order to increase their ratings, attempt to sensationalise information without proper professional analysis. Meanwhile, society expects complete and reliable information about the country's internal and external processes.

Research methods

Considering the nature of the research and the scope of the issues examined, various general and specialised methods have been employed, including analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, and the comparative–legal method.

The Relationship Between Public Communication and Civil Control

Conducted research shows that public communication and its management target both internal and external audiences, including citizens, public servants, partners, investors, journalists, and other stakeholders. Public communication enhances the credibility, authority, and effectiveness of state and public institutions.

In contemporary political systems, public interests and demands are realised not only through state power or political parties. Citizens often unite to achieve vital goals and realise their rights and freedoms by creating public organisations that represent and defend the collective interests of groups. Various self-governing associations of citizens, such as public, charitable, religious, and professional organisations, play a pivotal role in this process. These groups become important institutions in socio-political processes and governance. According to the current legislation of the Republic of Armenia, a public organisation is defined as a public association of RA citizens, foreign state citizens, stateless persons, and/or legal entities that has the status of a non-commercial organisation (The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Public Organizations”, 2016).

Public communication and its management include several fundamental functions that are significant for effective communication, the development of public relations, and the formation and strengthening of civilian oversight in the national security system.

1. Information Management: This process involves the effective collection, storage, processing, dissemination, and use of data, information, and knowledge. It enables organizations and individuals to make better decisions, optimize work processes, and safeguard sensitive information (Greenberg & Korol', 2017, p. 75).

In the 21st century, information management has become one of the most important areas of governance and technological development. It ensures process

efficiency, data security, and rapid adaptation to changing situations.

As a priority of public communication, information management is also valued for the following advantages:

- **Effective decision-making:** Decisions based on accurate data reduce the probability of errors.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Proper information management reduces time and resource losses.
- **Higher security:** Correctly applying cybersecurity methods prevents information leakage.
- **Process automation:** Information management systems (IMS, ERP, and CRM) increase efficiency.
- **Competitive advantage:** Accurate information management allows for a rapid response to market changes, providing a competitive (Calhoun, 2025).

2. Public Opinion Formation is the process of shaping people’s viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes around social, political, economic, or cultural issues. This process can be natural (spontaneously formed) or managed (through mass media, social media, propaganda, and PR technologies) (Sjoraida et al., 2024, p. 292).

Public opinion formation is a complex, multi-layered process that largely depends on the influence of media, social environment, propaganda methods, and psychological factors. It can be applied for both positive (increasing awareness, educational programs) and negative (fake news, propaganda, manipulation) purposes.

In the context of public relations and its management, the process of public opinion formation can include various, yet essential and significant, measures, depending on sectoral orientations. For example, in politics: organisation of political and social campaigns, electoral campaigns, public discussions, spokesperson statements; in economics: financial crises and changes in market confidence; in marketing: studying public moods, forming public attitudes toward brands (for example, Apple users’ loyalty), etc. The main sources of public opinion formation are mass media (television, radio, print press, news websites), social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok), bloggers, experts, influencers, and official sources (government, state bodies).

3. Ensuring Constructive Dialogue: Constructive dialogue is a communication process aimed at discussing various issues in an open, effective, and respectful manner to find mutually acceptable solutions, promote cooperation, and prevent conflicts.

Constructive dialogue is an important tool in the field of communication that contributes to conflict resolution, development of cooperation, and generation of innovative solutions (Mikes, 2025, pp. 8–10).

It is based on the principles of mutual respect, active listening, presenting reasoned arguments, and mutual understanding. In the field of state defence, particularly in the military-industrial system, the effectiveness of dialogue can be

assessed according to the following levels:

- Government–citizens: discussions regarding public policy
- Employer–employees: dialogue on improving working conditions
- Companies–customers: discussion of customer complaints and solutions
- Social groups–society: discussion of cultural and social initiatives, etc.

4. Media and public relations management is a strategic process that shapes and manages public perception of an organisation, individual, or brand through media, communication, and PR tools. The purpose of this process is to ensure positive public opinion, increase trust, and maintain the organisation’s or individual’s authority among society and stakeholders (Tomić & Grbavac, 2016, p. 92).

At the executive level, non-governmental organisations involved in the public communication process mainly cooperate more with responsible organisations than with special services. Their participation and influence in these processes can be expressed in the following main forms:

1. Conducting research, data collection, including comparative data from other countries, developing theoretical models and providing them to relevant state structures, presenting to competent bodies,
2. Preparing reports on specific problems with the aim of influencing or specifically assisting the emerging political direction,
3. General and substantive cooperation with mass media,
4. Dispatching experts to state institutions and other structures in the security sector,
5. Organising training courses and programs on human rights protection, security sector oversight and similar topics (Johnston & Blais, 1996, pp. 14–15).

By its nature and scope of work, media and public relations management is a complex but irreplaceable process that helps organisations and individuals manage their public image, maintain trust, and respond to social changes. It includes strategic communication, social media management, crisis communication, and public opinion formation.

In the national security sector direction, **the process of media and public relations management can be consolidated through the following key measures:**

- **Developing media strategy** (clarify key messages, define target audience, select appropriate media platforms),
- **Selection of communication tools** (digital media (social media, bloggers, influencers), traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers), press conferences, conferences, events),
- **Establishing media relations** (preparing and distributing press releases, organising interviews, engaging PR partners),
- **Continuous monitoring and analysis of public opinion** (social media analysis, assessment of topics covered in media, study of public response),

- **Crisis communication and rapid response** (managing information in unexpected situations, developing correct responses to negative reactions, maintaining public trust) (Edwin, 2004, pp. 23–25).

5. Information Protection within Communication Frameworks:

For the implementation of the objective discussed in this topic, information protection within communication frameworks is of pivotal importance. Particularly, the information published on contemporary media platforms, due to various objectives—political, corporate, personal interests—can be modified, distorted, or falsified by interested parties. It is noteworthy to mention that information protection in the contemporary legal system is a rather complex process. Thus, the protection includes the application of criminal law, administrative law, and civil law protection measures. Under the existing legislative frameworks, civil law protection measures predominate in law enforcement practice, which presuppose the publication of appropriate refutations and compensation for caused non-material damage (The Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia, 1998).

Conditioned by the above, we believe that information protection is also of pivotal importance for ensuring communication effectiveness. Therefore, in this regard, it is necessary to ensure the availability of appropriate legal safeguard mechanisms, including the involvement of specialists.

6. Structural & Strategic Communication is a coordinated and purpose-oriented communication process that focuses on developing communication strategies, constructing messages, and managing communication flows to achieve the fundamental objectives of an organisation, government, or individual. This type of communication is based on **planning, management, and impact assessment**, ensuring communication effectiveness in both internal and external environments [**Error! Reference source not found.**]. (Werder, 2005). In the context of public relations (communications) network assessments, structural and strategic communication can be characterised as interconnected yet distinct concepts that, together, ensure proper information management. Structural communication refers to the formation of communication systems, while strategic communication focuses on the content and impact of messages.

After the war, public disappointment, decreased trust in state institutions, and emerging security challenges in the Republic of Armenia underscored the need of revise Armenia’s national security strategy. In this context, it is important to increase mutual trust between the state and civil society, as well as to clarify and institutionalise society’s role within the military and security systems. Moreover, in specialised literature, civil society is characterised as a relatively independent and self-organising system of social, economic and political relations that includes various forms of associations of people in order to meet their own material and spiritual needs (Mailyan & Kazanchian, 2023; Kazanchian, 2021).

It should be noted that public relations and communication management systems in the national security sector significantly increase the effectiveness

of security structures and defence ministries, as well as international military-political structures. These systems ensure the proper and controlled dissemination of information, improve interaction with society, and contribute to building trust in security structures. These systems include methods, tools, and technologies that disseminate information to the public, manage communication during crises, and ensure information security.

Public relations' effectiveness in the national security sector is also important from a strategic security perspective. Public relations ensures rapid and accurate communication during wartime and crisis situations. It promotes a positive perception among youth and properly forms public opinion regarding military operations and national defence. Public relations also maintains the authority of the state and the army in the international arena. To this end, the Republic of Armenia assessed the strategic defence review process as a priority agenda item. In our opinion, the initiation was important not only from the perspective of strategic assessments, but also from the standpoint of public perception and emphasising the army's value within society. It is noteworthy that the Republic of Armenia initiated and conducted its first strategic defence review process starting in 2008. The five phases of the review included identifying and assessing current and future military threats, developing and simulating scenarios, clarifying the armed forces' tasks, planning necessary military capabilities, and forming a dynamic military structure capable of responding to aggression. As L. G. Ayvazyan (2015) rightly pointed out, a summary of these phases indicates that the strategic defence review process encompasses the development of defence policy and the formation of military strategy, culminating in the country's defence planning (pp. 58-59).

In the field of national security, public relations encompasses the following main functions:

- providing official information to state and international institutions, public organisations, and the general public;
- Promoting dialogue between the security sector and society to enhance trust.
- Ensuring transparency of military operations to foster an informed society;
- Increasing the effectiveness of disseminating information through mass and social media.

To restore public trust in the Republic of Armenia's defense and security system and the state as a whole, it is crucial to ensure informational transparency after a crisis, provide accurate information to the public, raise awareness about recovery measures and reforms in the security sector, promote dialogue with civil society and the media, and conduct information campaigns aimed at restoring a positive image.

Public awareness campaigns strengthen the connection between the army and the public. These campaigns include:

- Conducting informational campaigns on national security policy;
- Organizing educational programs and awareness initiatives;
- Holding informational events related to war and national security.

One positive example of such programs is those implemented during the defence reforms of the 2000s. During this period, the Republic of Armenia undertook large-scale measures within the framework of defence and security reforms to ensure greater control over the management of the armed forces. Some of these measures are summarised in “The Public Awareness Concept” (2007). The concept states that increasing transparency in the sector is one way to ensure stronger, more capable, and internationally recognised armed forces. The concept also establishes that public awareness of army-building and the current state of the armed forces is sufficient to prevent violations of individual rights under the pretext of maintaining military discipline. Furthermore, applying democratic oversight mechanisms to the armed forces would make the utilisation of institutions responsible for state security and defence more predictable, thereby preventing their involvement in processes with undesirable consequences.

Effective public communication and management in the security sector require distinguishing between internal and external communication policies. Internal communication is crucial for managing and ensuring the efficient operation of the security system. This includes exchanging official messages between military command and units to ensure an efficient flow of information, as well as mechanisms to maintain service discipline and information security. External communication systems aim to maintain effective connections between the army and society, as well as with international military organisations. This includes cooperating with media outlets, journalists, and international news agencies; exchanging information with international security and military bodies; and managing social media and public information platforms. Consequently, the disruption of mutual trust and the deepening of distrust in state-civil society relations pose a significant challenge to the collaboration between government entities and civil society. This deepening alienation creates a post-war conflict situation that may undermine the security of a country undergoing a transformational phase.

In the context of civil oversight, public relations management systems play an important role in ensuring national security, building public trust, and preserving information security. Alongside the development of modern technologies, it is necessary to improve communication methods by taking into account new challenges and international experience. Future developments should focus on enhancing cooperation with government bodies and maximising their involvement in discussions about proposals to delegate certain public authorities.

Conclusion

National security cannot be conceptualised solely within the confines of military or legal components. It equally requires the active engagement of society and the cultivation of trust in state institutions, a goal that can be achieved

through effective public communication. Public communication not only ensures the transparency and accuracy of information flows but also contributes to enhancing the accountability of state structures, strengthening civic oversight, and expanding public participation.

In the post-war context of the Republic of Armenia, the significance of this process is particularly acute. The challenges of diminished trust, the spread of disinformation, and scepticism toward the security system can be effectively addressed only if state institutions adopt clear and long-term communication strategies. Such strategies must incorporate information management, shaping of public opinion, constructive dialogue, the coordination of media and public relations coordination, information security, and strategic communication.

The central finding of the current study is that public communication should be regarded as an institutional mechanism for ensuring national security and civic oversight. It fosters an atmosphere of mutual trust between the state and society, mitigates the risks associated with disinformation, and stimulates public participation.

From a practical standpoint, it is essential to:

- enhance the transparency of communication processes within state institutions,
- broaden the participation of civil society and the media,
- strengthen components of information security,
- implement educational and awareness-raising programs aimed at restoring public trust.

Summarizing, public communication plays a crucial role in the national security system of the Republic of Armenia. It not only contributes to the stability of the state but also helps to shape a society in which the citizen becomes a co-author of security provision and state development

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THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS STATES

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Abstract

The article explores the role and significance of international organisations in the democratisation of the South Caucasus, focusing on the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE) as key actors in the democratisation processes in Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

The research highlights that while external actors provide important incentives and frameworks, the sustainability of democracy ultimately depends on domestic political commitment and institutional resilience. Despite some democratic backsliding in Georgia and Azerbaijan's ongoing authoritarianism, there are genuine aspirations for democratisation in Armenia, indicating that external incentives can be effective when combined with society's willingness and readiness, and the real will of political authorities.

Keywords: Democratisation, South Caucasus, European Union, Council of Europe, CEPA, PACE.

ԵՎՐՈՊԱԿԱՆ ՄԻՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԵՎՐՈՊԱՅԻ ԽՈՐՀՐԴԻ ԴԵՐԸ ԺՈՂՈՎՐԴԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԽԹԱՆՄԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՄ. ՀԱՐԱՎԱՅԻՆ ԿՈՎԿԱՍԻ ՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԴԵՊՔԸ

ՎԱՐԴՈՒՏԻ ՀՈՎՀԱՆՆԻՍՅԱՆ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ փիլիսոփայության, սոցիոլոգիայի և իրավունքի ինստիտուտի կրտսեր գիտաշխատող, քաղաքագիտության ասպիրանտ
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Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում է միջազգային կազմակերպությունների դերն ու նշանակությունը Հարավային Կովկասի երկրների ժողովրդավարացման գործում, մասնավորապես ուշադրության կենտրոնում

են եղել Եվրոպական Միության (ԵՄ) և Եվրոպայի Խորհրդի (ԵԽ) գործունեության ուղղությունները՝ որպես Հայաստանում, Վրաստանում և Ադրբեջանում ժողովրդավարացման հիմնական դերակատարներ:

Հետազոտությունն ընդգծում է, որ թեև արտաքին դերակատարներն ապահովում են կարևոր խթաններ և ինստիտուցիոնալ շրջանակներ, այնուամենայնիվ ժողովրդավարական կայունությունը կախված է ներքին քաղաքական հանձնառությունից և ինստիտուցիոնալ ճկունությունից: Չնայած Վրաստանում ժողովրդավարացման որոշակի նահանջին և Ադրբեջանի շարունակական ավտորիտարիզմին՝ Հայաստանում նկատվում են ժողովրդավարացման իրական ձգտումներ: Վերջինս վկայում է, որ արտաքին խթանները կարող են արդյունավետ լինել, եթե դրանք համակցվեն հասարակության պատրաստակամության և քաղաքական իշխանությունների իրական կամքի հետ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ ժողովրդավարացում, Հարավային Կովկաս, Եվրոպական Միություն, Եվրոպայի Խորհուրդ, ՀԸԳՀ, ԵԽԽՎ:

Introduction

The transitions from authoritarian regimes to democracy in the former Soviet Republics have varied widely in both starting conditions and outcomes. In some countries, the transition has been smooth and rapid, facilitated by favourable starting conditions, including geographical proximity to democratic states and a democratic legacy, while in others, internal and external factors, ethnic conflicts, and weak economies have complicated and delayed the political transition. In these cases, the democratization process has often been hindered by internal political resistance, underdeveloped institutions, and contradictory external influences. As a result, some countries have successfully established stable institutions, free elections, and active, thriving civil societies. In contrast, others remain under the strong control of political and administrative systems with limited capacity to uphold democratic norms.

The South Caucasus countries, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, provide a clear illustration of these differences. Despite shared Soviet-era historical legacies and regional contexts, their political development paths differ substantially. According to Freedom House’s Nations in Transit 2024 index, Armenia (Democracy Score: 3.07/7) and Georgia (3.04/7) are classified as Transitional or Hybrid Regimes, while Azerbaijan (1.07/7) is categorised as a Consolidated Authoritarian Regime (Freedom House, 2024). This classification highlights both the common challenges of the region and the significant divergence in their democratic development paths. Such variation underscores the complexity of democratisation in the South Caucasus. It suggests that domestic efforts alone are often insufficient to implement and sustain real democratic reforms without sustained international support.

Within this context, the concept of democracy promotion becomes particularly relevant. As Diamond (1992) emphasises, “promoting” democracy does not mean “exporting” it. Except in rare instances, democracy does not

work when foreign models are imposed. Rather, promoting democracy means offering moral, political, diplomatic, and financial support to individuals and organisations struggling to open authoritarian regimes. Countries that are trying to institutionalise democratic government must receive economic assistance to help them weather painful economic reform and the training and technical support to make democracy function effectively. Assistance must also be provided to the nongovernmental pillars of democracy: parties, civic groups, think tanks, and the mass media (pp. 25–46). Democracy-promoting actors can include individual states, as well as regional and international organisations, which provide frameworks, resources, and incentives for reform.

Building on this understanding, democracy promotion is commonly defined as a set of foreign policy activities which aim at fostering the transition to, consolidation of, or improvement of democracy in other states and their societies (Huber, 2015, p. 23). Earlier, Schmitter and Brouwer (1999) conceptualised democracy promotion as encompassing all overt and voluntary activities adopted, supported, and (directly or indirectly) implemented by (public or private) foreign actors explicitly designed to contribute to the political liberalisation of autocratic regimes and the subsequent democratisation of autocratic regimes in specific recipient countries. These definitions highlight the central role of external actors, particularly states and international organisations, in implementing democratic reforms.

Drawing on this theoretical and conceptual basis, the research explores the role of international organisations in supporting democratisation in the South Caucasus, with a particular focus on the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE). The article aims to analyse how these organisations, through their instruments, mechanisms, and policies, have shaped democratic development in Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. By employing a comparative approach, the study identifies both similarities and differences in organisational impact across the three countries, accounting for their unique political trajectories and levels of cooperation with international actors.

Research Methodology

The paper provides a comparative analysis based on a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources, including official documents, policy papers, reports, statements from international organisations, international tools and indexes of democracy measurement, academic literature, and expert analyses. This methodological framework allows for a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of international engagement and its implications on the democratisation of the three countries in the South Caucasus region.

EU Policy and Mechanisms in the South Caucasus

As one of the world’s leading promoters of democratic governance, the European Union is often regarded as one of the “democracy centres” and a normative power shaping political transformations beyond its borders. Based on

the foundational values of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, the EU places great importance on advancing and upholding democracy worldwide. In the South Caucasus, democracy promotion has become both a normative commitment and a strategic instrument, as the EU seeks to stabilise its neighbourhood, prevent conflicts, and create closer political and economic ties. The EU has played a significant role in promoting democratisation in the South Caucasus through different initiatives such as the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs), the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Eastern Partnership (EaP), and others. Within the framework of these projects, the EU applied its influence and soft power by establishing conditions that promoted the implementation of democratic reforms.

The first objective of the EU in the South Caucasus is to promote European values of good governance, democracy, human rights, and the rights of minorities, as enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union (Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012). Both the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, which form the basis of EU engagement with the South Caucasus, emphasise the importance of good governance and democracy as key drivers of security and stability. Moreover, the EU normative approach is enshrined in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, which require the South Caucasus states to cooperate with the EU to strengthen the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with international law and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) principles. Obligations related to human rights, democracy, and the Rule of Law are further outlined in the Association Agreement (AA) with the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) between the EU and Georgia, and in the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the EU and Armenia. The EU has long maintained a modernisation narrative, in which greater democracy leads to greater economic development, which in turn fosters political stability (Deen et al., 2023, pp. 27–29).

The most typical example from this perspective is EU–Armenia relations, which have gained new dynamics in recent years. Armenia, though a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), has signed a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the EU, indicating its commitment to alignment with EU standards. The CEPA covers areas such as the independence of the judiciary, the impartiality and effectiveness of criminal prosecution and law enforcement, access to justice, the right to freedom from torture, the right to life, freedom of assembly and association, the right to vote, the right to freedom of expression, the fight against corruption, transparent and accountable governance, freedom of the media, and the right to be free from discrimination in matters of democratization, human rights protection and the rule of law. It also aims to promote, preserve and strengthen peace and stability at both regional and international levels, including through joining efforts to eliminate sources of tension, enhancing border security, and promoting cross-border cooperation and good neighbourly relations (Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, 2018).

Armenia and the EU are making good progress towards deepened cooperation based on the CEPA. The EU remains the largest donor in the country, providing important support in areas such of justice, the rule of law, anti-corruption, etc. Armenia has gone through major political changes in recent years, with a government committed to both ensuring genuinely functioning democratic institutions and using the CEPA as a blueprint for reforms to modernise the country, despite considerable challenges. In recent years, Armenia has made further progress in implementing reforms in key areas, such as justice and the rule of law, particularly by advancing police reforms and strengthening democratic institutions, including efforts to combat corruption (Council of the European Union, 2024). This dynamic underscores that the EU's influence is strongest where there is clear domestic political will to pursue democratisation.

Armenia's relations with the EU have intensified significantly in recent years, as the country seeks to diversify its security and economic ties. In March 2025, the Armenian Parliament adopted a law on the "initiation of the process of EU accession" (National Assembly of the RA, 2025), based on a citizens' initiative. While not constituting an official EU membership application, the law confirms the country's European aspirations. Reflecting the mutual interest in deepening ties based on common values, the EU and Armenia have successfully concluded negotiations on a new EU-Armenia partnership agenda for more ambitious cooperation across all areas, including on security matters (Placzek & Jiráček, 2025). Among the key priorities of the new Partnership Agenda is also strengthening Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance: reinforcing the rule of law, advancing justice sector reform, combating corruption, and ensuring the protection of fundamental freedoms (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the RA, 2025). This development suggests that Armenia is gradually positioning itself as one of the EU's closest partners in the region, despite geopolitical constraints. However, implementing Armenia's ambitious reform agenda requires significant administrative and institutional capacity.

In parallel with the example of Armenia, it is also important to consider the influence of the EU in the democratization process of Georgia. The EU also played a turning role in strengthening the democratic governance and political stability of Georgia. The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership laid the foundation for political dialogue and cooperation between Georgia and the EU, with the main goal of promoting the development of a more stable and democratic governance structure in Georgia. Many reforms were carried out in the country, mainly aiming to improve the existing election processes, strengthen judicial independence and the rule of law, redistribute functions and duties between governmental institutions, and develop effective anti-corruption mechanisms. Effective public administration, the rule of law, and the adoption of a comprehensive legislative framework are critical parts of political development. Combining these and other reforms lays the foundation for a robust governance framework, which is fundamental to building a stable democratic system (Iakobishvili, 2025, pp. 124–139).

In Georgia, the EU supports the development of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The Association Agreement was concluded in 2016, and the Association Agenda 2021–2027 guides EU–Georgia cooperation in the field of human rights and democracy. While a culture of human rights still has to take firm root nationwide, there has been significant progress in the fields of human rights and democracy. Important electoral and judicial reforms have taken place, creating a more solid legal basis for the country’s democratic consolidation of the country, although significant challenges remain in both areas. EU support to human rights, democracy and rule of law is particularly directed towards transparency and inclusiveness of the electoral process, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, gender equality, rights of persons belonging to minorities, rights of persons with disabilities and labour rights (Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, 2023).

More than 80% of the Georgian population supports democracy and EU membership, according to a poll conducted by the International Republican Institute’s (IRI) Centre for Insights in Survey Research (CISR) (International Republican Institute, 2023). However, since 2012, the country has been governed by Georgian Dream (GD), a party that has gradually adopted elements of authoritarianism, tightening its control over all state institutions, including the judiciary and the electoral commission, while harassing political opponents and independent media. Two recent laws have caused uproar in the country: the so-called “foreign agents law” and the “law on family values and the protection of minors”. These laws are fundamentally at odds with core EU values and incompatible with Georgia’s stated EU aspirations. Granting Georgia official candidate status for EU membership was primarily intended to prevent further democratic erosion and reduce Moscow’s influence. However, the situation continues to deteriorate (Everts, 2024). Condemning violence against peaceful protesters in ongoing Tbilisi rallies, High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission Kaja Kallas and Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos warned that the Georgian government’s actions “have direct consequences” on the relationship with the EU. “The door to the EU remains open, and the return of Georgia to the European values and the EU accession path are in the hands of the Georgian leadership” (“Civil Georgia,” 2024; European Commission, 2024).

Georgia’s democratic development had ups and downs, improving after the Rose Revolution in 2003 and the first electoral transfer of power in 2012, but declining after 2007, when the government grew more undemocratic, and again after 2016 with the government’s supermajority in Parliament that gradually led to the shrinking of space for opposition, media, and civil society. Today, the country is stuck in the “electoral democracy” category. Increasing ties with the EU helped Georgia advance in some aspects of democratic development, particularly during the Georgian Dream party’s first term in office. Having secured a parliamentary supermajority in 2016 and subsequently near-total control of all democratic institutions, Georgian Dream has consolidated its hold on power. Since the 2018 presidential election, particularly the 2019 protests, Georgia has been in a political

crisis. The EU’s mediation in 2021 helped temporarily defuse it, but the EU’s goal of reducing political polarisation and improving power-sharing in parliament has not been achieved (Brudzińska et al., 2025; Sirbiladze & Ventura, 2023). This political stagnation and growing polarisation have weakened Georgia’s reform momentum and undermined its long-standing image as a regional frontrunner in democratisation. The government’s increasing reluctance to engage constructively with the EU reflects a gradual shift away from earlier commitments to deeper European integration.

The situation became more serious when Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze announced that the opening of accession talks with the EU would be removed from Georgia’s agenda and that the country would refuse EU budgetary grants until the end of 2028, “when Georgia will be adequately prepared economically to open negotiations to become a member in 2030” (Parulava, 2024). Such decisions further distance Georgia from its European trajectory and raise serious doubts about the country’s willingness to implement the democratic reforms required for EU membership. As a result, Georgia is missing the opportunity that closer ties with the EU could provide to pave the way for political stability and institutional strengthening.

Compared to Georgia, the EU’s policy towards Azerbaijan has had a fundamentally different nature due to the country’s limited development of democratic institutions. The promotion and support of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a key element of the EU’s action in Azerbaijan, along the following priorities: to strengthen the rule of law and democratic institutions, the EU is supporting steps in the direction of an independent, fair and efficient justice system, as well as supporting the fight against corruption. The EU is supporting civil society organisations (CSOs) and strongly promoting the elimination of legal provisions (such as registration obligations) that are currently hampering CSOs’ space and action in the country. Promoting freedom of expression is also an important element: the EU supports the freedom of the press and the plurality of opinions, advocating against the prosecution of individuals on political grounds. The EU also aims to contribute to the protection of rights, equal opportunities, and equal participation in the public and political life of women, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced people, and minority groups (EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2022, pp. 34–36).

According to the latest EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, the overall state of human rights and democracy in Azerbaijan deteriorated further in recent years, as reflected in the unprecedented crackdown on critical voices, reduced space for civil society and independent media, and ongoing limitations on civil liberties. The elections held in the country fail to meet the standards of genuine democracy. The general electoral legal framework still needs to be reviewed to align with international standards and obligations. The crackdown on journalists, human rights defenders, and civic and political opposition activists, which had started in September 2023, further intensified. More independent journalists, human rights defenders and political activists

were arrested on charges of money laundering. Activities of non-governmental organisations remain restricted. Corruption is a systemic problem.

The EU continued to address concerns related to human rights and democracy with the relevant competent national institutions. The EU Delegation organised meetings with representatives of NGOs, think tanks, members of political parties, human rights lawyers, human rights defenders, and journalists. The EU Special Representative for Human Rights raised the EU's concerns with the Azerbaijani authorities on several occasions (EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2024, pp. 40–41). The European Parliament even adopted three resolutions regarding the violation of human rights and international law, and the repression of civil society and independent media in Azerbaijan (European Parliament Resolutions, 19.12.2024; 24.10.2024; 25.04.2024).

Thus, the EU's involvement and influence in the South Caucasus countries take different forms. While in Armenia and Georgia it is mainly manifested through cooperation and promotion of reforms, in the case of Azerbaijan, it is more often expressed in a monitoring and critical format. In general, the EU's activities in the region contribute to the spread of democratic values. However, their effectiveness depends directly on each country's political will and domestic developments of each country.

Policies and Mechanisms of the Council of Europe in the South Caucasus

The Council of Europe is focused on human rights, democratic institutions, and the rule of law. All three South Caucasus countries are CoE members and have ratified the European Convention on Human Rights.

Since it acceded to the Council of Europe, Armenia has taken active steps towards fulfilling its obligations to the Council of Europe. All the Council of Europe conventions required for membership have been ratified. Over the years, with the expert support of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the Respective Codes and Laws of the Republic of Armenia have been amended, including the 2015 Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, followed by the ongoing amendments to the legislation. The projects implemented by the Council of Europe in Armenia are drawn up based on the priorities of the Government of Armenia, as well as the recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies, contributing to the implementation of reforms in Armenia in line with the European standards in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Since 2012, this cooperation between Armenia and the CoE has been conducted within Action Plans (Permanent Representation of Armenia to the Council of Europe, n.d.).

Ratifying the European Charter of Local Self-Government in 2002, Armenia has undertaken far-reaching reforms to strengthen local democracy. In late 2022, the Territorial and Administrative Reform of Armenia (TARA) reorganised the country into 71 consolidated communities, followed by the approval of a

Decentralisation Concept on 7 November 2023, further aligning Armenia’s governance with the Charter principles. A strategic focus of the CoE’s work in Armenia has been the support for local governance and democratic participation. Projects like the Democratic Development, Decentralisation and Good Governance in Armenia – Phase II and Support to Communities Hosting Refugees in Armenia under the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2023–2026 strengthen municipal structures, align local governance with the European Charter, and equip authorities to better manage responsibilities, including services to refugees displaced from Nagorno–Karabakh (Council of Europe, n.d.).

Armenia’s example is followed by the experience of Georgia, where a number of reforms and initiatives aimed at strengthening democratic institutions have also been implemented with the assistance of the Council of Europe. By becoming the 41st Member State, Georgia accepted the obligations incumbent on all Member States under Article 3 of the Statute of the Council of Europe, i.e., compliance with the principles of pluralist democracy and the rule of law, as well as respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons placed under its jurisdiction. To date, the country has signed and ratified numerous treaties and protocols of the Council of Europe. It is subject to a number of Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, 2025, p. 10).

Georgia, as a member of the Council of Europe, has been cooperating with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) since the 1990s and has been drafting amendments to the commission for expertise. At all stages of the development of Georgia’s electoral system’s development, the participation of international organisations, such as the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission, was important. Georgia also follows the Election Code under the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Nakashidze & Sirabidze, 2020, pp. 9–27).

Since its accession, Georgia has adopted laws and implemented several reforms to strengthen decentralisation and enhance civic engagement in decision-making, including Article 7 of the Constitution of Georgia, which introduced constitutional guarantees for local self-government; the adoption of the 2014 Self-Government Code; and the Decentralisation Strategy 2020–2025. Georgia has also implemented since 2014 the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights, accompanied by successive action plans (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, 2025, p. 11).

Georgia has greatly benefited from the co-operation programs of the Council of Europe since 2006. Since 2013, three Action Plans have provided a strategic framework for co-operation with the Council of Europe in support of democratic reforms in Georgia. The Council of Europe’s current Action Plan for Georgia 2024–2027, which is the fourth Action Plan, has been prepared in close consultation with the Georgian authorities. Its priorities also reflect the recommendations set out in the European Commission’s opinion on Georgia’s application for European Union (EU) membership, as well as Georgia’s national reform agenda. The Action

Plan is a strategic programming instrument that aims to align Georgia’s legislation, institutions, and practices with European standards in the areas of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, 2025, p. 11).

The main results of previous Action Plans include: the enhanced knowledge and expertise in civil participation methodologies among local experts, public officials, civil society organizations and individual citizens; reinforced National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia, as a fully-fledged intermediary to promote the needs and identify the challenges existing at local level before the central government with a view to securing efficient and effective localization of human rights principles and increased engagement of citizens and civil society organizations in decision-making processes, and other results in the areas of democracy, human rights and the rule of law (Council of Europe, 2023a, pp. 7–8).

In recent years, the Council of Europe has maintained close oversight of Georgia’s democratic trajectory and its adherence to international obligations. Once regarded as a regional example of reform and constructive engagement with the Council of Europe, Georgia demonstrated a clear readiness to align its policies and reforms with European democratic standards and norms. This willingness to engage in open dialogue distinguished the country from its neighbours and positioned it as a model of cooperation. However, recent developments have significantly altered this perception. The Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) has expressed deep concern about political shifts that raise questions regarding Georgia’s commitment to democratic principles, Euro-Atlantic integration, and the fulfilment of membership obligations. Constructive cooperation and dialogue, which once characterised Georgia’s approach, have been increasingly replaced by uncompromising rhetoric and confrontational attitudes toward critical voices. Instead of progress, signs of democratic backsliding have emerged, creating uncertainty about the country’s future trajectory within the European institutional framework (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 2024).

The example of Georgia shows relative success and progress, but recent developments have raised some concerns. This also highlights the differences between the countries in the region. Unlike Armenia and Georgia, the Council of Europe’s relations with Azerbaijan have been more controversial.

Azerbaijan joined the CoE in 2001 and became a member of the ECHR in 2002. Joining the CoE, Azerbaijan made a wide range of commitments to uphold specific principles of Article 3 of the Statute of the CoE and implement reforms such as protecting the rights of journalists and citizens to express opinions freely, including critical viewpoints, ensuring citizens’ rights to peaceful gatherings and protests, engaging with the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe (PACE), Venice Commission (constitutional experts), and other relevant monitoring bodies, and abiding by the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) (“CSO Meter”, 2024). To date, the country has signed and ratified 65 treaties of the Council of Europe treaties, signed seven more, and is subject to a number of

Council of Europe mechanisms and bodies (Council of Europe, 2022, p. 6).

The Council of Europe supported the Azerbaijani authorities in harmonising national judicial practices by providing analysis and recommendations to state actors in the light of the case law of the ECHR and other human rights protection mechanisms under the Action Plans for Azerbaijan 2014–2017 and 2018–2021 (Council of Europe, 2022, p. 11). The next Action Plan, planned for 2022–2025, is also intended to support the country’s efforts to fulfil its obligations as a Council of Europe member state. It is a strategic programming instrument aimed at further aligning Azerbaijan’s legislation, institutions and practices in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy with Council of Europe standards (Council of Europe, 2022, p. 2).

At the same time, Azerbaijan has one of the worst records among Council of Europe member states of implementing European Court of Human Rights judgments. In January 2024, according to the resolution passed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Azerbaijani delegation was suspended for 12 months for persistent violations of Council of Europe standards; the persecution of the opposition and independent media; and actions in Nagorno–Karabakh that led to the mass exodus of Armenians. Unhappy with the growing criticism, the Baku authorities responded by temporarily withdrawing from the work of many CoE’s institutions. At the same time, repression against independent news outlets and civil society activists intensified in the country (Council of Europe, 2024).

In July 2024, the Council of Europe’s Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) took the “exceptional decision” to make a public statement concerning Azerbaijan under Article 10 (2) of the Convention for the Prevention of Torture, citing the government’s “outright refusal” to cooperate with the Committee. The CPT has repeatedly highlighted severe and systemic issues related to the treatment of people in police custody. Likewise, the European Union Delegation to the Council of Europe has expressed grave concern over Azerbaijan’s persistent lack of cooperation with international mechanisms. The Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights has raised the alarming increase in politically motivated detentions of civil society representatives and journalists (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

After those events, there was increasing speculation that Azerbaijan would follow Russia’s example and leave the organisation. Despite increasing repression at home, Azerbaijan formally remains a member of the Council of Europe, though it engages only with selected branches of the institution. This approach not only undermines the legitimacy of the institution as a whole but also dashes hopes of Azerbaijani political prisoners regaining their freedom. Although, in theory, the Council of Europe procedures do not envisage a scenario in which a member state does not have a delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly but continues to work in the other Council institutions, Azerbaijan may set a new precedent for many months or even years (Zamejc, 2025). As it appears, the Council of Europe’s activities in Azerbaijan are facing more serious obstacles, including human rights violations, democratic regression, and limited cooperation with international organisations.

Another programme is the joint initiative of the European Union and the Council of Europe, The Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), which has played an important role in advancing democratic governance, rule of law, and anti-corruption reforms in Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan (it is an initiative for the Eastern Partnership countries). In Armenia, the programme contributed to the adoption of a new Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan in 2019, supported the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Committee in 2021 and specialised Anti-Corruption Court in 2022, and promoted integrity standards through improved asset declaration systems and training for public officials. Judicial reforms were strengthened by the revision of the Judicial Code in 2022 and enhanced training for judges, while targeted measures promoted gender equality in the justice sector (Council of Europe, 2023b; European Union/Council of Europe, 2023a). In Georgia, the PGG supported reforms in the areas of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing, the independence and efficiency of the judiciary, and access to justice. The programme also provided capacity building for legal professionals, introduced new digital tools for constitutional justice, and strengthened legal aid for vulnerable groups (European Union/Council of Europe, 2023b). In Azerbaijan, key results include reforms in anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing, including the adoption of key laws and support for the implementation of non-discrimination and gender equality standards, with particular attention to combating violence against women (Council of Europe, 2025; European Union/Council of Europe, 2023c).

Overall, the PGG has contributed to aligning governance and justice systems in the South Caucasus with European standards. By supporting legislative reforms, enhancing institutional capacities, and promoting equality and inclusion, the programme has created more transparent, accountable, and citizen-oriented institutions in the countries of the region.

In summary, the Council of Europe has become an important partner in building democracy and the rule of law in the countries of the South Caucasus. Although the experiences of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan differ, ranging from the depth of institutional reforms to the demonstration of political will, the overall role of the organisation is important in guiding the democratization processes in the region and spreading European values.

The EU and CoE Impacts in Promoting Democracy: Comparative Analysis

The democratization process in the South Caucasus cannot be considered without the involvement of international organisations. In this context, two main European institutions play a key role: the Council of Europe and the European Union, which are the most influential international actors in terms of democratisation.

The CoE was one of the first international organisations to become involved in the democratization process of the newly independent states of the South Caucasus. It used monitoring mechanisms and a system of commitments and reporting to promote legal and institutional reforms. It is especially important to consider the

process of implementing the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, the advisory activities of the Venice Commission, as well as the monitoring missions of the PACE. On the one hand, these tools have contributed to the approximation of the legislative field to European standards; on the other hand, they have often encountered resistance from political elites, as a result of which the depth of real reforms remained limited.

Unlike the CoE, the EU acted not only as a normative power but also as a partner, offering opportunities for economic, political, and institutional integration. The EU's approach to democratization in its Eastern neighbours, including Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, has been largely shaped by the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership program, which aim to strengthen ties with these countries and offer political and economic support in exchange for reforms aimed at establishing democratic institutions, the rule of law, and respect for human rights (Ordukhanyan et al., 2025). Along with these projects, later, the Association Agreement in the case of Georgia and the CEPA framework in the case of Armenia also allowed the EU to link democracy promotion with economic integration and financial assistance, creating incentives for reforms.

The comparative analysis shows that the CoE's influence was mainly manifested at the monitoring and advisory levels, ensuring compliance with and adherence to democratic and human rights standards. The EU, in turn, viewed democratisation not only as the spread of a value system but also as a means of ensuring security and stability, linking it to regional development and economic cooperation. In this regard, the EU's involvement was more practical and stimulating.

The effectiveness and results of these approaches are most clearly demonstrated in democracy scores. Exploring the democracy scores of the South Caucasus countries for 2005–2024 according to Freedom House's *Nations in Transit* index (Freedom House, n.d.) (see Figure 1), significant differences are observed in the dynamics of democratisation of these three countries.

- Georgia – Initially, having more favourable starting conditions, Georgia recorded relatively high democracy indicators and rapid progress. However, in recent years, a loss of democratic momentum has been observed due to the centralisation of power by the political elite, the dominance of parliament, and restrictions on civil liberties.

- Armenia – Initially, the indicators were significantly lower, and progress was slow. However, in recent years, a new momentum of democratic development has emerged, and even the indicators are slightly higher than those of Georgia. This is due to both the willingness and readiness of broad layers of society, and the willingness of the authorities to promote democratic reforms.

- In Azerbaijan, unlike Armenia and Georgia, a regression of democratic development is observed. The indicators have remained low and have declined further in recent years. This is due to the nature of the political regime, in which the authorities not only fail to promote democratic development but also restrict the activities of civil society and opposition structures.

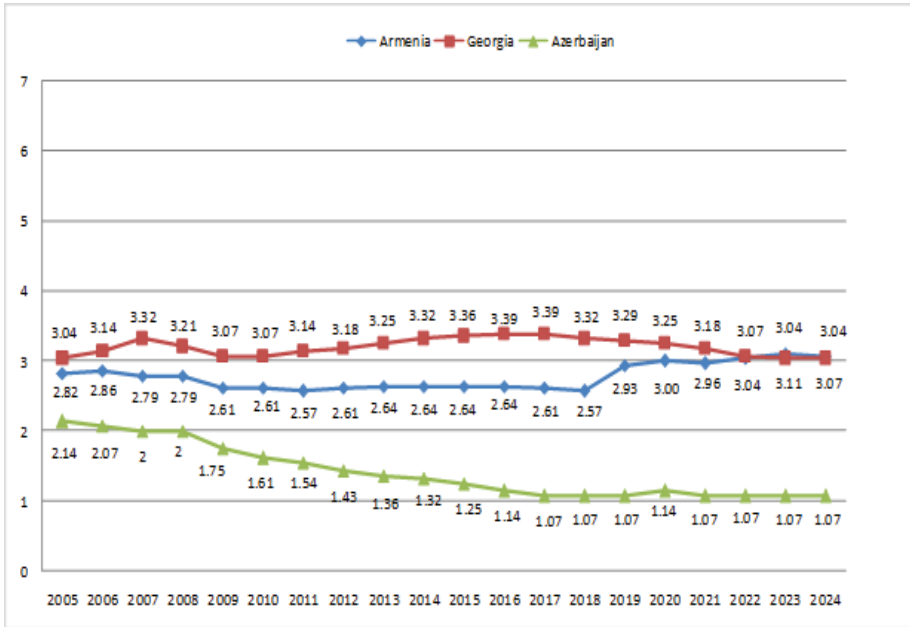


Figure 1. Democracy Score in the South Caucasus countries in 2005-2024 Nations in Transit
 (The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the lowest and 7 the highest level of democracy)

This analysis shows that although the involvement of international organisations plays a key role, the democratic development of countries is largely determined by internal factors: the willingness and readiness of society and the real will of political authorities.

These dynamics not only reveal the different paths of democratisation in the region but also reflect the varying extent to which the engagement of the EU's and the CoE's engagement has influenced the outcomes. The role of the EU in Georgia's democratisation was of great importance, enabling Georgia to achieve the status of an EU candidate country. However, a recent deviation from democratic values has been observed. For Armenia, CEPA created a new roadmap aimed at reforms in democratic governance, the judiciary, and anti-corruption policy. In the case of Azerbaijan, the influence of both the CoE and the EU remained limited due to the limited willingness of the authorities to implement democratic changes.

In this context, it is obvious that international organisations can offer mechanisms, financial support, and monitoring tools, but their effectiveness depends on the willingness of domestic institutions and political powers. Therefore, for further democratic development, it is necessary to combine at least two important components: the continuous involvement of international institutions and the state's willingness and readiness to participate. The experience of the

EU and the Council of Europe shows that only through joint efforts can an environment be created in which democratic institutions become a stable basis for socio-political life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the involvement of international institutions, in particular the European Union and the Council of Europe, in the democratisation process of the South Caucasus has been multifaceted and significant. While in the cases of Armenia and Georgia, with specific characteristics, external support has contributed to legislative reforms, institutional development, and progress in the protection of human rights, in the case of Azerbaijan, this impact has also been limited due to the priorities of the political regime.

In this context, it becomes clear that the tools and mechanisms of international institutions, from financial support to political dialogue and monitoring, can create favourable conditions for democratisation. However, their effectiveness largely depends on internal factors, which determine the extent to which international support can translate into real democratic reforms. The several key factors are:

- Political will of the ruling elites to initiate and sustain democratic reforms.
- Societal readiness to accept and internalise democratic values.
- Civic mentality, reflecting the broader attitudes and expectations of citizens toward democratic governance.
- The strength and activity of civil society, capable of promoting and defending democratic principles.
- Political legacy, which shapes the institutional culture and trajectory of democratisation.

Without the commitment of both authorities and broader segments of society, as well as an active civil society able to advance democratic principles, real reforms are difficult to achieve, and international support remains at a merely formal level.

Therefore, the future democratic development of the South Caucasus is conditioned by two main factors: *first*, continuous and consistent involvement of European institutions that can provide guidance, incentives and oversight, and *second*, internal willingness and readiness of regional countries to build stable democratic institutions, develop civil society and strengthen the rule of law. Only with this combination will the South Caucasus countries be able to move toward genuine, irreversible, and sustainable democratisation.

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