NEW APPROACHES TO PROMOTING WELL-BEING

Innovations in the cultural sector, community building, and HR practices

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Editor's preface

The topic of our 2025 year English issue is: New approaches to promoting well-being: innovations in the cultural sector, community building, and HR practices. The six articles are dealing with different aspects of this concept, and give a quite broad picture.

The first article is about childhood well-being, and the factors which are influencing it. The paper highlights well-being-oriented and community-based educational models as potential environments for fostering children's autonomy, emotional safety, and social relationships. The author emphasizes the significance of the teacher's role from a mental health perspective, demonstrating that the educator's well-being is essential for supporting children's emotional and social development, this way contributing to the development of a child-centered, empathetic, and reflective educational culture.

The second article is an analysis of Franz Liszt's Funérailles. The instrument of this analysis is musical hermeneutics, by which the sonic body is dissected into its constituent layers, through the lens of the works of Hegel, Sartre, Camus, and Heidegger, haunting the interstices between the notes and offer their testimonies. The result is that Funérailles is not music but a performative retrial of History. Its triumphant central section is a radiant deception, hope a mayfly simulacrum annulled by the eternal law of mourning.

The third study is about digital parenting, which is essential for well-being of our children in this digital world. A systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The literature search was performed using the Web of Science database, resulting in the selection of 19 studies that were subjected to full-text analysis. Findings reveal that digital parenting is a complex, context-sensitive practice that requires adaptive approaches, shaped by individual, relational, and cultural factors and informed by diverse methodological perspectives. Practically, the findings highlight the need for educational programs that enhance digital literacy, emotional attunement, and adaptive mediation among parents.

The fourth article is a comparison of Hungarian and Serbian adult education. The aim of the research is to examine the activities, competences and related professionalism of adult educators who provide professional development for early childhood educators. Adult education and training typically encompass a wide range of practices that are interwoven with many other areas. The link between the theory of hybrid professionalism and the practice of adult education is confirmed by the interviewees presented.

The study written by Bettina Botos explores the theoretical framework of integrating nonverbal, body-awareness-based methods — specifically Dance and Movement Therapy into teacher education programs to improve Social and Emotional Learning skills. It connects insights from emotional intelligence theory, embodiment theory, positive psychology, and psychological capital, and proposes that body-based, experiential approaches can strengthen teachers' empathy, emotion regulation, self-

awareness, and relational competence, thereby improving their psychological well-being and pedagogical effectiveness. The study contributes to the evolving discourse on holistic, well-being-oriented teacher education through embodied and arts-based pedagogical innovation.

Sadia Nur Habib investigates the motivational factors that drive academicians in Bangladesh to engage in lifelong learning and continuous professional development. The study highlights that in collectivist societies such as Bangladesh, extrinsic motivators, when aligned with individual values can reinforce intrinsic motivation. Implications for institutional leadership and policy formulation to enhance academic professional development are discussed.

We hope, that this issue of Knowledge Management will contribute significantly to our readers' well-being.

Katalin Varga
chief editor
December, 2025

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CHILDHOOD AND WELL-BEING: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS, EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES, AND COMMUNITY INNOVATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Abstract

This study explores the interrelation between the concept of child well-being and contemporary educational practices, with a particular focus on the 21st-century socio-cultural context and the interpretation of childhood as a social construct. The author argues that child well-being is not merely a sum of physical and cognitive indicators but a complex experience shaped by culturally and socially embedded meaning systems. This recognition calls for the development of new pedagogical paradigms. The paper highlights well-being-oriented and community-based educational models as potential environments for fostering children's autonomy, emotional safety, and social relationships. Through the examples of alternative pedagogies, community spaces, and parental cooperation, it illustrates how education can become a site of social participation and a redefinition of childhood. The study also emphasizes the significance of the teacher's role from a mental health perspective, demonstrating that the educator's well-being is essential for supporting children's emotional and social development. The approach is both theoretically grounded and supported by practical examples, contributing to the development of a child-centered, empathetic, and reflective educational culture.

Introduction

This study explores the diverse interpretations of childhood and their cultural, social, and psychological contexts. My aim is to examine how images and understandings of childhood and the state of being a child have evolved, what factors have influenced them, and how various theoretical attempts have sought to define this pivotal life stage in terms of its social, psychological, and biological dimensions. How can we understand that, while humanity shares many universal traits, we still differ profoundly in our interpretations and experiences shaped by social and cultural contexts? I analyze this question from the perspective of childhood by employing the theoretical frameworks of psycho-biological development and the social construction of childhood. I highlight that children's development is not solely driven by biological determinants and external expectations, but is deeply embedded in the social and cultural contexts that shape them.

Furthermore, this study pays particular attention to the impact of increasing social individualization from the 19th century onward on childhood and educational practices. Social individualization not only transformed the role and position of the individual, but also radically reshaped expectations regarding children and the strategies used in their

upbringing. Emerging approaches to child-rearing—such as reform pedagogies and child-centered educational models—opened new horizons, placing individual well-being and communal responsibility at the center of educational efforts.

Understanding childhood as a social construction allows us to go beyond a narrow focus on individual biological development and to consider the child's lived world, the nature of education, and the role of the community in which children form their most significant values and behavioral models. Educational strategies and institutional cultures—such as well-being-oriented pedagogical models and the mental health of educators—are essential for enabling children to develop optimally and achieve emotional and social balance.

The goal of this study is to uncover these complex interconnections and to interpret the issues of childhood and education through both theoretical and practical lenses, taking into account biological, social, psychological, and pedagogical aspects—all from the perspective of children's well-being.

Defining Childhood

According to cognitive psychologist Alison Gopnik, childhood is a distinct developmental phase in human life—a prolonged period of immaturity during which *"the young human being depends on the care of older individuals." (*Gopnik, 2009, p. 15) From this perspective, the child is not a miniature adult, as it can be clearly stated that children possess biological and psychological characteristics that are fundamentally different from those of adults. In contrast, adulthood is nothing more than the outcome of childhood. *"Our brains are shaped by childhood experiences; we begin our lives as children, and our conscious memories reach back to that period."* (Gopnik, 2009, p. 19)

It is essential to recognize, on the one hand, the fundamental and exceptional importance of childhood, whose understanding ultimately serves the betterment of adult society. On the other hand, we must also acknowledge that the concept of the child and childhood, in and of itself, is only partially interpretable—primarily from a biological perspective. We can certainly make statements about the child's physical and psychological characteristics, which may be studied in isolation from many angles, but childhood cannot be understood apart from the prolonged relationship between the vulnerable child and an adult caregiver. One might say that the child and childhood are, in essence, incomprehensible without adults—without adults, there is no child. This is precisely why it is crucial to understand childhood within the complexity of both its immediate and broader social environments.

In their work The Social Construction of Reality, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann describe childhood as a period of existence outside of society, and simultaneously as the stage during which the mechanisms of society are gradually learned. This includes what they define as the dialectical process of externalization, internalization, and objectivation. However, they do not portray this acquisition of societal functioning as a one-way process. The child is not a passive recipient of its environment. Members of the new generation influence society just as much as the social patterns and schemas they acquire influence them. (Berger & Luckmann, 1967)

The Significance of Environmental Influence

Research has confirmed that the stimuli a fetus experiences in the womb can have long-lasting effects on later stages of life. Studies suggest that by the third trimester, the fetus is capable of responding to external sounds, such as the mother's voice, and these auditory experiences may influence future language development and attachment patterns (DeCasper & Spence, 1986). Furthermore, prenatal stress and the mother's emotional state have been linked to the child's later psychological sensitivity, behavior, and cognitive functioning (Van den Bergh et al., 2005; Glover, 2011). Thus, the intrauterine environment shapes the individual not only in a biological sense, but also through early experiential imprints that may form the basis of later developmental states (Schore, 2001).

In addition to the child being the result of a unique, random combination of the parents' genetic material, the influences encountered in the womb also contribute to the individuality of the child to be born. Universally, the uterus is not only the place where human form and organ systems begin to develop, but also where experiences start to exert influence even before birth. Therefore, infants are no longer regarded as *"blank slates" (*as John Locke and the empiricists imagined in the 18th century); they are not solely shaped by experience, but come into the world with innate schemas, processing abilities, and expectations about how the world works. Beneath surface-level similarities, individual differences emerge from the very beginning due to both biological and environmental factors. *"The similarities and differences among people ultimately arise from the interaction between environmental and genetic factors."* (Cole & Cole, 2023, p. 74)

For children to develop their unique abilities within a supportive environment that meets their needs and individual characteristics, the surrounding socialization context—and its embeddedness in the broader society—plays a critical role. Equally important is how this environment responds to the child's emerging needs. Therefore, biological and environmental influences must be considered together when analyzing child development, and contemporary theories increasingly integrate both perspectives.

A child cannot choose their primary environment of socialization. For the child, this environment does not represent one of many possible worlds—it represents the world. Identification with close family members and the reality they embody is inevitable. The family environment predisposes children to inequality, both biologically and in terms of their perception of reality. For the child, the image of society is doubly filtered: first through the immediate family, and second, more specifically, through the primary caregivers. Thus, a child born into a lower social class inherits a working-class perspective of the world—mediated through the lens of their parents' particular experiences. As a result, not only do lived realities differ across social strata, but even within the same stratum, children begin the process of secondary socialization with vastly different attitudes and perceptions of reality, shaped by uniquely filtered and transmitted experiences. (Berger & Luckmann, 1967)

Childhood as a Universal Developmental Stage

The interpretation of childhood as a universal developmental stage appears in numerous theories describing the stages and characteristics of human development. Every person who has ever lived has passed through these stages, and it is likely safe to assume that future generations will as well. These theories generally trace individual development through a sequence of predetermined steps that tend to appear in the same order and manner in every human life, regardless of cultural or societal context. The process of physical and psychological development is always gradual and cumulative. Classical developmental psychology theories—such as Jean Piaget's model of cognitive development and Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development—agree that human development unfolds in stages that appear in a similar order across all individuals, regardless of cultural setting (Piaget, 1952; Erikson, 1963). These models are built on the idea that human development consists of incremental steps, with the abilities acquired in each stage forming the basis for the next (Flavell, 1963). Although contemporary cultural psychology has added nuance to this universalist view, the existence of basic developmental schemas remains widely accepted (Case, 1992).

The first attempts to observe children with scientific rigor began in the late 19th century. From the early 20th century onward, the emergence of "*child study*" as a field marked a growing interest in understanding children through both their biological and psychosocial developmental milestones. These early, fragmented areas of research aimed to offer a general, depersonalized description of childhood based on observation, measurement, and testing. At the dawn of child study, for example, Édouard Claparède (1905) approached child development from the perspective of general human development. Jean Piaget is still considered one of the founding figures of modern child psychology. His observations on psychosocial development in children have become foundational to modern pedagogical movements.

However, recent research emphasizes that childhood and human development are far more diverse and culturally influenced than most early universalist child study models suggest. Representatives of cultural psychology, such as Barbara Rogoff and Lev Vygotsky, argue that child development cannot be understood independently of the cultural practices, norms, and interactional patterns within which it unfolds (Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Rogoff, in particular, stresses the concept of "*participatory learning*", whereby the child acquires knowledge and skills as an active member of the cultural community, embedded in everyday life. At the same time, the original goals of child study—with its detailed examination of various segments of childhood—laid the groundwork for a systematic approach that allows for the most sensitive and complex understanding of childhood (Deák, 1998).

Childhood as a Social Construction

Understanding childhood as a social construction means recognizing that the concept and meaning of childhood are shaped by society and vary across time and place. At first glance, this perspective appears to contrast sharply with the view of childhood as a universal developmental stage, which portrays children and adults as individuals situated on distinct biological and psychological levels of development. It is commonly accepted that children must reach specific developmental milestones at certain stages of maturity. When such milestones are achieved, one can be confident that the child is progressing within healthy developmental parameters, without the need to further investigate possible causes of delay. Clearly, one cannot expect the same behavioral or cognitive efforts from a one-year-old as from a three-year-old (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Biological differences—such as age and gender—strongly influence the development of social norms and expectations. However, there is a growing societal effort to move beyond these biologically grounded social conventions.

It is also crucial to consider that historical, sociocultural, and even economic factors shape the definition of childhood. From the perspective of social constructionism, childhood is not the outcome of a predetermined biological or psychological process but rather a socially and culturally defined state. This means that the meaning of childhood and the expectations surrounding children may differ across societies and historical periods. What is considered part of childhood in one social or cultural context may, according to another context's standards, already be regarded as part of adulthood.

This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the diversity and complexity of childhood, freeing it from narrow, biologically determined interpretations. Viewing childhood as a social construction highlights the existence of multiple conceptions of childhood, each potentially reflecting divergent social values. It also draws attention to expressions of childhood that deviate from Western-centric norms.

The image of the well-behaved, morally inclined schoolchild of the 19th century (Pukánszky, 2015), or the "*consumer child*" of the 20th century (Sulyokné, 2002), are examples of social constructions shaped by the societal, economic, and cultural conditions of their respective eras. In the digital age, new concepts such as "*online childhood*" or the "*digital child*" have emerged, driven by the proliferation of the internet and digital technologies (Golnhofer, 2022).

The Concept and Meaning of Child Well-being in Social Discourses

Interpreting childhood as a social construction also implies that notions of child well-being cannot be regarded as universal norms independent of time and culture. Child well-being is not merely a measurable psychological or medical condition; it is a category shaped at the intersection of societal values, educational ideals, and cultural expectations—one whose meaning is constantly evolving (James & Prout, 1997; Ben-Arieh, 2008). The dimensions that define well-being—such as autonomy, safety, learning, or emotional support—are interpreted differently across societies and change over time

in response to prevailing understandings of childhood and social policy directions (Fattore, Mason, & Watson, 2009). As such, the concept of well-being is itself a construct that reflects the societal representations of how children are perceived and treated.

In contemporary Western societies, the emphasis on child well-being is increasingly prominent in education, policy-making, and community-level initiatives. Such efforts are often underpinned by a holistic approach that focuses not only on children's physical health or academic achievement but also on psychological stability, emotional security, social relationships, and cultural identity. At the same time, it is observable that the notion of well-being is sometimes linked to economic productivity, future employability, or institutional expectations, highlighting once again that the concept of "*well-being*" is not free from ideological influence.

From a social constructionist perspective, child well-being is not merely about whether a child is "*doing well*" in a general sense, but also about the value systems that define what a "good life" means for a child. What image of childhood do we invoke when we claim a child is "*well*"? Do we associate well-being with quiet, rule-following behavior, academic progress, or the freedom for creative self-expression?

It is also worth examining how concepts of well-being differ across cultures and social strata. In some communities, the child's integration into social relationships and their sense of communal responsibility are seen as primary indicators of well-being, while in others, individual autonomy, self-assertion, and personal achievement are more highly valued. This diversity suggests that child well-being cannot be fully described through universal psychological or pedagogical indicators—its interpretation is inseparable from the social context in which the child grows up.

Such an understanding of child well-being offers new perspectives for examining educational practices. The key question is not only what tools can be used to promote well-being, but also what societal goals are served by the strategies employed in its name. Childhood—and with it, the concept of well-being—must be seen not only as a life stage that needs protection but also as a symbolic and institutionalized space in which society expresses its self-image and its vision for the future.

The Effects of Social Individualization on Childhood

When examining the historical transformations and functional shifts of the family institution, attention is often directed toward how children were prepared for specific familial, gender, and societal roles within a given cultural context at a particular time. Historical family models not only reveal typologies of childhood representations but also shed light on the types of influences children encountered within informal educational settings. In The History of Pedagogical Problems (Németh & Pukánszky, 2004), the chapter on the history of the European family and childhood provides a broad overview of the many factors shaping family-based childrearing practices, encompassing not only parental influence but the socializing role of the entire household.

From this historical overview, a clear trend emerges: throughout history, the family has gradually become more nuclear and isolated, a development that parallels broader processes of social individualization. Consequently, the child has increasingly had to

navigate both immediate and extended social contexts alone. What we now understand as "*childhood*" emerged alongside the rise of the bourgeois family. The process of bourgeoisification and individualization gave birth to a new maternal role and attitude toward childrearing. This transformation was supported by the era's child study movement, which laid the foundations for early childhood education principles—many of which remain influential and are still applied in contemporary families.

This new maternal role assumed exclusive responsibility for caregiving and early education. Mothers began to see childrearing as their primary duty, guided by contemporary scientific insights and emerging pedagogical knowledge. Drawing on the growing body of educational theory—often coinciding with the establishment of kindergartens, primary schools, and boarding institutions—mothers prepared their children for social integration (Danis & Kalmár, 2011).

"*One of the most significant anthropological developments of modernization was the increasing 'distance' between childhood and adulthood and the emergence of a distinct children's world.*" The reform pedagogical movements that emerged as a response to social individualization and the growing emphasis on the child as an individual provided an answer to these transformations within secondary socialization. These reform movements, which sought to renew pedagogical thinking and educational practice with a child-centered focus, began in the last decades of the 19th century and continued into the mid-20th century (Németh, 2002, p. 21).

Interestingly, the reform pedagogical approach has also come to influence the practices of primary socialization in response to the educational challenges of the 21st century. Within this process, the impact of the life reform movements can also be observed. We will return to this phenomenon later. First, however, it is necessary to examine the image of childhood in 21st-century Western culture.

The Effects of Social Individualization on Childhood

When examining the historical changes in the institution of the family and the transformation of its functions, the primary focus often falls on the child's role as a central figure in early socialization. This perspective helps illuminate how, at a given time and within a specific cultural context, children were prepared for certain familial, gender, and societal roles. Historical models of family not only reveal typologies of childhood images but also indicate the kinds of influences children were exposed to within informal educational settings. In The History of Pedagogical Problems (Németh & Pukánszky, 2004), the section on European family and childhood history explores the diverse factors of familial educational influences, including not only parental but also broader household socialization impacts.

The historical overview reveals a clear tendency: as the process of social individualization advances, the family becomes increasingly narrow and isolated, and children are expected to navigate both their immediate and broader socialization environments more independently. The modern understanding of childhood emerged alongside the development of the bourgeois family. The processes of bourgeoisification and individualization fostered a new maternal role and a novel attitude toward child-

rearing. This was reinforced by the era's burgeoning child-study movements, which laid the foundation for early childhood education theories. Many of these views continue to exert significant influence and are still actively applied in numerous families today.

This new maternal role entailed exclusive responsibility for the care and upbringing of the child, with early childhood education regarded as the mother's personal duty. Attitudes and methods related to child-rearing were shaped in accordance with contemporary scientific findings, and mothers used emerging pedagogical knowledge—or acted in its shadow (during the emergence of early kindergartens, primary schools, and boarding schools)—to prepare their children for integration into social life (Danis & Kalmár, 2011).

"*One of the most important anthropological developments of modernization was the increasing 'distance' between childhood and adulthood, and the separation of the world of children.*" The emergence of reform pedagogical movements within the context of secondary socialization provided a response to the rising prominence of the child as an individual and to the dynamics of social individualization. These reform efforts aimed "*to renew pedagogical thought and educational practice in a child-centered way and emerged from the last decades of the 19th century through to the mid-20th century*" (Németh, 2002, p. 21).

An interesting trend is that, in response to the child-rearing challenges of the 21st century, reform pedagogical principles are increasingly influencing the educational practices of primary socialization environments as well. Within this process, the impact of life-reform movements can also be observed. This phenomenon will be discussed in detail later, but first, it is important to review the 21st-century Western cultural conception of childhood.

The Image of Childhood in 21st-Century Western Culture

Alongside the fact that, since the 20th century, a significant improvement has taken place in the situation of children in modern, economically developed countries (e.g., children's rights, the extension of compulsory education, the expansion of higher education), by the end of the 20th century, attention was drawn to the problem of the "*hurried child*" in the context of the American middle class (Elkind, 2016). The concern over the disappearance of childhood and its merging with adulthood emerged as a result of children's increasing exposure to mass media, which brought to light the growing societal expectations placed upon them (Golhofner, 2022). The emergence of new media introduced an unprecedented system of expectations for modern societies. Adults also face enormous pressure—tasks that previously took weeks, months, or even years to complete are now expected to be done in far shorter periods. The requirement to multitask and the exponential increase in screen time have influenced how adult society perceives children and what is expected of them. In this context, it is also important to highlight that children are becoming increasingly autonomous in their cultural acquisition processes, which, in extreme cases, can become uncontrolled.

The topic of children's presence in online spaces is now repeated to the point of exhaustion, yet still often not taken seriously. While in the early 2000s in Hungary the use

of digital devices by young people was still relatively balanced—likely due to the technological limitations and restricted accessibility—by the 2010s, data revealed a notably high rate of internet addiction and problematic internet use among young people (Galán, 2014).

The 21st-century image of the child differs significantly from those of earlier centuries, as societal (e.g., individualization), technological, and cultural transformations have reshaped the concept of childhood. Children of the 21st century are "*digital natives*" (Prensky, 2001). Today's children grow up under the direct influence of the internet and digital technologies, which affect their communication, learning habits, and modes of entertainment.

Children increasingly appear as "*mini-consumers*," actively participating in consumer society, where consumption and branding play a major role in shaping their identity. This impact has become so significant that, due to the changing media environment, regulating marketing activities aimed at children became necessary in both nature and extent.

Children today may appear to gain a certain degree of independence at an early age, engaging in activities outside the reach of adult control (largely due to the online space), but this independence is often only superficial. Their decisions and opportunities are constrained by adults, societal structures, and the lack of economic independence.

Children's culture refers to the unique interests and cultural practices of children, but it is most often defined by content and products created by adults. In today's digital world, value transmission increasingly slips out of the hands of parents. The rise of influencers has introduced an unexpected shift in children's areas of interest. Previously predictable childhood activities and interests have been supplemented by domains that are foreign to many parents—domains where children explore and engage under the guidance of outsider "*experts*", typically influencers perceived as adult role models.

Children frequently face pressure to reach certain developmental milestones more quickly, which can cause stress and anxiety. This issue may affect the entirety of childhood, beginning with the acceleration of particularly sensitive early stages like infancy and toddlerhood, which can be especially harmful.

As a result of all this, the role of parents has changed, particularly in terms of attitudes toward child-rearing. There has been a strong shift away from the authoritarian parenting of earlier generations (sometimes swinging to its complete antithesis), and a growing effort to "*slow down*" childhood once again. This new approach to parenting centers around responsiveness and is often paired with the adaptation of reform pedagogical perspectives into family education practices (Holloway & Pimlott-Wilson, 2014). Responsive parenting based on secure attachment has become the flagship of child-centered informal education (Sears & Sears, 2001; Bowlby, 1988). Reform pedagogical approaches that emerged in formal educational settings are increasingly seeping into and shaping the educational practices within the primary socialization contexts of the Western middle class.

Reform pedagogies such as Waldorf, Montessori, and Freinet emerged around the turn of the 19th to 20th century and continue to influence educational practices. Their core principles include child- and personality-centered approaches, the use of alternative

(often creativity- and discovery-based) learning methods, and the support of children's freedom, autonomy, and dignity within a framework of democratic values. According to Jürgen Oelkers' (1989) critical perspective, the greatest achievement of these reform pedagogies is the formulation of a new image of the child. In this view, "*the essence of childhood is self-directed activity; child development follows a natural, autonomous teleology, whose optimal conditions are ensured through negative education, which protects the process from obstructive external factors*" (Németh, 2002: 25).

Contemporary family education in the 21st century complements this negative education with efforts to minimize children's exposure to digital devices. Where exposure is unavoidable, it seeks to filter content according to age-appropriate guidelines. From the Oelkersian perspective, such exposure can be considered an external factor that hinders natural developmental processes. The dominant child-rearing strategy within families today is built on responsiveness and the resulting secure attachment. Based on these foundations, this societal context adapts the child-centered vision and philosophy of reform pedagogies, complementing them with the practice of organic education. This is particularly influenced by the Scandinavian (Swedish, Finnish, Danish) branches of life reform movements, which integrate a close-to-nature orientation alongside the pedagogical principles mentioned above.

The Changing Image of Childhood in the Light of Cultural Practices

The image of the child is not merely a theoretical construct but a form of social engagement that takes shape within everyday cultural practices, institutional norms, and media representations. As societies transform, so too does their relationship with children—along with the child's role, legal status, and the image we construct of them as individuals or social beings.

In contemporary Western cultures, representations of children reflect both idealizing and functionalist tendencies. On the one hand, the child appears as a "*pure soul*", a symbol of naturalness and sincerity—an embodiment of values that the adult world nostalgically longs for. On the other hand, the child is often framed as the bearer of future societal hopes, whose development and success serve as guarantees for the reproduction of national economies, welfare systems, or even cultural identities. This duality—the idealized child and the child seen as an investment—is clearly visible in various cultural products, whether in educational campaigns, children's literature, television programs, or discourses around child-friendly urban planning.

Children's literature and visual culture play a particularly important role in shaping the image of childhood. Whereas children's books were once primarily didactic, today an increasing number of works explore the child's subjective world, social dilemmas, and emotional complexity. This trend not only transforms the content directed at children but also influences adults' perceptions of childhood. The child's voice, as presented in literature or contemporary theater—especially through themes such as social exclusion, domestic violence, or identity exploration—elicits new, reflexive relationships toward children.

Another significant field of cultural practice is museum education and the growing presence of community arts, where children are no longer passive recipients but active participants, creators, and opinion-shapers. Such initiatives implicitly emphasize the child as a value-bearing, thinking being and help ensure that children's voices are heard not only as subjects of pedagogy but also as active contributors in society.

At the same time, we must not ignore the fact that cultural practices can also contribute to the uniformization of the child image—particularly when dominant media content or educational policy discourses promote homogenized Western or highly nationalistic, middle-class norms. Representations of children circulating on digital platforms often portray the idealized, high-achieving, self-regulating, and aestheticized child as the desirable model, building on both neoliberal and individualist values. In this context, the image of the "*good child*" frequently becomes a projection of parental or institutional expectations, sidelining the unique needs and voices of children from different socialization backgrounds.

In light of all this, it can be said that cultural practices do more than reflect childhood— they actively shape it. The changing image of the child is not an isolated phenomenon but a sensitive indicator of broader societal transformations. It reflects the current state of adult society's self-reflection and, either directly or indirectly, influences how we understand child well-being.

The Teacher as a Well-being Agent: Mental Health and Institutional Culture

Beyond the development of children's knowledge and skills, the role of the teacher is also fundamental in promoting their mental well-being. In both the theoretical and practical approaches to child well-being, the teacher's own well-being and mindset are often overlooked—despite the fact that these two factors directly influence children's emotional, social, and intellectual development.

As a mental health agent, the teacher creates an environment in which children can feel safe, accepted, and motivated. The teacher is not only an educator but also an emotional support figure, whose behavior, attitude, and mental state deeply influence students' well-being and development. The teacher's personal well-being and psychological balance therefore indirectly determine the extent to which children feel valued, how they perceive their own abilities, and how motivated they are to engage in learning.

The teacher's mental health is closely linked to their working environment, which is shaped by the institutional culture. A well-functioning institutional culture—one that supports continuous professional development, collegial relationships, and a healthy work environment—is essential for ensuring teacher well-being. Workplace conditions that provide opportunities for professional support, training in stress management techniques, and collaboration all contribute to enabling teachers to perform effectively not only as sources of knowledge, but also as emotional and mental support systems.

Teachers' mental well-being is intrinsically connected to children's psychological and emotional development. A teacher who is equipped with effective stress management tools and inner balance to handle daily challenges positively influences students'

emotional safety and overall school experience. Conversely, a burned-out, overburdened teacher without appropriate mental health resources not only jeopardizes their own work but also risks undermining child well-being. Students can sense the stress and tension of their teachers, which can impact classroom atmosphere, learning outcomes, and their school experiences as a whole.

The teacher's perspective and pedagogical attitude are also crucial for child well-being. If a teacher adopts an approach that emphasizes children's individual needs, emotional safety, and social connections, it not only improves the quality of learning but also enhances children's psychological stability and overall well-being. Children learn not only the subject matter but also develop their social, emotional, and mental skills through their daily interactions with teachers, who serve as role models.

Therefore, teachers' mental health and mindset fundamentally shape the pedagogical environment in which children grow and learn. Emotional support, empathy, and a positive attitude not only improve academic outcomes but also contribute to the healthy personality development of children (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Supporting teacher well-being not only enhances their own quality of life but also has a powerful indirect effect on children's lives, helping them to function mentally and emotionally in society (Roffey, 2012). Interest in this topic has grown significantly in recent years; in Hungarian literature, for instance, Zsuzsa F. Várkonyi (e.g., Tanulom magam [Learning Myself], Sors és sérülés [Fate and Wounds]) explores the close connections between personal self-awareness, inner work, and pedagogical relationships (F. Várkonyi, 2013; 2017).

Summary

As outlined in this summary, contemporary challenges in child-rearing have prompted responses similar to those of the 19th and 20th centuries. While those earlier periods saw the rise of reform pedagogy within institutional education and life reform movements in response to industrial social changes, the 21st century has adapted elements of these approaches to the family setting—particularly those that aim to preserve the time and quality of childhood. In parallel, the concept of child well-being has also taken on new meaning: it is no longer understood solely in terms of physical health or academic achievement, but also encompasses emotional security, social relationships, self-expression, and the right of the child to be an active participant in their own educational environment. Today's well-being-oriented educational efforts therefore not only prioritize the child's happiness and psychological well-being, but also foster the development of emotionally intelligent, compassionate, and socially aware adults.

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Barbara Fazekas

AN AUDIBLE TESTAMENT TO PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE TRAGEDY

Abstract

The framework of this research is a fissure in time—June 2025—where wounds open in the air itself, and statistics cease to be numbers, becoming instead the fever charts of the collective soul. Within this ailing landscape, the analysis of Franz Liszt's Funérailles becomes a kind of surgical intervention. The objective, therefore, is to open the black body of the piano, to exhume the ontological testament concealed within it, for the hypothesis is a whisper from the deep: music is an unregulated space, a sanctuary from the laws of oblivion, where Chopin's final cough and the blood of the Arad martyrs circulate in a single shared bloodstream.

For this autopsy, instruments are indispensable. The scalpel is musical hermeneutics, by which the sonic body is dissected into its constituent layers. The spirits invoked—Hegel, Sartre, Camus, and Heidegger—haunt the interstices between the notes and offer their testimonies. The magnifying glass is historical context, which renders visible the erased traces of blood from 1849 on the manuscript paper. And what these instruments uncover is nothing less than a judgment. The result is this: Funérailles is not music but ritual—a performative retrial of History. Its triumphant central section is a radiant deception, hope a mayfly simulacrum annulled by the eternal law of mourning.

The work's hermeneutic indeterminacy thus becomes not its weakness, but its weapon— for through this it transforms into a universal tribunal. And herein lies the value of the research. Theoretically, it offers a new map for the anatomy of grief; practically, it reveals art as a counteragent—as an acoustic vaccine against collective amnesia, as proof that sonic beauty can grant jurisdiction even to that pain which the world would rather suppress.

Keywords: mourning; piano; philosophy

Introduction

On the horizon of June 2025, as the complex challenges of the present era unveil ever-newer dimensions of the vulnerability of human existence, a philosophical examination of Franz Liszt's elegiac piano composition, Funérailles, becomes indispensable. Within a national and European sphere where crisis phenomena profoundly affecting the deepest layers of the human psyche – including Hungary's lamentably prominent position in suicide statistics within the European Union (Rihmer & Gonda, 2013). These data poignantly attest to the burden of unprocessed individual and collective traumas, a pervasive sense of despondency, and communal experiences of loss. In this context, the artistic and philosophical contemplation of grief, tragedy, heroism, and temporality emerges as an urgent imperative for societal self-awareness, the critical re-evaluation of cultural memory, and the quest for solace. This context compels the interrogation of how

a work of art might address the most poignant wounds of our time and what pathways it might offer towards understanding in an epoch grappling with the experiences of meaninglessness and alienation. It is in light of these pressing questions that penetrating the deeper layers of Liszt's oeuvre becomes acutely relevant, where the dramas of personal and national destiny confront us with philosophical dilemmas of universal importance.

The present investigation therefore attempts to uncover, within the layers of this dense, enigmatic composition by Franz Liszt, those philosophical and musico-aesthetic mechanisms that elevate Funérailles beyond the category of mere funeral music, transforming it into an existential-ontological pronouncement. Beyond the documentary significance of the work's genesis – the Hungarian tragedy of 1848-49 and the death of Chopin – the central focus is the process whereby the composer, in the wake of these events, poses questions of universal validity concerning loss, the ethics of remembrance, the tragic nature of heroism, and the burden of existence in time. The analysis is structured around the premise that the musical language of Funérailles itself becomes a philosophical gesture: an unregulated space wherein ineffable sorrow, the suppressed narratives of history, and the uncodified rituals of mourning are given voice, thereby bypassing the potential constraints of official discourses and the cultural regulators of forgetting. To this end, the investigation concentrates on those pivotal concepts that delineate the interpretative framework of the work, and along which Liszt's musical testament initiates a dialogue with humanity that remains profoundly resonant to this day.

More about the audible testament

The conceptual quartet of grief, tragedy, heroism, and time encapsulates fundamental experiences of human existence, interweaving intellectual trajectories from Hegelian philosophy of history, through Kierkegaard's existential dilemmas, to Ricœur's theory of narrative identity (Ricœur, 1985). These concepts constitute points of condensation within the human condition, where the imperative to process loss, the drama of fate, the pathos of value-based conviction, and the consciousness of irreversible transiency coalesce into a single, complex phenomenological field. The triad of funeral, farewell, and rite, inherent in the title Funérailles, inherently opens an interpretative space that invites an acoustic exploration of these philosophical dimensions.

Here, grief cannot be reduced to a mere psychological reaction; its philosophical horizon can also be understood as a negative ontology, wherein the absence of the departed Other possesses constitutive force, reconfiguring the relational system of the world and the self (Derrida, 2003). Tragedy, transcending the commonplace narrative of suffering, enables the representation of irreconcilable value conflicts, the Hegelian struggle of 'world spirits' (Hegel, 1988), or indeed, the Camusian absurd within the musical sphere. Heroism, in this context, signifies defiant confrontation with tragic destiny, a moral fortitude upheld despite loss, the gesture of Kierkegaard's 'knight of faith' manifesting on the stage of history (Samson, 1992). The all-pervading dimension of time, in the case of Funérailles, is ritual time, the time of remembrance, which interrupts the

linearity of profane time and performatively inserts the past into the present, thereby creating the possibility for processing and transcendence.

The work was composed in October 1849, amidst the atmosphere of mourning and retribution following the collapse of the Hungarian War of Independence. In this historical vacuum, where open political expression was impossible and national mourning confined to private or artistic forms, Funérailles became one of the most harrowing documents of musical memory politics. Its implicit program, though not articulated by Liszt, is closely linked to the execution of Prime Minister Count Lajos Batthyány and the tragedy of the thirteen Martyrs of Arad (Hamburger, 2010). Alongside these events, the death of Frédéric Chopin in the same month wove a personal layer of grief into the collective trauma.

The musical language functions as an uncodified ritual of mourning, where the piano's monumental sonic capabilities evoke the profound depth of national cataclysm and the pathos of heroic struggle. Its dark, ominous tonality, dotted rhythms reminiscent of funeral marches, the weighty chords in the profound registers of the left hand, and the heroic-elegiac, march-like theme of the middle section collectively forge a musical narrative that embodies the duality of despondency and defiant remembrance. Its structure—an introductory funeral march, a middle section akin to a heroic apotheosis, followed by the return of an overwhelming grief—symbolically traces the arc of revolutionary hopes and their tragic denouement.

This musical process also engenders interpretive legal uncertainty. Despite the absence of explicit references, the historical allusions were likely palpable to contemporary audiences. For later generations, however, the work may acquire a more universal significance, interpretable as a broader symbol of the struggle against oppression and of generalized mourning, a notion supported by the contexts of its performance, which frequently occur in connection with memorial events.

The piece's central section, conceived as a heroic march reverberating in octaves, holds particular significance. It stands as a musical monument to fallen heroes, providing moral vindication within the realm of sound where political reality denied it. Alan Walker, too, posits that in these segments of the work, Liszt's musical rhetoric ascends to its zenith, expanding the piano almost into a symphonic apparatus (Walker, 1989). The music here operates as an unregulated historical testimony, offering an alternative form of remembrance that counters narratives silenced or distorted by official historiography and censorship.

Its formal structure and musical rhetoric, in my view, delineate a narrative arc that guides the listener from mourning through heroic struggle to a tragic conclusion. The opening, a solemn and dignified funeral march (Introduzione: Adagio), immediately establishes the atmosphere of a memorial service through its dotted rhythms and somber harmonic language. Subsequently, the octaves resounding in the left hand's deep registers, imitating the tolling of bells (alluding to Lacrymosa or the bell motif), further intensify the grim sense of grief, serving as an acoustic memento. These elements articulate the ritualistic act of loss and remembrance, transforming the musical material into a performative act of mourning.

The central section of the work, marked Lagrimoso, gradually shifts into a more passionate, struggle-laden character. Militant, march-like motifs and fanfares reminiscent of trumpet calls, coupled with escalating dynamics, prepare for the emotional climax. This culminates in a heroic outburst: a triumphant theme rich in octaves and chords in A-flat major or C major, demanding extraordinary technical and expressive power (Hamilton, 1996). These keys can be read as musical metaphors for hope, resistance, and the evocation of a glorious past.

Figure 1: *Quelle: Franz Liszt: Funérailles*

Source: Neue Liszt-Ausgabe, Serie I, Band 9. Mező, I. & Sulyok, I. (Eds). (1981).
Editio Musica.

In light of Susanne Langer's aesthetics, the music here realizes a metaphorical reenactment of the dynamic forms of conceptual structures, such as struggle or heroism. The music does not directly depict these concepts but rather articulates their internal logic and emotional arc (Langer, 1996).

Following the heroic climax, the musical material gradually reverts to its initial mournful character, with the triumphant theme fragmentarily and brokenly recalled, signaling the tragic outcome of the struggle. The conclusion features the deep, resonant tolling of bells and a dark-toned recapitulation of the funeral march's material, providing a cathartic, albeit bleak, resolution.

The opening measures, in my view, embody universal musical codes of collective mourning, rooted in Western tradition and in more archaic layers of the human psyche. The dark-toned chords that begin the piece, moving in deep registers and reminiscent of bell tolls, combined with the Adagio tempo indication, collectively create a sonic space that almost immediately evokes associations with grief, solemnity, and final farewell. These musical gestures—the slow, heavy steps; the descending melodic lines; the preference for minor keys; the pain-expressing use of dissonances—appear as intercultural musical archetypes, capturing universal aspects of the experience of mourning. Leonard B. Meyer's argumentation also suggests that certain musical structures can elicit emotional responses by embodying patterns rooted in human experience e.g., the dynamics of tension and release (Meyer, 1961).

The introductory bell-like effects are particularly potent symbols. The sound of bells, in numerous cultures, signifies death, transience, remembrance, and the transition into a

sacred space. The profound depth of these associations raises the relevance of Carl Gustav Jung's theories on the collective unconscious and archetypes in understanding musical experience. According to Jung, archetypes are inherited, universal patterns and images residing in the collective unconscious, finding expression in myths, dreams, and artistic creations (Jung, 2024). Within this interpretive framework, the musical elements at the beginning of Funérailles, such as the somber tolling bells or the weighty rhythm of the funeral march, can activate ancient, collective experiences related to loss and death in the listener, functioning as acoustic archetypes.

These musical codes constitute an unregulated, consensually established semiotic system for the expression of mourningits temporal (Loya, 2011). There are no explicit laws or codified regulations dictating the musical means by which grief should be portrayed; yet, the use of these elements elicits an almost instinctive recognition and emotional resonance from a culturally conditioned listener. In the case of Funérailles, Liszt embeds these universally understandable codes within a specific historical context—the suppression of the 1848-49 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence—thereby creating a unique expression of collective mourning pertaining to a national tragedy.

The jurisprudential uncertainty of the musical symbols—that is, to precisely which event or person they refer—paradoxically enhances the work's universality, enabling listeners to project their own experiences of loss onto the piece. Thus, the music exercises transcendent jurisdiction over emotions, addressing deeper and more archaic layers than verbal discourse or formal regulatory systems could achieve. Raymond Monelle, in his work on musical topoi such as the passus duriusculus or the funeral march, similarly illuminates the role of these conventional, yet powerfully meaningful musical formulas in musical communication (Monelle, 2006). Liszt employs and transforms these topoi in Funérailles, crafting a poignant musical tableau of collective grief.

The work stands as a poignant example of the musical synthesis of individual sorrow and collective historical tragedy, where personal destiny and national cataclysm are inextricably intertwined. The piano, Liszt's most personal instrument, speaks with a pianist's voice, revealing the intimate spaces of individual grief and internal struggle. Its more lyrical, sorrowful episodes, the tear-filled sections marked Lagrimoso, and the softer, more fragmented gestures create the impression of a personal lament, in which the composer's subjective emotions find their sonic expression. In my view, the coincidence of Frédéric Chopin's death with the work's period of creation further strengthens this layer of personal mourning, where the pain over the loss of a friend resonates with the larger, national tragedy (Walker, 1989).

Parallel to and permeating this personal anguish, the musical codes of historical tragedy emerge. The militant, march-like motifs, fanfare-like signals, and the heroic outburst in the central section unequivocally depict the revolutionary thematic elements of the Hungarian War of Independence: the struggle, the hope, and subsequently, the defeat. These elements represent the collective experience and the nation's turning point, serving as a musical monument to communal mourning and the bitterness over a lost cause. This layer of the piece articulates the public, historical dimension, supporting the

thesis that the impact of historical events is deeply ingrained in individual destiny, inseparable from it. Charles Rosen also points out that Romantic music often sought to connect personal emotions with grand-scale, even historical, narratives, and Liszt was one of its preeminent masters (Rosen, 1998). In the musical fabric of the work, the boundaries between individual and collective tragedy blur, forming a jurisdictional overlap where personal and historical destinies interpret and reinforce each other. The pianist's lament gains deeper meaning within the context of the nation's mourning, while the historical tragedy becomes tangible and emotionally graspable through the prism of personal experience. The work's structural organization also reflects this interplay, with intimate, introspective moments alternating with monumental sections radiating communal pathos.

Consequently, the composition navigates an unregulated musical space where emotions and historical reflections can freely flow into one another, avoiding rigid formal or narrative codification. Funérailles thus immortalizes the experience that major historical upheavals inevitably shape individual destinies, and individual suffering becomes part of the collective trauma, its unique manifestation. In such works, the compositional subject effectively forms a litigious community with national destiny, where the individual voice becomes the bearer of the legal continuity of collective memory.

The central section of the piece can be described as a dramatic representation of heroic resistance and burgeoning hope, yet within the overall tragic context of the composition, it is unmasked as an illusory intermezzo, a simulacrum of hope. The sudden emergence of this section's powerful character—with the thundering octaves in the left hand, the expansive, fanfare-like melodies unfolding with broad gestures, and the monumental torrents of sound (in A-flat major or C major, featuring heroic, trumpet-like motifs)— evokes the final, desperate gesture of suppressed forces, a musical manifestation of defiance.

Here, the musical material seems to portray the glory of the past or a momentary triumph of the struggle, attempting a musical coup d'état against the prevailing atmosphere of mourning.

The musical narrative of Funérailles, however, does not elevate this heroic episode to the level of ultimate redemption or triumph; rather, hope here assumes a tragic character. Following the elemental outburst of the middle section, the music gradually recedes into the somber world of the opening funeral march. The heroic theme fragments, loses its power, and the dark harmonies of the funeral procession, along with the relentless tolling of bells, reaffirm the dominance of tragedy and transience. This structural organization— the dramatic arc of mourning → heroic episode → returning mourning—supports the interpretation that heroism, within the work's universe, is not a redemptive event, but merely a transient, albeit uplifting, moment overshadowed by ultimate demise.

Hope here emerges as a simulacrum: it evokes the possibility of victory yet remains ephemeral. Within the overarching legal order of the work, it cannot achieve lasting validity. Heroism is commemorated as a moral gesture, but its inadequacy in reversing historical calamity is painfully exposed. Jim Samson's analyses also address the

expressive and structural complexity underlying romantic virtuosity and heroic gestures in Liszt's works, which here manifests in the portrayal of hope's illusory nature (Samson, 2007). The hope-simulacrum of Funérailles's middle section thus constitutes a peculiar musical imprint of 19th-century historical pessimism and Romantic irony, where the value of the heroic act stands on its own, independent of its ultimate, tragic outcome. The music here offers a retrial against the fact of historical defeat; however, the acquittal is withheld, and the jurisdiction of grief proves unshakable.

Its temporal unfolding creates a deeply structured narrative time, whose phases—the somber beginning, the heroic outburst, the painful retreat, and the final silencing—resonate with philosophical concepts of existential time experience heremenet (Kramer, 2003). This musical process transcends mere chronological succession; it forms a meaningful 'temporal fabric' that, in light of Martin Heidegger's or Paul Ricœur's understanding of time, can be interpreted as an ontological experience. While the work depicts events in time, time itself becomes the carrier and shaper of meaning within it. The musical 'temporal fabric' of Funérailles becomes an ontological experience by articulating fundamental temporal dimensions of human existence: remembrance, anticipation, presentness, and confrontation with loss.

In Being and Time, Heidegger describes temporality (Zeitlichkeit) as the fundamental characteristic of human Dasein, not as objective, clock-measured time, but rather as the unified, ecstatic structure of being: the unity of orientation towards the future, thrownness (Geworfenheit) into the past, and active manifestation in the present (Heidegger, 2006).

The musical treatment of time in Funérailles evokes this Heideggerian concept by continuously presenting the weight of past tragedy (the suppression of the revolution, the death of heroes) within the musical now. This presence shapes the piece's progression and the course of processing grief. The heroic central section, a recollection of past glory and resistance, is embedded in the present pain, projecting the musical process towards future silencing and a tragic conclusion. The music here synthesizes the complex temporal experience of remembrance, present-day experience, and future fulfillment (or its absence).

Paul Ricœur, in his work Temps et Récit, emphasizes the role of narrative in structuring human temporal experience. He argues that through narrative, a mere chronological succession of events (episodic time) is configured into a meaningful story (narrative time) with a beginning, middle, and end (Ricœur, 1985).

In this sense, Funérailles functions as an instrumental narrative that organizes the chaotic experience of collective and individual trauma into a musically formed, emotionally and symbolically coherent temporal structure. The piece's plot—the introduction of mourning, the flash of heroic resistance, the fading of hope, and the ultimate resignation—constitutes an internal, lived time for the listener, where the relationships between musical events create meaning. Lawrence Kramer's writings similarly analyze how music can convey complex cultural and psychological meanings through narrative structures, treating temporality as a key element in this meaning-making process (Kramer, 1993).

The mere sound ascends to a philosophical manifesto; the radical treatment of the musical material engages in dialogue with fundamental questions of human destiny. The sharp, finely honed dissonances interwoven throughout the work transcend the mere mechanism of tension creation, instead proclaiming the inherent disharmony of existence, the acoustic embodiment of Sartrean existential anguish (Sartre, 1990). The incisive character of the sonorities and the consistent eschew of consonances map an acoustic landscape of a bleak worldview, promising resolution only sparingly, if at all. The frequent fragmentation of the harmonic fabric, the erosion or ambivalence of traditional progressions, foreshadows a state of being devoid of a transcendent organizing principle, where the illusion of resolution crumbles into dust.

The persistent deferral of cadences and the unwavering turning away from the repose of tonic centers during the formal development become a musical emblem of the Camusian absurd (Camus, 1973). This musical narrative approach, which rejects definitive conclusions, closely aligns with the existentialist realization that the human life path is not a solvable endeavor, but rather a ceaseless experience interwoven with pain and struggle. This realization unfolds in the score of Funérailles, echoing its genesis in Liszt's response of mourning to the suppression of the 1848-49 Hungarian War of Independence and its martyrs (Walker, 1989). The ominous, bell-tolling bass lines and the dramatic alternations between heroic struggle and subsequent numb despair are the acoustic stigmata of this compulsion to process; from the deepest layers of sound emanates the drama of a bleak confrontation with finite and often tragic humanity. In this manner, the musical gestures transmute into a veritable ontological creed, in which the notes carry the leaden weight of existence and the resigned knowledge of the unattainability of resolution.

The category of mourning in this work extends far beyond the mere concept of an emotional response to loss; it transforms into a performative act, a deliberate resistance against the imperative of oblivion. The work of remembrance encoded within the musical fabric (Assmann, 2013) constitutes a heroic gesture, created in defiance of the obfuscation of historical trauma—the downfall of the 1848-49 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence. The monumental scale of the composition and the weighty, somber pathos of its funeral march elements inherently elevate the piece into an acoustic monument, articulating the processing of collective trauma and a tribute to the victims (Walker, 1989). Within this interpretive framework, the militant, march-like central section of Funérailles, featuring the renowned octave passages, functions not only as a recollection of past struggle but also as a perpetuation of suppressed ideals and the spirit of resistance. At this juncture, the musical narrative portrays mourning as active defiance: the fact of loss does not act as a debilitating force but rather becomes a source of moral integrity and the obligation to remember.

The work can thus also be read as a hidden political statement, where musical forms and dramatic climaxes are metaphorical expressions of an oppressed nation's tragedy and its unextinguished will to live. The sonic violence, dissonances, and unexpected modulations reflect an internal struggle that, instead of passively accepting grief, opts for its active experience, using memory as a weapon. The composition, through the aesthetics

of mourning, thereby formulates an ethical imperative: resistance to the allure of forgetting and the preservation of lessons embedded in historical allegories (Connerton, 1989).

The musical idiom of Funérailles supports the thesis that within historical consciousness, the threads of individual grief and collective tragedy are inextricably interwoven. Liszt's treatment of the piano capitalizes on the instrument's inherent duality: the piano is simultaneously the mediator of the most intimate personal anguish—the subjective confession of a pianist's voice—and an acoustic entity capable of evoking an almost orchestral apparatus to render the overwhelming drama of national cataclysm. In the sighs of the Lagrimoso and the more transparent textures reflecting personal sorrow over Chopin's loss, the lyrical manifestations of individual grief emerge. Concurrently, and permeating this, the somber procession of the funeral march, the ominous tolling of bells, and the march-like, fanfare gestures of heroic struggle elevate the work into the sphere of collective memory, where the tragedy of the 1848-49 events resonates.

The musical structure's continuous oscillation between these two registers—the private and the public—the interplay of personal lament and historical tableau, and the musical unmasking of the heroic outburst's illusory nature (as the triumphant fanfares brokenly recede into the dark tones of mourning) all reinforce that individual destiny inevitably shares in the community's fate during historical storms.

Thus, Funérailles transforms into an acoustic monument of historical memory, where the individual tear and the tide of collective tragedy appear as a single, stirring musical process, indelibly imprinting this indivisible duality of human existence into the consciousness of posterity.

The foregoing analysis illuminates how Liszt's Funérailles transcends into a universally resonant meditation on the tragedy of human existence, the arduous process of confronting loss, the fallibility of heroism, and the creative yet burdensome power of memory. A meticulous examination of its musical toolkit has revealed how the language of sound can articulate philosophical depths and existential experiences.

Summation

The work thus embodies art's transcendent capacity to provide a dignified, profound space for confronting the most painful truths, for voicing the unspeakable, and for engaging in an essential, if not always redemptive, dialogue with historical wounds. Consequently, the piece is not a monument gazing into the past, but rather an everlasting musical testament addressing the present, probing the depths of the soul. Within the uncodified domain of grief and before the tribunal of history, it asserts the unassailable right to remembrance and dignity, demonstrating that art can give voice and jurisdiction even to pains and truths that history seeks to suppress.

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NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL AGE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF HOW DIGITAL PARENTING IS STUDIED AND CONCEPTUALISED

Abstract

In an era increasingly shaped by digital technologies, understanding how parents navigate their roles in digitally mediated environments has become a critical area of inquiry (Benedetto et al., 2020; Modecki et al., 2022) Digital parenting, as a multidimensional construct influenced by technological, educational, and socio-cultural factors, has garnered growing scholarly attention (Livingstone et al., 2015; Mascheroni et al., 2018). This study aims to systematically examine how digital parenting is conceptualized in recent academic literature (2020–2024) and to map the methodological approaches that characterize this emerging field.

To address these aims, a systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The literature search was performed using the Web of Science database, resulting in the selection of 19 studies that were subjected to full-text analysis. Content analysis, supported by AI-assisted coding tools (Edwards et al., 2020) was employed to identify patterns in conceptual frameworks and methodological practices.

Findings reveal that digital parenting is a complex, context-sensitive practice that requires adaptive approaches, shaped by individual, relational, and cultural factors and informed by diverse methodological perspectives.

Theoretically, the study deepens the understanding of digital parenting by emphasizing relational dynamics and socio-cultural influences as core components of its conceptualization. Practically, the findings highlight the need for educational programs that enhance digital literacy, emotional attunement, and adaptive mediation among parents.

Keywords: digital parenting; systematic review; digital mediation

Intoduction

Digital transformation has profoundly reshaped our everyday life, extending its influence beyond public domains into personal and family spheres. For minors, the digital environment significantly shapes both their home life and educational experiences (Smahel et al., 2025). Notably, this is not an entirely new phenomenon—earlier technological innovations such as radio and television also sparked societal and educational debates (Ranschburg, 2006) similar to those surrounding today's internet, smart devices, andartificial intelligence(AI)-based tools (Kárpáti, 2013). Each emerging medium has promised social and educational benefits, while simultaneously raising parental concerns about children's exposure to inappropriate or harmful content (Wartella & Jennings, 2000). Although such concerns are longstanding, the rapid proliferation of digital technologies has intensified anxieties about their impact on

educational and learning processes (Modecki et al., 2022). For instance, prior research has linked excessive screen time to a range of negative outcomes, including lower academic performance, impaired cognitive development, and increased risks of obesity, addiction, and sleep disturbances (e.g., Wolf et al., 2018).

In this context, parental involvement plays a vital role in guiding and protecting minors as they navigate the digital landscape (Banić & Orehovački, 2024). The traditional role of parents is thus supplemented with responsibilities that emerge within digital spaces. Hence, digital education is a complex and evolving concept, encompassing both the mediation of digital media and the development of new, digitally-informed parenting practices (Mascheroni et al., 2018).

Given this shifting landscape, there is a growing need to better understand how digital parenting is conceptualized and how it is empirically studied across diverse contexts. Hence, this study contributes to that understanding by offering a systematic overview of recent scholarly approaches to digital parenting—both theoretical and methodological— providing timely insights to guide future studies and applications in today's digital landscape.

Theoretical background

The evolving role of digital parenting and educational challenges in the digital learning environment

Building on the profound transformations described earlier, the increasing complexity of the digital media environment—impacting both adults and minors—combined with the early adoption of digital technologies by young users, presents significant educational challenges for parents (Nikken & de Haan, 2015). Children often acquire digital competencies intuitively, frequently initiating shared digital experiences and even guiding their parents in using technology (Benedetto et al., 2020). This dynamic, known as reverse socialization, introduces both challenges and opportunities for parenting in the digital age (Grossbart et al., 2022).

Parental mediation approaches vary widely. While some studies assume a clear separation between the online lives of parents and minors (Choy et al., 2024), others highlight more integrated digital experiences, especially when parents and younger family members engage collaboratively in digital play (King et al., 2025). In such cases, mediation extends beyond mere restriction and support, encompassing active cooperation and co-engagement (Nichols & Selim, 2022). Importantly, households remain a foundational context for development, with prior research emphasizing its critical role in shaping both safe and risky online behaviours among minors (Terras & Ramsay, 2016).

Given these dynamics, digital parenting should be recognized not merely as a technological issue but as an essential dimension of supporting learning at home (Dennen et al., 2020). Parents' digital competence and mediation strategies—whether active, restrictive, or technical—directly shape minors' learning environments and influence their study motivation (Jing et al., 2025). In this expanded role, digital parenting extends

beyond traditional educational responsibilities to actively shaping and facilitating digital learning contexts (Choy et al., 2024).

Providing adequate parental support alongside informal learning is particularly crucial during the early stages of formal education. Hence, parental digital skills appear to be especially influential at this stage, with research suggesting that children in the early years of primary school engaged online when their caregivers demonstrate confidence and awareness in digital contexts (Pons-Salvador et al., 2022). Relatedly, online parenting interventions have demonstrated high effectiveness in enhancing parenting skills related to digital mediation, particularly for parents of young children. These programs offer considerable benefits in terms of time and resource efficiency, utilize visual information transfer techniques, and deliver practical support to parents navigating digital environments (Novianti et al., 2023). Altogether, digital parenting is not only shaped by technological access or parental attitudes, but also deeply embedded in broader educational and developmental processes—where parental digital competence plays a pivotal role in fostering safe, meaningful, and supportive online experiences for children (Christakis & Hale, 2025; Livingstone et al., 2015; Mascheroni et al., 2018).

Social and cultural factors influencing digital parenting

Building on the foundational role of parental mediation, existing literature emphasizes the substantial impact of cultural norms and socioeconomic conditions on how parents navigate and support their children's digital lives (Choy et al., 2024; Modecki et al., 2022). Research has increasingly called for parenting strategies that are culturally sensitive and responsive to diverse social realities, recognizing that digital mediation practices do not operate in a vacuum but are embedded within specific cultural and economic contexts (Livingstone et al., 2015; Smahel et al., 2025).

Parental approaches to digital engagement thus vary considerably across different societal structures, shaped by a complex interplay of values, resources, and expectations (Choy et al., 2024; Modecki et al., 2022; Smahel et al., 2020). While much of the existing scholarship has focused on European contexts (Livingstone et al., 2015), more recent contributions from Arabic-language research underscore a growing awareness of parents' pivotal role in digital education across other cultural landscapes as well (Saber' & Al-Shafey, 2024).

These findings collectively suggest that digital parenting must be understood through a broader lens—one that considers how cultural background and socioeconomic status influence both parenting practices and children's digital learning environments. Such contextual factors not only shape the forms of mediation parents adopt but also affect the development of digital competencies in children, as parenting values and resources often determine the extent and quality of young people's digital experiences (Lafton et al., 2024).

Relevance of the research

Research foci

The preceding literature review highlights the complexity of digital parenting, emphasizing its multifaceted role in mediating minors' interactions with digital technologies and shaping digital learning environments (Christakis & Hale, 2025; Livingstone et al., 2020; Mascheroni et al., 2018; Turner, 2020). Despite growing scholarly attention, there remains a need to clarify how digital parenting is understood shaping this emerging field. This study thus aims to systematically explore how *digital parenting* is conceptualised and framed in recent scholarly literature. It seeks to identify the key dimensions, perspectives through which digital parenthood is understood.

In parallel, the study seeks to examine the current methodological landscape of digital parenting research. It investigates dominant research designs, commonly used data collection methods, and the demographic groups most frequently represented in empirical studies published between 2020 and 2024. Building on key foundational reviews, this analysis aims to provide a concise yet updated overview of methodological trends in digital parenting research. Previously, Modecki et al. (2022) mapped the field by identifying a predominance of quantitative studies, alongside an increase in qualitative and mixed-method approaches. Other scholars have similarly emphasized methodological diversity, whether in evaluating the effectiveness of parental support programs (Novianti et al., 2023) or exploring parental mediation and involvement from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Nichols & Selim, 2022). Together, these studies reflect the field's evolving methodological landscape.

Emphasizing this dual focus, the overarching aim of the study is to enhance one's understanding of digital parenting through the integration of conceptual frameworks with empirical research methodologies. This comprehensive examination not only advances theoretical insights but also informs the design of future studies in the field. Through this combined focus on both conceptual and methodological dimensions, the review offers a thorough overview of current academic engagement with digital parenting.

Building on this comprehensive overview, the study addresses the following research questions:

1) How is digital parenting conceptualized and framed across the selected studies?

2) What characterizes the research landscape of the selected studies?
   2.1   Which methodological approaches are most commonly employed?
   2.2   What are the defining features of the selected quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods digital parenting research in terms of study design, data sources, and participant characteristics?

Applied research method

A systematic review was considered the most suitable approach for this study, as it aims to critically analyse existing literature on the conceptualization of digital parenting and the emerging methodologies used to study it.

To find relevant articles in the chosen databases, the researchers used the search terms:

"Digital Parenting" OR "Online Parenting" OR "Cyber Parenting" OR "E-Parenting" OR "Digital Age Parenting" OR "Internet Parenting" OR "Virtual Parenting" OR "Parental Digital Guidance" OR "Digital Literacy for Parents" OR "Media Literacy for Parents"

This specific combination was selected because it helped to make the search clear and focused (as supported by Benedetto et al., 2020 and Modecki et al., 2022.). The process of screening articles and deciding which ones to include followed the PRISMA 2020 guidelines for systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021), particularly focusing on database and registry searches (as shown in Figure 1).

For this study, the researchers utilized Web of Science as their primary database. It was chosen due to its broad indexing of academic publications and their capacity to identify reputable, peer-reviewed research across various disciplines, including but not limited to education (e.g. Szabó et al, 2020). Their comprehensive coverage ensures the inclusion of high-quality scholarly work relevant to the research topic.

The initial identification phase yielded 451 records through a search of the Web of Science database. Following this, 142 records remained after an initial assessment, as 309 publications were removed before the formal screening process began. These pre-screening exclusions were based on several criteria: not being published between 2020 and 2024 (n=174), not being classified as Open Science (n=111), not being an article (n=19), and not being in English (n=5).

The remaining 142 records then underwent a more detailed screening process, where titles and abstracts were reviewed for relevance. This stage resulted in the exclusion of a significant number of records (n=118) due to a lack of content relevance to the research question.

Subsequently, 24 records progressed to the stage of full-text review. From these, a further 5 records were excluded after examining the complete text. The reasons for these exclusions were that two were not empirical research, and the full text of three articles was not available in English (two were in Turkish and one in Malay).

Ultimately, after rigorous screening phases, 19 records met the inclusion criteria, were selected for full-text review and were subsequently included in the final qualitative synthesis of the study. This systematic and multi-stage screening process ensured that only the most relevant and appropriate articles were included in the final analysis.

Figure 1. Identification and selection of studies

Identification of studies via databases and registers

Identification

Records identified through database:
Web of Science- (n=451)

Removed publications before screaming
Reason 1: Not published between 2020–2024: n=174
Reason 2: Not open science: n=111
Reason 3: Not an article: n=19
Reason 4: Not in English: n=5

Screening

Records identified through database searching screened by title and abstract (n =142)

Excluded records due to lack of content relevance: (n=118)

Full text articles assessed for eligibility (n =24)

Records excluded:
Reason 1: not empirical: n=2
Reason 2: Full text article not available in English n=3 (2 Turkish, 1 Malay)

Number of records selected for full-text review n = 19

Included

Studies included in qualitative synthesis n = 19

Source: Author's own data, adapted from PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021)

Synthesis of Results

To synthesize the findings, we conducted content analysis (Dinçer, 2018) to identify and organize recurring patterns within the selected studies. The analysis proceeded in two key stages. First, we categorized the articles based on how they conceptualized digital parenting, highlighting the various themes, definitions, and frameworks employed. This allowed us to distinguish differing perspectives and theoretical orientations across the literature. In the second stage, we examined the methodological landscape of the studies, focusing on the research designs, data collection methods, and target populations. This two-step process enabled a comprehensive understanding of both the conceptual and empirical dimensions of digital parenting research.

In addition to manual coding, we integrated AI-assisted content analysis (Davison et al., 2024; Hamilton et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2024) to support and enhance our synthesis. Specifically, we employed generative AI tools, including Microsoft Copilot, to identify conceptual similarities across the dataset. To guide the AI's output, we used structured prompting strategy inspired by task-oriented prompt engineering approaches, where prompts were designed to articulate logical connections or thematic progressions across studies (cf. Wang et al, 2024) based on our research foci. This layered prompting approach enabled the AI to produce more coherent and analytically useful summaries. These AI-generated outputs served as a preliminary layer of abstraction, which was then critically reviewed and refined by two of the authors to ensure interpretative accuracy and conceptual coherence. Importantly, the final categorizations reflect human judgment, grounded in scholarly review, while benefiting from the efficiency and breadth afforded by AI augmentation.

Results

Conceptualisation of digital parenting among the selected studies

The concept of *digital parenting* has been explored extensively in recent literature, with various studies offering different perspectives on its definition and implementation. This subchapter aims to categorize digital parenting into four main conceptual groupings based on the analysis of 19 articles (see Appendix 1).

Firstly, digital parenting conceptualized through the lens of competence and awareness highlights the significance of digital literacy, technological proficiency, and risk awareness. Studies by Aydoğdu et al. (2024), Durualp et al. (2023), Fidan and Olur (2023), Öztürk and Şahin Sarıtaş (2023), Tosun and Mihci (2020), Kumas and Yildirim (2024), and Edwards et al. (2020) define digital parenting as a set of skills and knowledge that enable parents to guide, protect, and model behaviour for their children in digital environments. These studies highlight the need for parents to possess digital literacy, risk awareness, and role modelling capabilities.

Secondly, the findings highlight that parenting approaches in digital contexts encompass distinct parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—as well as various mediation strategies, such as active, restrictive, and technical mediation. Studies by Aziz et al. (2022), Chemnad et al. (2023), Isikoglu et al. (2023), Jeffery (2024), Zhao et al. (2023), and Pratiwi et al. (2022) conceptualize digital parenting through the lens of behavioural regulation, communication, and interaction patterns between parents and children. These studies explore conflict, autonomy, and mediation effectiveness.

Thirdly, in conceptualising digital parenting, the findings underscore the value of educational and developmental support, particularly through educational guidance, training programs, and developmental initiatives aimed at enhancing parents' digital competencies. Studies by Mameli et al. (2025), Ramirez-Garcia and Aguaded-Gomez (2020), and Ponte et al. (2021) frame digital parenting as a developmental and educational responsibility. They emphasize the importance of structured training, self-determination theory, and preventive interventions to support both parents and children.

Lastly, the findings emphasize that conceptualizations of digital parenting are shaped by contextual and cultural influences, including cultural norms, socioeconomic conditions, and broader environmental factors that impact parenting practices in digital settings. Studies by Grane et al. (2023), Reginasari et al. (2021), and Türen and Bağçeli Kahraman (2024) explore how beliefs, cultural norms, economic capital, and family dynamics influence digital parenting strategies. These studies highlight the variability and adaptation in parenting approaches based on contextual factors.

In conclusion, this synthesis reveals that digital parenting is a multifaceted construct shaped by individual competencies, relational dynamics, educational frameworks, and sociocultural contexts. These findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to digital parenting that integrates digital literacy, effective mediation strategies, educational support, and cultural sensitivity.

Applied research landscape of the investigated digital parenting research

This section synthesizes the findings from the included studies, categorized by their methodological approaches: applied research tools and the participating population. The overarching aim of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the key elements regarding digital parenting based on the selected studies.

Table 2 outlines the diverse methodological approaches and key findings of the selected investigations (see Appendix 2). Notably, the majority of the included studies follow a quantitative approach (F=11). Additionally, these studies consistently emphasize that effective digital parenting is profoundly influenced by both technological competence and emotional engagement. For instance, Aydoğdu and Özaydın (2024) demonstrate the potential of AI-based tools to enhance parental skills through personalized support. In addition to that, Aziz et al. (2022) identify that authoritative parenting—marked by moderate control and open communication—reduces adolescent internet addiction. Chemnad et al. (2023) further emphasize the protective role of strong family bonds and supportive school environments. Similarly, Fidan et al. (2023) and Durualp et al. (2022) show that parental attitudes, digital self-efficacy, and socio-economic background significantly shape children's digital habits. Türen et al. (2025) and Zhao et al. (2023) underscore the impact of digital literacy and parental awareness on preventing digital game addiction and bridging digital divides.

Qualitative studies (F=6), as the second applied approach, reinforce these findings by emphasizing the importance of trust, empathy, and developmental sensitivity. For instance, Edwards et al. (2020) and Jeffery (2021) argue that restrictive strategies often lead to conflict, advocating instead for collaborative approaches tailored to children's developmental stages. Reginasari et al. (2022) and Ramirez-Garcia et al. (2021) highlight the need for culturally sensitive and adaptive parenting strategies. Similarly, Isikoglu et al. (2023) contend that the digital society is not static, and therefore, parenting approaches should be shaped by children's evolving needs rather than a focus on restrictions. In line with this, Page Jeffery (2021) emphasizes the importance of dialogue between parents and adolescents, particularly in navigating conflicts, suggesting that open communication can serve as a foundation for more constructive and empathetic

parenting practices. Mixed-methods research (F=2) (e.g., Öztürk et al., 2023; Tosun & Mihci, 2020) bridges these perspectives, calling for comprehensive digital parenting education that integrates technical skills with traditional parenting values.

In sum, the findings indicate that successful digital parenting depends on emotionally supportive, autonomy-promoting, and context-sensitive strategies grounded in awareness, self-efficacy, and nuanced judgment (e.g., Mameli et al., 2024; Kumaş & Altındağ, 2024; Ponte et al., 2021).

Defining features of the selected quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies on digital parenting

Based on the data in Appendix 3, the selected quantitative studies demonstrate a methodologically coherent landscape, with clear documentation of study designs, data collection methods, and participant demographics—including both adult respondents and references to minors through parental reporting (see Appendix 3). The studies predominantly employ survey-based designs, with a strong emphasis on cross-sectional (e.g., Aziz et al., 2022; Chemnad et al., 2023; Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2024) and correlational approaches (e.g., Fidan & Olur, 2023; Kumas & Yildirim, 2024; Zhao et al., 2023). These designs are well-suited for identifying associations between parenting practices and digital behaviours or outcomes in children and adolescents.

A wide range of standardized instruments is applied to assess digital parenting constructs. For instance, the Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS) and the Digital Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (DPSS)— which measures parents' confidence in managing digital media use—appear frequently (e.g., Durualp et al., 2023; Fidan & Olur, 2023; Kumas & Yildirim, 2024). These tools reflect a trend toward validated, multidimensional instruments that capture both attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of digital parenting. Several studies also incorporate diagnostic and behavioural assessment tools. For example, Aziz et al. (2022) and Chemnad et al. (2023) use the Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ) to assess problematic digital behaviours, while Aziz et al. (2022) further employ the Parental version of Young's Diagnostic Questionnaire (PYDQ) to evaluate adolescent internet addiction from the parental perspective. Chemnad et al. (2023) also utilize the Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS) and selected items from the WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey to assess contextual family and school-related factors.

In terms of participant profiles, the studies span a broad demographic range. Most focus on parents of school-aged children (e.g., Durualp et al., 2023; Fidan & Olur, 2023), but some target special populations, such as parents of children with special needs (Kumas & Yildirim, 2024), preschool-aged children (Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2024), or children under the age of 6 (Grané et al., 2023). Sample sizes vary widely—from small-scale developmental studies (e.g., Aydogdu et al., 2024, with 13 parents and 132 app testers) to large-scale secondary data analyses (e.g., Ponte et al., 2021, with 1404 children).

Overall, the emerging results illustrate a growing methodological sophistication in digital parenting research following a quantitative research approach, with increasing use

of validated scales, diverse populations, and multi-dimensional constructs to capture the complexity of parenting in the digital age.

Based on the data in Appendix 4, the selected qualitative studies on digital parenting also demonstrate a rich diversity in designs, data collection methods, and analytical strategies, reflecting the field's emphasis on contextual depth and participant experience. The table also highlights the range of participant demographics, including adults and parental references to minors, providing insight into how contextual depth and lived experiences are captured across different methodological orientations (see Appendix 4).

It was found that the selected studies employ a range of qualitative designs, including participatory approaches (Edwards et al., 2020; Jeffery, 2024) or case studies (Isikoglu et al., 2023; Pratiwi et al., 2022). These designs enable the exploration of implementation practices within real-world contexts and incorporate diverse stakeholder perspectives, enhancing the depth and relevance of findings (e.g., Hudon et al., 2021).

In terms of data collection, the included studies utilize a variety of tools tailored to their populations and contexts. For example, Edwards et al. (2020) integrate interviews, observations, diaries, child-centred interviews, and digital exemplars in a participatory design framework involving parents, children, educators, and industry partners. Similarly, Page Jeffery (2024) uses group discussions, scenario-based activities, post-it notes, whiteboard notes, and field notes to engage both parents and adolescents in co-constructing insights. Other studies, like Isikoglu et al. (2023), combine semi-structured interviews with parents, and a psychiatrist, home observations, and digital play diaries to capture nuanced family dynamics. Pratiwi et al. (2022) employ structured interviews via in-person meetings, video conferencing, and voice notes, while Reginasari et al. (2021) use open-ended surveys administered both online and offline.

Participant diversity is another important aspect of these studies. While some focus on small, in-depth samples (e.g., Isikoglu et al., 2023, with 9 parents and a child psychiatrist), others engage larger and more varied groups (e.g., Jeffery, 2024; Reginasari et al., 2021). Several studies include multi-stakeholder samples that combine parents, educators, and professionals—for instance, Edwards et al. (2020) involve both parents and industry partners, while Pratiwi et al. (2022) draw on university lecturers. Children and adolescents are also represented across age ranges, typically through parent reports—for example, 5–7-year-olds in Isikoglu et al. (2023) or 10–16-year-olds in Page Jeffery (2024). This range of participant types and sample sizes enhances the studies' capacity to reflect the complex realities of digital parenting.

Analytically, the studies apply robust qualitative methods. Content analysis is used in several studies (e.g., Edwards et al., 2020; Isikoglu et al., 2023; Ramirez-Garcia & Aguaded-Gomez, 2020), often incorporating triangulation of data, method, and investigator to enhance credibility. Thematic analysis is also widely applied (e.g., Page Jeffery, 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2022; Reginasari et al., 2021).

In summary, these qualitative studies were found to contribute richly to the digital parenting literature by offering context-sensitive, participant-driven insights grounded in methodological rigor and interpretive depth.

Based on Appendix 5, the two included digital parenting studies appear to employ distinct mixed-methods designs, analytical tools, and participant types, each carrying specific methodological implications (see Appendix 5).

The study by Tosun and Mihci (2020) employs a sequential explanatory design (Király et al., 2014), where the quantitative phase (a survey using the 12-item Digital Parenting Attitude Scale – DPAS – with 231 parents) is followed by a qualitative phase involving open-ended questions analyzed through content coding. The participant group also included children under the age of 6, represented indirectly through parent responses, offering early childhood insights into digital parenting contexts. This approach is particularly useful when researchers aim to explain surprising or nuanced results from the initial survey phase.

In contrast, Öztürk and Şahin Sarıtaş (2023) follow an exploratory sequential design (Király et al., 2014), beginning with qualitative semi-structured interviews (33 parents) followed by a quantitative survey (602 parents). They used the Scale of Conscious Use of Applications on Smart Devices (SCUASD), which aligns the survey instrument with prior qualitative insights. This approach is especially valuable when the research area lacks established measurement tools or theoretical frameworks.

Notably, both mixed-methods studies were found to reflect the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods in a sequential structure, but with opposite directions of sequencing—one explanatory, the other exploratory. These designs are employed to enhance the validity, depth, and applicability of the research findings of digital parenting by integrating the expansive scope of quantitative data—often involving larger participant samples—with the nuanced, contextual understanding derived from qualitative inquiry (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

Discussion

The aim of the study was to systematically explore how digital education is formulated and framed in the latest scientific literature. Furthermore, it sought to map the research environment of studies on digital education published between 2020 and 2024 by examining the dominant methodological approaches, frequently utilized data collection methods, and the most commonly represented populations. With a dual focus focusing on conceptual and methodological dimensions, the review aimed to provide a comprehensive view of current scientific research on digital education.

Our first research question addressed how digital parenthood is conceptualized within recent scholarly literature. Influential factors shaping the conceptualization of digital parenthood have shifted notably in recent scholarship; for instance, Benedetto and Ingrassia (2020) highlight a movement away from traditional parenting styles toward emphasizing parental mediation as central to managing children's digital lives. Expanding on this perspective, our review of 19 studies revealed four core dimensions through which digital parenthood is framed: (1) parenting styles and mediation strategies used to regulate and engage with children's digital activity; (2) parental digital competence and awareness, particularly concerning online risks and literacy; (3) the role of digital parenting in supporting children's educational and developmental pathways; and (4) the

broader contextual factors—such as cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and family dynamics—that shape parenting practices. These interconnected dimensions highlight the complexity of digital parenthood and underscore the importance of a comprehensive understanding that integrates behavioural, educational, and contextual perspectives.

Our second research question aimed to characterise the methodological landscape of the selected studies. Prior research has identified a strong preference for quantitative methods alongside growing qualitative and mixed-methods approaches (Modecki et al., 2022), further studies have reflected methodological diversity on parental support programs and mediation (e.g; Novianti et al., 2023; Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Nichols & Selim, 2022). Building on these foundations, our study offers a more focused and updated synthesis of the methodological approaches and data collection techniques prevalent in recent research. Our analysis also revealed a clear predominance of quantitative methodologies (F=11), complemented by a smaller but significant number of qualitative studies (F=6) and mixed-methods approaches (n=2).

Nevertheless, it was also found that quantitative research in this field is characterized by considerable methodological diversity. Specifically, many studies employed validated, multidimensional instruments designed to capture nuanced aspects of digital parenting. For example, tools such as the Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS) and the Digital Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (DPSS) were frequently used to assess parental confidence and attitudes towards managing children's digital media use (Durualp et al., 2023; Fidan & Olur, 2023; Kumas & Yildirim, 2024). In addition, we observed that diagnostic and behavioural assessment tools also play a vital role in this body of research. Instruments like the Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ) and the Parental version of Young's Diagnostic Questionnaire (PYDQ) have been utilized to identify and measure problematic internet behaviours (Aziz et al., 2022; Chemnad et al., 2023). Our review also highlighted the importance of contextual factors, which are frequently examined through standardized measures such as the Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS) and the WHO Health Behaviour in School-Age Children (HBSC) survey, allowing researchers to consider the broader family and social environments influencing digital parenting practices (Chemnad et al., 2023).

Our analysis also revealed notable methodological diversity within the qualitative studies examined. Researchers employed a wide range of approaches, including semi-structured interviews, observational techniques, and the use of game logs to capture parent-child digital interactions (Isikoglu et al., 2023). Other studies utilized thematic analysis of open-ended questionnaire responses (Reginasari et al., 2021) and structured interviews conducted remotely via video calls (Pratiwi et al., 2022). These variations demonstrate a flexible and context-sensitive application of qualitative methods in digital parenting research.

Among the two mixed-methods studies identified, distinct forms of methodological integration were observed. For example, Öztürk and Şahin Sarıtaş (2023) used qualitative interviews as a basis for developing a quantitative scale, whereas Tosun and Mihci (2020) combined the use of structured scales with qualitative content analysis of open-ended survey responses. These examples highlight the potential of mixed-methods designs to

deepen insights into digital parenting by bridging exploratory and confirmatory approaches.

Regarding target populations, it was revealed that the majority of studies focused on parents of school-aged children (e.g., Durualp et al., 2023; Fidan & Olur, 2023). However, it was also found that there is a growing emphasis on more specific groups, including parents of children with special educational needs (Kumas & Yildirim, 2024), as well as increasing attention to early childhood, with studies centered on preschoolers (Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2024) and children under the age of six (Grané et al., 2023).

Sample sizes were also found to vary considerably across studies. Some research featured small-scale developmental designs, such as Aydoğdu et al. (2024), which involved 13 parents and 132 application testers, while others drew on large-scale datasets, such as Ponte et al. (2021), whose study encompassed over a thousand children. This variation reflects differing research aims and resource availability, further illustrating the methodological heterogeneity of the field.

By systematically mapping these methodological trends, populations, and tools, our study contributes an updated and comprehensive overview of the digital parenting research environment, highlighting areas of concentration as well as gaps that future research might address.

Further advancing the contribution of our study, its novelty lies in combining a conceptual mapping of digital parenthood with an in-depth analysis of the research methodologies employed in this field. This dual focus not only illuminates the diverse ways digital parenting is conceptualized but also highlights the evolving sophistication and variety of methodological approaches utilized in recent research. Notably, clear connection between how digital parenthood is understood and the methodological approaches applied emerges more distinctly when viewed across the reviewed studies. For instance, digital parenthood understood primarily as a set of competencies and awareness-related attributes—such as digital literacy, risk perception, and parental self-efficacy—is predominantly examined through quantitative approaches (Aydoğdu et al., 2024; Durualp et al., 2023; Fidan & Olur, 2023; Kumas & Yildirim, 2024). These studies often rely on surveys and standardized scales to capture measurable constructs, aligning well with quantitative methodologies. Conversely, investigations into the contextual and cultural dimensions of digital parenthood tend to employ qualitative or mixed-methods designs (Reginasari et al., 2021; Öztürk & Şahin Sarıtaş, 2023). Although some quantitative studies address these themes (Grané et al., 2023; Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2024), the complex and nuanced nature of cultural and contextual factors frequently necessitates in-depth, interpretive approaches to fully understand their impact. This methodological diversity reflects the multidimensional character of digital parenthood and underscores the importance of selecting appropriate research designs to capture its varied aspects.

Conclusion

As digital technologies continue to reshape family life, understanding digital parenting has become an increasingly vital area of research with significant implications for children's development and well-being (Hammer et al., 2021; Kalkim et al., 2024; Lauricella et al., 2015)

This review has synthesized current knowledge on digital parenting, highlighting key trends, methodological patterns, and emerging research directions in an increasingly digitalized family context. Despite offering valuable insights, this systematic review nevertheless faces several limitations inherent in the current body of research on digital parenting. First, conceptual and terminological variability (Donovan et al., 2015) persists across studies concerning digital parenting, complicating the classification and synthesis of key concepts during content analysis. Second, the predominant reliance on self-reported data (Gorber et al., 2016)—especially from parents—introduces potential biases, which may compromise the validity of reported digital mediation practices. Furthermore, sample diversity is limited, with many studies drawing on convenience samples from homogenous populations (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022), thereby restricting the cultural and socio-economic generalizability of the findings. The widespread use of cross-sectional designs also limits the ability to track the evolution of parenting practices over time (Spector, 2019). Finally, despite the acknowledged importance of including more diverse voices and perspectives (Christakis & Hale, 2025), the underrepresentation of children's voices—particularly through direct data collection—reduces the depth and balance of the findings. This is because selected studies often foreground parental perspectives without adequately incorporating those of the children or adolescents affected by digital mediation strategies.

This study contributes to the understanding of digital parenting by integrating insights from education (Fidan & Olur, 2023; Kumas & Yildirim, 2024), psychology (e.g., Chemnad et al., 2023) sociology (e.g., Aziz et al., 2022), and media studies (e.g., Zhao et al., 2023). Future research could thus benefit from a more explicit interdisciplinary framework to deepen theoretical integration and foster cross-sectoral dialogue.

Nevertheless, these directions encourage more inclusive, longitudinal, and multi-perspective approaches, which hold significant promise for developing nuanced understandings of digital parenting across diverse contexts

Taken together, these insights highlight that in today's media-saturated environment, children increasingly engage with online platforms that present both developmental opportunities and potential risks (Konok et al., 2020; Nikken, 2018). As digital technologies become deeply embedded in the routines of everyday life, it becomes imperative that parents possess the necessary skills and awareness to effectively support and guide their children in navigating the challenges of the digital landscape (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Christakis, 2025; Livingstone et al., 2020).

With regard to practical implications, the findings highlight the need for targeted educational programs that enhance parents' digital literacy, support emotional responsiveness, and encourage flexible, adaptive mediation strategies tailored to these evolving challenges. Consequently, the implementation of structured parental support

programs emerges as a critical priority. These programs should not only focus on preventing online risks but also address the educational, social, and relational benefits of digital media (Mameli et al., 2025; Ramirez-Garcia & Aguaded-Gomez, 2020; Tosun & Mihci, 2020). A central aim of such initiatives is to promote children's digital well-being by strengthening parental digital competence and media literacy (Burns & Gottschalk, 2019; Mameli et al., 2025), since higher parental proficiency has been linked to increased self-efficacy in overseeing their children's digital engagement and more constructive attitudes toward technology (Nikken & de Haan, 2015). Moreover, these programs are expected to broaden parents' pedagogical repertoires by introducing a range of mediation strategies—from restrictive and technical approaches to those based on active collaboration and dialogue (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; Nichols & Selim, 2022). At the same time, it is essential that these programs consider contextual factors such as cultural expectations, socioeconomic status, and family dynamics, as these fundamentally shape digital parenting practices (Modecki et al., 2022; Navarro & Tudge, 2023).

Ultimately, the implementation of targeted, evidence-based interventions to strengthen parental capabilities marks a pivotal step by the authors toward fostering more balanced, and developmentally appropriate digital environments within families.

Acknowledgement

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Theoretical and methodological background, discussion, conclusion

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Appendices

Appendix 1.

Emerging conceptualizations of digital parenting in the analysed literature

Key concepts of digital parenting	Authors and Years	Definitions of the emerging concepts
Digital parenting as competence and awareness	Aydoğdu et al. (2024) Durualp et al. (2023) Fidan & Olur (2023) Öztürk & Şahin Sarıtaş (2023) Tosun & Mihci (2020) Kumas & Yildirim (2024) Edwards et al. (2020)	Emphasis on parents' ability to guide, protect, and model online behaviour through digital literacy, risk awareness, and role modelling.
Parenting styles and mediations Strategies	Aziz et al. (2022) Chemnad et al. (2023) Isikoglu et al. (2023) (Page Jeffery, 2024) Zhao et al. (2023) Pratiwi et al. (2022)	Focus on parenting styles and mediation strategies to regulate behaviour, communication, and interaction in digital contexts.
Educational and developmental support	Mameli et al. (2025) Ramirez-Garcia & Aguaded-Gomez (2020) Ponte et al. (2021)	The role of guidance, training, and support as key to parents' developmental role in digital contexts.
Contextual and cultural influences	Grane et al. (2023) Reginasari et al. (2021) Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman (2024)	Centrality of cultural norms, socioeconomic factors, beliefs, and family dynamics influencing parental strategies.

Source: Author's own elaboration

Appendix 2.

Methodological approaches of the included studies

Analytical approach (frequency of use)	Authors and Years	Main findings
quantitative (11)	*Aydogdu et al. (2024)* *Aziz et al. (2022)* *Chemnad et al. (2023)* *Durualp et al. (2023)* *Fidan & Olur (2023)* *Grané et al. (2023)* *Kumas & Yildirim (2024)* *Mameli et al. (2025)* *Ponte et al. (2021)* *Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman (2024)* *Zhao et al. (2023)*	Emotional support, autonomy promotion, context sensitivity, awareness, self-efficacy, and nuanced judgment as foundations of successful guidance.
qualitative (6)	*Edwards et al. (2020)* *Isikoglu et al. (2023)* *Page Jeffery (2024)* *Pratiwi et al. (2022)* *Ramirez-Garcia & Aguaded-Gomez (2020)* *Reginasari et al. (2021)*	Balance of guidance, trust, and adaptability; parental support of digital literacy through age-appropriate communication, involvement, and rule-setting for safe and meaningful technology use.
mixed methods (2)	*Tosun & Mihci (2020)* *Öztürk & Şahin Sarıtaş (2023)*	Comprehensive, sustainable digital parenting education; integration of technical and traditional parenting skills; importance of lifelong learning in an evolving digital landscape.

Source: Author's own elaboration

Appendix 3.

Detailed methodological profile of the selected quantitative studies

Authors and Years	Study design and methodological orientation	Data collection methods	Participants above 18	Minors referenced by parents
Aydogdu et al., 2024	Developmental research	Surveys, scales (e.g., digital parenting self-efficacy), and user interaction data	13 parents using a task list and 132 people during Android/iOS testing	Adolescents aged 10-14
Aziz et al., 2022	Cross-sectional survey	Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ) for parents. Parental version of Young's Diagnostic Questionnaire (PYDQ) for adolescents.	165 parents	Adolescents aged 10–19
Chemnad et al., 2023	Cross-sectional survey	Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ). Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS). WHO HBSC survey items (school pressure, peer/teacher support, academic performance)	479 adolescents in Qatar	Adolescents aged 11–17
Durualp et al., 2023	Descriptive survey	Demographic Information Form Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS) with two subscales: Approving Effective Use of Digital Media and Protecting Against Digital Media Risks	388 parents (273 mothers, 115 fathers)	Children and adolescents aged 6–15
Fidan & Olur, 2023	Correlational survey	Digital Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (DPSS) Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS)	434 parents	Primary school children (ages ~6–14)

Grané et al., 2023	Descriptive study using structured interviews	Conducted via video calls using a guided interview format with A 30-question structured questionnaire	46 families	Children under the age of 6
Kumas & Yildirim, 2024	Correlational study	Face-to-face surveys with informed consent Digital Parenting Awareness Scale Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS) Digital Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (DPSS)	180 parents	Children with special needs
Mameli et al., 2025	Repeated-measures quasi-experimental design with two intervention groups	Perceived Parental Autonomy Support Scale (P-PASS) Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ) Home Situations Questionnaire (HSQ)	33 parents	29 Children aged 10-14
Ponte et al., 2021	Multivariate analysis using secondary data	EU Kids Online (2017–2019)	1404 children	Children aged 9–16
Türen & Bağçeli Kahraman, 2024	Cross-sectional survey study	Digital Play Addiction Tendency Scale (DPAT) Digital Parenting Awareness Scale (DPAS) Digital Literacy Assessment Scale	400 mother	Preschool children (aged 48–72 months)
Zhao et al., 2023	Correlational, predictive study	Parental mediation strategies scale (active, restrictive, authoritarian, nonintrusive) Digital parenting readiness scale (self-efficacy, perceived risks/benefits, skill gaps) Parental capital scale (economic, cultural, social)	530 parents	Children aged 10–17

Note: Most studies include only adults with children in a given age group, typically asking them to answer with one particular child in mind. As a result, the number of children generally matches the number of parent participants.

Source: Author's own elaboration

Appendix 4.

Detailed methodological profile of the selected qualitative studies

Authors and Years	Study design and methodological orientation	Data collection methods	Analytical framework and tools	Participants above 18	Minors referenced by parents
Edwards et al. (2020)	Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Participatory Design (PD), utilizing ethnographic approaches, longitudinal studies, and quasi-experimental design	Interviews, observations, diaries, child-centred interviews, and digital exemplars	Content analysis	Industry partners, educators, parents	Children aged 0-6
Isikoglu et al. (2023)	Qualitative case study	Semi-structured interviews (children, parents, psychiatrist) Home observations Digital play diaries (1 week)	Content analysis employing triangulation of data, method, and investigator"	9 Parents and a child psychiatrist	Children (aged 5–7)
Page Jeffery (2024)	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	Group discussions (parents and children separately) Scenario-based activities Post-it notes, whiteboard notes, field notes	Thematic analysis	115 parents,	Adolescents aged 10–16
Pratiwi et al. (2022)	Qualitative case study	Structured interviews (face-to-face,	Thematic analysis	27 university	Children aged 3–6

		video calls, voice notes)		lecturers in Indonesia	
Ramirez-Garcia & Aguaded-Gomez (2020)	Qualitative case study	Selected documents	Content analysis	Applied to 17 family education programs	NP
Reginasari et al. (2021)	Qualitative case study	Open-ended surveys (online and offline)	Thematic analysis	171 Indonesian parents of	Children aged 6–14

Note: As with Table 3, the number of children typically corresponds to the number of parent participants, based on study design.

Source: Author's own elaboration

Appendix 5.

Detailed methodological profile of the selected mixed-methods studies

Authors and Years	Data Collection Methods	Analytical framework and tools	Participants above 18	Minors referenced by parents
Tosun & Mihci (2020)	Quantitative Phase: Survey	Digital Parenting Attitude Scale (DPAS)	231 parents	Children under the age of 6
	Qualitative Phase: Open-ended questions	content analysis	NP	NP
Öztürk & Şahin Sarıtaş (2023)	Stage 1 Qualitative Semi-structured interviews	content analysis	33 parents.	NP
	Stage 2 Quantitative Survey	SCUASD Scale of Conscious Use of Applications on Smart Devices	602 parents	NP

Note: *As with Table 3, the number of children typically corresponds to the number of parent participants, based on study design.*

Source: Author's own elaboration

Gréta Ábrahám – Heléna Kolip

AN ASPECT OF HUNGARIAN AND SERBIAN ADULT EDUCATION

Abstract

Lifelong learning (LLL) can address key socio-economic challenges such as increasing competitiveness and employment, equal opportunities and quality of life. For LLL to become a reality, adult educators have a crucial role to play (Farkas, 2014). Differentiated activities and competences place specific demands on the professionalism of adult educators, which results in a balancing act between several logics of action when working at the interface. For adult educators to continuously reconcile the economic, bureaucratic, and professional requirements of their daily work, a concept known as "hybrid professionalism" is essential (Noordegraaf, 2015). The aim of this paper is to provide an insight into and comparison of adult education in Hungary and Serbia, and to examine the activities, competences and related professionalism of adult educators who provide professional development for early childhood educators. The research seeks answers to the following questions: What are the main activities and competences developed by adult educators? What are the differences and similarities between the two countries? How can the hybrid professionalism of adult educators be understood? The research included semi-structured expert interviews with a Serbian and a Hungarian adult educator, as well as the analysis of the legal regulations of adult education (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013, Felnőttképzési törvény, 2013) as well as the regulation and government decree regulating teacher training courses (Pedagógus-továbbképzési kormányrendelet, 2024). As the education systems of both countries show the basic characteristics of the continental type, many similarities are found in terms of areas, activities and competences. The differences are due to the different economic and governance systems in the two countries. Adult education and training typically encompass a wide range of practices that are interwoven with many other areas. The link between the theory of hybrid professionalism and the practice of adult education is confirmed by the interviewees presented.

Keywords: adult education; professionalism; competences

Introduction

Lifelong learning can be a solution to the most important socio-economic problems, such as increasing competitiveness and employment, equal opportunities, and improving the quality of life. To make lifelong learning a reality, adult educators are crucial (Farkas, 2014). The practices of adult learning and education are typically very diverse and intertwine with numerous other fields. This situation leads to a lack of clarity regarding the precise profile of adult educators and their particular behaviours. Furthermore, these factors have a specific impact on the professionalism of adult educators (Breitschwerdt & Guimarães, 2022). Differentiating activities and competences set unique expectations on

adult educators' professionalism, resulting in balancing between several logics of action while working at interfaces. For adult educators to be able to constantly coordinate the various economic, bureaucratic, and professional requirements in their daily work, it requires a "*hybrid professionalism*" (Noordegraaf, 2015).

An important and determining factor in the development of European adult education and training is the constantly evolving society and economy (Németh, 2006). The demand for the transformation of the quality of adult and continuing education is closely related to the extensive transformation of the modern world of work. The professional discourses on the topic focused on the professionalization efforts of adult education, for which social, institutional, and organizational contexts provide the background and framework. Important factors for achieving this direction are market, bureaucratic, and professional principles, i.e. the interconnectedness of functional systems, the integration of research-based new knowledge into education, the aspects of the connections between abstract expertise and concrete practice, ensuring a working environment following the logic of professionalism, which raises the importance of the organization, as well as the professional services, like group work with the independent and fully developed adults who form the target group (Egetenmeyer et al., 2019).

Over time, it became clear to researchers that a multi-level perspective is needed to investigate professionalism. As a background for this, researchers distinguish three levels. On the one hand, the state, society, and institutions determine the laws and rules for adult education policy, which establish, among other things, the guidelines for lifelong learning and the necessary competences and skills. On the other hand, the level of the organizations that will be responsible, among other things, for the training of those working in adult education. Thirdly, the level of teachers and students, which includes both the preparation and needs of professional staff and adult learners, thus, forming the centre of professionalism at this level (Egetenmeyer et al., 2019).The relevance of the topic is also supported by Balázs Németh's view (Németh, 2023) that we need to emphasise the training of adult education professionals, andragogues, who can and are able to effectively educate and train adults in formal, non-formal or informal learning environments.

Aims, research questions, methodology, key terms

The aim of this search is, on the one hand, to provide insight into adult education and compare it in Serbia and Hungary and, on the other hand, to examine the actions, competences, and associated professionalism of adult educators providing professional further education for pedagogues in early childhood education.

To achieve the set goal, we are looking for answers to the following questions in the Serbian and Hungarian context: What are the main domains in adult learning and education? What competences are important for adult educators? What differences and similarities can be found between the two countries? How can the hybrid professionalism of adult educators be understood (Breitschwerdt & Guimarães, 2022)?

In order to answer the research questions, we used two different research methods. First, to make a comparative analysis, we examined the Hungarian and Serbian aspects of

the legal regulations related to adult education. Then, we conducted in-depth interviews with colleagues working in the field of training of early childhood professionals, which increased our knowledge about the personal involvement, competences, and attitudes of adult education professionals. During the research, two in-depth interviews were conducted with professionals working in adult education. We interviewed a professional in Hungary who was in the practical phase of early childhood education training course, and a professional in Serbia who was in the further training of teachers. In both cases, the interview was conducted based on the following structure, along the listed questions: What does your everyday work look like in general, specifically in the practical part of adult education? In which area do you work and what is your main task? How is this area of work structured and organized? How did you get into this position, in this institution? Tell us about your education, work experience, and scope of activity! How much do you like your specific work, what challenges do you face? What different demands do you face in your everyday life? How do you deal with them? What are the situations that pose a challenge? How do you behave in these situations? What competencies and resources are necessary for your work and how do you develop them? How do you stay up-to-date at work? How do you stay informed about current events and developments in your workplace? The interviews were recorded at the professionals' workplaces in February 2023. In both cases, the material was recorded in writing and then examined through text analysis.

The participants in adult education are, of course, the same in both countries. First, we need to clarify who is involved in adult learning, who is learning in this framework and who are the professionals who support this learning. The target group of adult education can be considered to be those people who have been left out of the education system for some reason, or who wish to continue their studies after school (Zachár, 2009). To define the adult student, we will describe Kraiciné's formulation: "*All (state) citizens of compulsory school age who, in addition to their work or in the absence of it, undertake the development of their knowledge, skills, and competences voluntarily or under external motivation, are considered adult students*" (Kraiciné, 2004, p. 51). The participants in the trainings are extremely diverse: they include career starters, career changers, and the unemployed, but also those who want to advance in their profession or acquire new knowledge. The motivations are also diverse: professional development, improving employment opportunities, self-realization or even leisure learning can all be important driving forces.

Those who help adults learn are the teachers working in adult education. This profession is very different from the work of those working in higher education or other formal education. The specialist must be able to build on the work and life experiences, previously acquired knowledge, and competencies of the training participant. The basis of his work is that in this situation the student is characterized by strong voluntary and internal motivation. Competencies play an important role during the training. The output competencies of the training are also determined upon admission. It is essential that the teacher is aware of this, that is, at the beginning of the training, to assess the extent to which the student possesses these. After all, he organizes and differentiates the joint work

that awaits them along this line. Formulation in learning outcomes is a related innovative form (Kóródi et al., 2015).

Nagypál writes about the role of andragogues in his study as follows: "*The andragogue diagnoses with his background knowledge, which diagnosis he responds to in his interpersonal relationships. Adults can and should be offered a number of services, at least for the purpose of their position in the labour market or their integration into the labour market, and at the most for the implementation of Lifelong Learning, as a program of lifelong learning, lifelong renewal, and fulfilment*" (Nagypál, 2014, p. 81). In his opinion, in addition to his professional development, the task of the adult educator is to provide education and help with learning. However, its roles in adult education practice may expand for financial reasons. We need highly qualified instructors who plan the curriculum, professionally organize and document the course of the training, and provide the right environment for learning. In the optimal case, the adult educator is professionally and methodologically prepared, and motivated to transfer knowledge and practical skills, but in Hungary and in Serbia, there are no legally required adult education-related training or continuing education for these professionals (mentors, vocational instructors, trainers) (Nagypál, 2014).

Among the competencies of professionals participating in adult education, Farkas distinguishes the following five groups: professional, andragogic, social, technological, and communication competencies (Farkas, 2013). Distinguishing them in the analysis of the conducted interviews is useful for us.

Adult education and learning in Serbia

The development of adult education in Serbia builds on the Yugoslav andragogical tradition that emerged at the University of Belgrade during the 1960s and 1970s (Popović et al., 2024). At the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, the Andragogy Study Group and Chair of Andragogy were established in 1979, founded on pioneering research and institution-building efforts of Borivoj Samolovčev (Samolovchev, 1978; Samolovčev & Muradbegović, 1979) and Dušan Savićević (Savićević, 1989; 1991). This Chair (later Department) became a centre for developing professionals and advancing research, strengthening andragogy as a recognized scientific discipline (Popović et al., 2024). The wartime period at the end of 1990 adversely affected both the training of adult educators and the institution's scientific activities. Nevertheless, Serbia managed to maintain the structure of the Adult Education Institution and the profession. In 1994, the journal *Andragogical Studies* was launched, followed by the establishment of the *Society of Andragogues* in 2000. The Institute of Andragogy at the University of Belgrade has achieved notable research results and maintains active international collaborations (Savićević, 2010). This demonstrates that andragogy is firmly established in Serbia both as a scientific discipline and as a university program (Milivojevic-Beszédes, 2023).

Serbia's adult learning situation is significantly influenced by its EU candidate status and the associated close cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF), the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), and the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) Serbia network (ETF, 2024a; UIL, 2022). The ETF actively

supports Serbia in reforming vocational education and expanding non-formal adult education, in line with EU integration objectives (ETF, 2024b). In parallel, according to UNESCO GRALE reports, Serbia has taken steps to improve the quality and accessibility of adult education, such as developing teacher andragogical training, strengthening the principle of lifelong learning, and recognizing non-formal and informal learning (UIL, 2022).

In the history of the country The Law on Adult Education (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013) was the first law that covered the field of adult education. It was adopted by the Republic of Serbia in June 2013 and has been enforced since January 1, 2014. According to the Law on Adult Education (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013), adult education is part of the unified education system of the Republic of Serbia, which provides lifelong opportunities for adults to acquire skills and qualifications necessary for their personal and professional development, work and employment, and socially responsible behaviour.

Adult education in Serbia is implemented as formal and non-formal education, as well as informal learning (Beszédes, 2020). Formal education includes general formal education and formal vocational training. General formal education refers to organized teaching and learning processes based on the curricula and lesson plans of primary and secondary education. Although based on general elementary and secondary education concepts, the performance levels of these programs are aligned with the adult population. General formal education aims to increase the performance of basic skills (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013). In formal vocational training, programs of other forms of professional training adapted to the needs and possibilities of adults and the needs of the labour market are implemented. Formal vocational training aims to obtain a qualification recognized as an adult. Formal adult education is intended for those who have failed to complete general and vocational school education (Eurydice, 2022). Non-formal education includes organized teaching and learning processes based on special curricula outside the school system. These processes aim at the acquisition of knowledge, values, positions, abilities, and skills that help adults advance their personal development, work, employment, and social activities. Non-formal education does not provide a transition to higher education, but it provides students with the skills, knowledge, and abilities essential for professional development. Non-formal education is for people who have completed a part or all of their formal schooling and who need to improve their skills or re-qualify for another profession (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013). Informal learning is the process of independent acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, abilities, and skills, which takes place in everyday life, in the workplace, and in the social environment of education.

The following are the objectives of adult education in Serbia, as stated in the Law on Adult Education: improvement of educational structure and employability of citizens; creation of a basis for the socio-economic development of Serbia; increase in professional mobility and flexibility of the working population; providing grounds for the reduction of poverty, social equality, social inclusion, and intergenerational solidarity; improvement of personal and family life standards, along with the social and natural environment;

development of democracy, multiculturalism, and tolerance; integration into the European social, economic and educational frameworks (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013). The goals of adult education can be realized through adult education activities.

There are five main areas of adult education in Serbia. According to the Adult Education Law (2013), the following are activities within adult education: general education, vocational education and specialisation, professional development, assessment and recognition of previously acquired competences, career guidance, and counselling.

General education aims to obtain a primary and secondary education and to acquire the key competences, which are realized within formal education. Vocational education and vocational training are aimed at acquiring or developing the professional competences required for participation in the labour market, which takes place through formal and non-formal education. The goal of professional development is to increase knowledge, activity, and professional abilities through informal and non-formal learning. The prior qualification is recognized by assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through education, life, and work experience. The career guidance and counselling activity is aimed at developing career development skills important for successful employment and professional advancement (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013).

Implementation of adult education and learning in Serbia

Adult education takes place in lectures, training, courses, seminars, workshops, tribunes, and conferences, as well as other forms of learning and education. Adult training can be conducted through regular teaching, consultative-instructional work, correspondence-consultative education, practical work, distance learning and other suitable methods. Organizers of adult education activities include primary and secondary schools, public companies, employment agencies, business associations, trade unions, associations, professional societies, adult training organizations and cultural and educational centres, etc. Organizers of adult education are implementers of adult training programs (teacher, lecturer, trainer, course leader, instructor; professional colleagues; colleagues and teacher and adult educator assistants. Adult education programmes can be organised in Serbian or in a minority language, depending on the learners' ethnicity (Despotović & Popović, 2014).

Competences in Serbian adult learning and education

Competences according to the Adult Education Law are, is understood as the ability to use acquired knowledge, skills and positions in a wide variety of life situations. The law identifies key competences and professional competences within this (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013). "*Key competences represent transferable, a multifunctional package of knowledge and abilities necessary for the individual to achieve personal fulfilment, development, professional mobility and employment. An individual acquires key competences at the end of vocational education and training, and they represent the basis for an individual's lifelong learning*" (European Training Foundation, 2007, p. 6).

Key competences are necessary for personal, social, and professional growth, as well as for continuing education and the capacity to put new information, abilities, and points of view into practice. Standards for adults' key competences in primary and general secondary education are established by the National Education Council and the Institute for Educational Quality and Evaluation. The domains outlined in the EU framework on key competences for lifelong learning are as follows: communication in the mother-, and in a foreign language; mathematical literacy, science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; interpersonal-, intercultural-, social- and civil competences ; Sense of innovation and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and expression professional competences (European Training Foundation, 2007).

Professional competences are understood as the suitability essential for carrying out work activities, and the ability to use acquired knowledge, skills and viewpoints. Vocational education and specialisation are directed towards acquiring or improving vocational competences required for participation in the labour market. Standards of vocational competences in vocational education, competences of professional development, and other kinds of adult education are determined by the Council for Vocational and Adult Education and the Institute for the Improvement of Education (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013).

Adult education and learning in Hungary

The goal of adult education in Hungary is also to expand knowledge, improve labour market opportunities, support lifelong learning, and develop personal and social competences. The fields and functions of adult education in Hungary can be grouped according to several criteria. In this paragraph we use Zachár's classification. According to this, in addition to training in the school system and training outside the school system, it distinguishes labour market training, in which case the starting point for determining professional qualifications is economic demand and general and language training, which helps to strengthen the employee's position. The largest area of adult education is vocational training outside the school system. This can be felt from the number of participants and the range of qualifications. Continuous or further training helps employees to successfully assert themselves and, in certain areas, stay in the labour market. From an economic point of view, the subsidized training of the unemployed that helps employment is not negligible either (Zachár, 2009).

Based on the data of the last ten years, in Hungary, it can be said that the number of training courses and their participants has increased dynamically, the proportion of state-recognized vocational qualifications is the highest, the age group under 35 is overrepresented in the training courses, and opportunities under 400 hours of training time predominate (Zachár, 2009).

The basic idea of adult education in Hungary is that the effective operation of the adult education system is essential for the creation of a knowledge- and work-based society and economy. In 2019, the Hungarian Government decided to renew the adult education system. In the background of this was the focus on the training system that satisfied the economic needs induced by the rapid technological changes. For these reasons, the

development of an adult education system that meets the constantly changing needs of the labour market has become of strategic importance for the Hungarian economy (Borbély-Pecze, 2021). In response to the challenges, strategic steps were taken. This includes ensuring measurability in the career tracking system in connection with the training, reflecting on the real labour market demand, reducing administration, introducing new financing options, and starting training courses that meet the demand and provide usable competencies in order to increase the number of participants, as well as the creation of independent, accredited examination centres. To implement the strategic steps, the guidelines governing the adult education system were also changed (Innovációs és Technológiai Minisztérium, 2020).

Implementation of adult education and learning in Hungary

The topic in the title is an important area of educational science, as it provides learning and development opportunities for the age group beyond compulsory schooling. The forms of adult education are diverse, depending on the framework in which learning takes place. As already mentioned, one of the most significant areas is school-based education, which provides adults with the opportunity to obtain a general or secondary education, or even pursue higher education. These mostly operate in the evening, correspondence or distance learning format, in order to adapt to the time schedule of those who wish to study alongside work and family life. Training outside the school system, on the other hand, is shorter, often modularly structured courses that serve specific professional or competence-development goals. This includes language courses, IT training, company training, as well as various further training and retraining options. Distance, online and blended learning are becoming increasingly common, allowing participants to develop at their own pace and with flexibility (Bajusz, 2011).

Adult education in Hungary is organized by a variety of institutions. The system includes state institutions such as vocational schools, public education centres and various professional training centres, which also provide catch-up and retraining programs. In addition, private training providers and language schools play a significant role, offering courses on a market basis and for a fee. Higher education institutions – universities and colleges – are also active players in adult education, mainly in the form of specialized further training, correspondence courses and graduate courses designed for adults. Civil society organizations also play an important role, providing community learning, cultural and general literacy programs, especially for disadvantaged or low-educated adults.

The implementers include teachers, trainers, lecturers, course leaders, language and practical experts. In many cases they are professionals who do not necessarily work in the traditional institutional system of education. They work with a methodological toolkit that takes into account the specific needs, experiences and motivations of adult learners. In adult learning, practice orientation, interactive learning forms and labour market relevance play a prominent role.

Adult education and training in Hungary is basically conducted in Hungarian, as the majority of programmes are organised by domestic institutions and advertised for

Hungarian-speaking participants. At the same time, linguistic diversity is also evident: numerous foreign language courses are available. In parallel, the teaching of Hungarian as a foreign language also plays an important role, which facilitates the integration of foreigners studying or working in Hungary. The adult education system is therefore open, flexible and diverse, providing the opportunity to learn for all those who strive to acquire new knowledge at any stage of life.

Competences in Hungarian adult learning and education

The competences of teachers working in adult education and training in Hungary form a complex and diverse system, in which professional preparation, methodological awareness, and personal and social sensitivity complement each other and help the successful development of adult learners. According to the educational science approach, the activity of teachers working in adult education is not only aimed at transferring knowledge, but also at guiding, supporting and facilitating the learning process, taking into account the specificities arising from the life situation, experiences and motivations of adults (Kraiciné, 2006).

Among the competencies of professionals participating in adult education, Farkas distinguishes the following five groups: professional, andragogic, social, technological, and communication competencies (Farkas, 2013).

Results of the comparative analysis in terms of regulation and competences

The Serbian and Hungarian adult education and training systems are based on a number of common educational and social policy principles, but they also show noticeable differences in terms of their legal regulation, institutional implementation, financing structure and development priorities. In both countries, adult education is a prominent part of the lifelong learning strategy, which, in addition to increasing economic competitiveness, also serves to promote social equality, labour market reintegration and personal development. The pedagogical approach of adult education in both countries is based on supporting the autonomous learner, encouraging self-directed learning and maintaining learning motivation.

In Hungary, the legal framework of adult education is defined by Act LXXVII of 2013 on Adult Education (Felnőttképzési törvény, 2013), which uniformly regulates the licensing, quality assurance and registration system of training. The legislation establishes the main areas of adult education, including formal adult education, which enables the acquisition of general and secondary education, non-formal vocational training aimed at developing labour market competences, and non-formal and informal forms of learning that support personal development, skills development and cultural learning. All of these areas are closely linked to labour market needs, state education policy priorities and social inclusion programmes. In Serbia, the Law on Adult Education (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013), adopted in 2013, establishes similar principles, but places greater emphasis on supporting non-formal learning and lifelong competence development, as well as on validating knowledge and experience. The main areas of adult education in the

Serbian system include formal education (school-based studies), non-formal training (courses, short courses), and a system of recognition of informal learning, which allows for the recognition of knowledge acquired through work experience and self-education.

Funding is based on a mixed model in both countries. In Hungary, state funds, EU grants and private contributions play a role. Grant-based programs, especially those financed from the European Social Fund, are of particular importance. Funding is centrally managed and strictly regulated, aiming to strengthen quality assurance and accountability. In Serbia, funding is more decentralized, with a greater role for local governments and regional development centres, but state support is often project-based, which ensures less long-term sustainability. At the same time, more flexible resource allocation allows for the development of training offerings that are better suited to local needs (Borbély-Pecze, 2021).

In terms of resources, the development of human and infrastructural capacities is decisive in both countries. In Hungary, a wide network of accredited training institutions, vocational training centres and adult education providers ensures access, while in Serbia the network of adult education centres is gradually being built up, mainly in urban areas. The challenge for both systems is to reach rural and disadvantaged areas, as well as to develop digital infrastructure and forms of distance learning. Quality assurance is bound by legal frameworks in both countries, but with different emphases. In Hungary, the operation of a quality management system, the application of programme requirements and examination regulations, and state registration are mandatory for licensed trainers. The Serbian system provides institutions with greater autonomy: quality assurance is primarily based on self-assessment, external professional evaluation and the measurement of learning outcomes. In Serbia, special attention is paid to the validation of non-formal learning, which is even less developed in the Hungarian system.

In both countries, the tasks of teachers working in adult education extend beyond the transfer of professional knowledge to supporting, motivating and assisting students in their self-directed learning. In Hungary, teachers primarily fit into state-defined training programs, and their main tasks include organizing and evaluating the learning process and integrating competence development. In Serbia, teachers and trainers work with greater methodological autonomy, and the development of personalized learning paths and the validation of learning outcomes play a more prominent role. Both systems expect teachers to have a reflective, developmental approach, the application of interactive, practice-oriented learning methods, and the conscious use of digital tools s can be assumed along the lines of hybrid professionalism (Breitschwerdt & Guimarães, 2022; Noordegraaf, 2015).

As for competencies, they can be similarly grouped into key, professional and personal competencies. The key competences of an adult education teacher include, above all, teaching and supporting learning, i.e. the ability to encourage students to engage in an independent, reflective and goal-oriented learning process. This is complemented by communication competence, which helps to establish empathetic, partnership relationships and maintain motivation. Social and intercultural competence enables teachers to sensitively and acceptingly deal with the diverse social and cultural

backgrounds of adult learners, as well as with learning difficulties arising from potential disadvantages. Digital competence is also of particular importance, as it enables the effective use of modern learning environments – the previously mentioned online and blended forms – and the use of digital tools and teaching materials for pedagogical purposes. Key competences form the basis of pedagogical work, as they determine the success of teaching and learning in every adult education situation (Barta et al., 2005)

Professional competences encompass the knowledge and skills of adult education teachers that are based on their scientific, professional and methodological preparation. This includes in-depth knowledge of the field taught, the transmission of content that is up-to-date and meets the needs of the labour market, and the planning of relevant learning paths for adult learners. Professional competences also include the ability to plan and evaluate teaching, i.e. to develop methods, tasks and assessment procedures that are aligned with learning objectives. This also includes the ability to differentiate, as the heterogeneous background, life paths and motivations of adult learners require flexible educational solutions. One of the defining elements of professional competences is openness to methodological innovation, i.e. the conscious and reflected application of new teaching strategies, learning organisation forms and digital tools (Barta et al., 2005).

The personal competences of teachers working in adult education provide the emotional, attitudinal and self-awareness basis for professional functioning. Empathy, tolerance and the ability of teachers to develop authentic, supportive and trusting relationships with students are of paramount importance in this area. Motivational competence helps teachers to recognize and strengthen students' internal motivation to learn, especially those returning to education after a longer learning break. Reflective thinking and a commitment to self-development are also crucial, as in the rapidly changing, flexible environment of adult education, teachers must continuously develop their own knowledge, methods and approaches. Stress tolerance, flexibility and personal example-setting are model values for adult learners and contribute to strengthening trust and commitment to learning (Barta et al., 2005).

Overall, the competencies of teachers in adult education and training form a three-fold structure: key competencies ensure the overall success of the learning process, professional competencies ensure the content and methodological quality, while personal competencies guarantee the teacher's credibility, supportive role and human quality. The close unity of these three areas creates the pedagogical foundation on which adult learners become capable of expanding their knowledge, self-development, and strengthening their active social and labour market participation (Nagypál, 2014; Kóródi et al., 2015).

Summary analysis of interviews

As part of the research – to answer the research questions – semi-structured interviews were conducted with colleagues involved in adult education. Our questions focused on main tasks, competences used and expected activities, challenges, and the current situation and regulation of adult education. In both cases, we found a strong sense of vocation and commitment. According to our interview partners, in this job, it is important

to be able to accurately assess learning needs and plan training accordingly (Research voor Beleid, 2010).

Our interviewees emphasized that in their daily work, they are faced with various needs, which must be constantly coordinated. Because of the resulting challenges, they love their work the most, because it never bores them, and they can always improve. Noordegraaf's (2015) model of "*hybrid professionalism*" here is clearly shown. They react to the heterogeneity and diversity in the group by applying different learning methods, which they learned based on their various training and experiences. They respond to different needs with good organizational and communication skills, patience, and resilience.

The interviewees were unanimous in saying that the right professional qualifications, digital competencies, as well as social and communication skills, openness to needs, and, of course, friendliness should not be lacking on either the teaching or the student side. It was pointed out that humour should not be left out either, as it facilitates many things, even in the courses. The answers to the questions show that it is important for students' input requirements to be able to make independent decisions and to take responsibility for these decisions. This is consistent with the characteristics of adult learners mentioned earlier and with the characteristics expected of adult educators.

Among the challenges they face, they clearly highlighted the diversity of students, the differences in students' backgrounds, attitudes, knowledge, and why they chose this particular course. It is very important for the respondent to be able to build on the existing knowledge and competencies of students with different backgrounds.

In response to our research question, we can say that the same main areas of practice and the same main activities and competences are important for adult educators in Serbia and Hungary. Differences are mainly in the challenges of the professional field taught.

Conclusion

It's important to note that adult education is a dynamic field, and policies and programs may evolve over time in response to changing needs and priorities. Additionally, the specific experiences of individuals in these countries may vary widely depending on their location, socioeconomic status, and personal circumstances.

The comparison of Serbian and Hungarian adult education shows that, despite the different legal and institutional frameworks and the differences in the emphasis on teacher competences, the principles of learner-centredness and lifelong learning play a central role in both countries' systems. In future developments, both countries could benefit from strategic cooperation based on the exchange of experiences, the adaptation of good practices and the strengthening of the recognition of non-formal learning.

At the same time, the study draws attention to the need for further research, especially on measuring the development and effectiveness of teacher competences, the effectiveness of learning organisation forms applied in different areas of adult education, and the impact of legal and financing structures on student outcomes. Such research can contribute to the continuous development of adult education systems, the professional support of teachers and the successful lifelong learning paths of students.

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Bettina Botos

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF INTEGRATED NONVERBAL, BODY-AWARENESS METHODS TO IMPROVE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Abstract

This paper explores the theoretical framework of integrating nonverbal, body-awareness-based methods — specifically Dance and Movement Therapy (DMT) — into teacher education programs to improve Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills. Responding to increasing social and educational demands for socio-emotional skill development, the study connects insights from emotional intelligence theory, embodiment theory, positive psychology, and psychological capital. It proposes that body-based, experiential approaches can strengthen teachers' empathy, emotion regulation, self-awareness, and relational competence, thereby improving their psychological well-being and pedagogical effectiveness. Integrating DMT into higher education may thus foster resilience and reflective capacity in future educators, enabling them to create supportive, emotionally attuned classroom environments conducive to both academic and socio-emotional growth. The study contributes to the evolving discourse on holistic, well-being-oriented teacher education through embodied and arts-based pedagogical innovation.

Problem Statement and Research Focus

The growing emphasis on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in both educational policy and broader societal expectations underscores the necessity to strengthen these competences within teacher education. SEL has been defined as "*the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.*" (CASEL, 2023). Despite their well-documented contribution to well-being, resilience, and professional effectiveness (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Zins et al., 2007), SEL skills remain underdeveloped among teachers, partly due to the persistence of traditional, content-oriented pedagogies that leave little space for experiential, relational learning (Zsolnai et al., 2015; Szabadi, 2016).

Addressing this gap, the present study explores the potential of Dance and Movement Therapy (DMT)—particularly its psychodynamic branch (PMT)—as an embodied, experiential approach to developing teachers' socio-emotional competences. DMT has been demonstrated to enhance emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal attunement through nonverbal, body-based communication (Wengrower, 2010;

Panagiotopoulou, 2018). As Betty (2013) observes, "*movement becomes both the language and the medium through which emotion and relationship are explored*" (p. 47). By integrating DMT principles into teacher education, this study aims to strengthen prospective teachers' *self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation*—core components of SEL (Durlak et al., 2011; Zsolnai, 2022). It is hypothesized that such embodied development will not only promote teachers' mental health and resilience (Jennings et al., 2017) but also foster emotionally safe and supportive classroom environments that encourage students' holistic growth. As Durlak et al. (2011) emphasize, "*effective SEL instruction improves students' social behavior and academic performance while reducing emotional distress and conduct problems*" (p. 410). Accordingly, the enhancement of teachers' own socio-emotional competences may represent a fundamental prerequisite for cultivating emotionally intelligent, inclusive, and responsive educational practices.

In Hungary, research on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has expanded steadily over the past decade, though it has yet to achieve full systemic integration into teacher education and national curricula. Prominent Hungarian scholars in this field include Anikó Zsolnai, László Kasik, Krisztián Józsa, and Szilvia Hegedűs, whose studies have primarily focused on social competence, emotional regulation, prosocial behaviour, and their pedagogical implications (Zsolnai, 2022; Kasik, 2015; Józsa & Fejes, 2012). The Hungarian discourse on SEL is closely connected to the traditions of social competence research and cooperative learning developed at the University of Szeged, as well as to educational psychology research conducted at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) and the University of Pécs. While several pilot programs and empirical studies have explored the integration of SEL into early childhood and primary education (Zsolnai et al., 2015; Hegedűs, 2019), comprehensive frameworks for teacher education are still limited. National policy documents such as the *National Core Curriculum* (2020) highlight the importance of social competence, yet implementation often remains fragmented (Szabadi, 2016). Recent studies have also examined links between SEL, well-being, emotional intelligence, and psychological capital, aligning Hungarian research with international paradigms (Józsa & Morgan, 2014; Zsolnai, 2022).

Research on the integration of Dance and Movement Therapy (DMT) into teacher training programs may provide novel pathways for examining and enriching Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) initiatives.

The Unfolding of the Theoretical Framework of this Study

The research topic exhibits a multidisciplinary character, situated at the intersection of various theoretical traditions. Its conceptual background is jointly shaped by the fields of educational science, psychology, sociology, and philosophy. The core theoretical foundations of this study are: the theory of *emotional intelligence* and the closely related and overlapping framework of *social and emotional learning (SEL)*; *embodiment theory*, and the theory of *psychological capital* from positive psychology.

Emotional Intelligence Theory

There are now numerous models of emotional intelligence (EI), and the theory has gained increasing popularity in connection with performance enhancement among employees in various organizational contexts. Both theoretical considerations and empirical evidence indicate that individual performance is significantly influenced by emotional intelligence (Neale et al., 2009). It is therefore not surprising that, following human resource professionals and corporate leaders, actors and stakeholders within the educational sphere have also begun to show interest in the performance-enhancing role of emotional intelligence. In fact, the theory of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) later emerged from the transposition of the elements of emotional intelligence into the school curriculum. Consequently, a thorough engagement with the concept of emotional intelligence is indispensable for understanding SEL, which constitutes one of the central foci of my research. In order to understand the various models of emotional intelligence, it is essential to mention Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, introduced in the 1980s, in which he identified intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences as distinct domains (Bauer, 2018). Intrapersonal intelligence refers to the capacity to perceive and understand one's own internal states and to act accordingly, whereas interpersonal intelligence denotes the ability to perceive and understand what is taking place in others and to respond on the basis of that understanding (Sparrow & Maddocks, 2000). This bidirectional process is evident in all subsequent models of emotional intelligence. A comprehensive understanding of EI also requires insight into the functioning of the human brain. According to Paul MacLean's triune brain model (J.D. Newman et al., 2009), the most ancient part of the brain, the reptilian brain, regulates primary life functions and controls the body's basic operations, such as breathing, hunger, and sleep. The limbic system, which developed subsequently and is often referred to as the emotional brain, is the region where our values, beliefs, and attitudes are formed—that is, all those processes that give rise to emotional experiences. During the course of human evolution, the neocortex—the thinking brain—developed only third, which helps explain why our unconscious, emotional brain is far more active than our logical, reasoning brain. Moreover, considerably more neural pathways extend from the emotional brain to the thinking brain than in the opposite direction. Our emotional brain transmits a vast number of signals to the thinking brain and the body through these neural pathways within a given unit of time. Communication also occurs in the opposite direction, but with lower intensity and fewer available neural pathways. Consequently, the influence of the emotional brain on our behavior and functioning is substantial. However, the thinking brain can also be activated, and its influence strengthened—an effect that is closely associated with the development of emotional intelligence. When a message from the emotional brain does not reach conscious awareness in the thinking brain, it is processed unconsciously in a region of the brain known as the anterior cingulate cortex. In such cases, we are not fully aware of the mix of emotions within us, nor of the attitudes associated with them. Through the development of emotional intelligence, it is possible to strengthen the smooth communication and cooperation between the emotional brain, the thinking brain, and the body, as well as the capacity to attend to and respond to their

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reciprocal messages (Neale et al., 2022). I will return to the role of bodily engagement in the section of my paper that elaborates on body awareness and embodiment theory. The Cartesian dictum "*I think, therefore I am*" has, in light of recent developments, increasingly been replaced in contemporary studies by the notion "*I feel, therefore I am.*" This perspective was explored in depth by the Portuguese neurobiologist Antonio Damasio in his work Descartes' Error (Damasio, 2001). The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has since been articulated through numerous definitions. In their study Applied EI, Sparrow and Knight describe emotional intelligence as a set of habituated practices that involve utilizing emotional information derived from oneself and from others, integrating emotional data into one's practical actions, and incorporating affective awareness into decision-making processes in order to achieve desired goals (Sparrow & Knight, 2006). From this standpoint, emotional intelligence can be understood as the capacity to think about our emotions (and to experience emotions about our thoughts) and to employ this reciprocal awareness in the regulation of behavior. This reflexive process enhances self-leadership and facilitates the development of more effective interpersonal relationships (S. Neale et al., 2022). The popular acceptance of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is largely attributed to Daniel Goleman's influential work Emotional Intelligence (1995), which brought the concept to global recognition. However, the most widely accepted and empirically grounded model of emotional intelligence is associated with Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer (1990, 2001, 2002). In their seminal article, which marked the birth of the construct, they defined emotional intelligence as "*the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.*" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189).

Salovey and Mayer's model places strong emphasis on the integration of affective and cognitive processes, proposing that the perception, appraisal, and expression of emotions form the foundational mechanisms through which emotional information contributes to higher-order cognitive functioning and social behavior (Kun, 2011). Goleman's approach originates from the definition proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). However, while Salovey and Mayer conceptualize emotional intelligence strictly as a set of cognitive–affective abilities, Goleman broadens the construct to include personality traits, motivational factors, and attitudinal dispositions. Consequently, his framework is classified among the mixed models of emotional intelligence, integrating both ability-based and trait-oriented components. According to Goleman's original model, emotional intelligence comprises five core dimensions: 1) awareness of one's own emotions; 2) regulation and management of emotions; 3) self-motivation; 4) recognition of others' emotions; and 5) the management of interpersonal relationships. Each of these components encompasses a range of associated qualities and personality traits. Under the domain of emotional awareness, Goleman includes self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-esteem. The dimension of emotion regulation comprises self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, and innovativeness. Finally, self-motivation is understood as an umbrella category that integrates such dispositions and traits as achievement orientation, commitment, initiative, and optimism. The component

recognition of others' emotions encompasses empathy, understanding of others, the ability to recognize and develop potential in others, service orientation, the appreciation of diversity, and political awareness. Finally, relationship management involves a wide range of social and interpersonal competencies, including influence, communication, conflict management, facilitation of change, relationship building, collaboration, cooperation, and team capabilities (Goleman, 1995, 2002). Goleman later refined his model, ultimately organizing emotional intelligence into four principal dimensions, each representing a core component of emotional competence: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-regulation, (3) social awareness, and (4) relationship management or regulation. Goleman and his colleagues argue that the effectiveness of workplace performance is determined by the dynamic interaction of these four domains (Kun, 2011). It is important to recognize that the conceptual diversity of emotional intelligence is closely intertwined with the challenges surrounding its measurement and operationalization as a psychological construct.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

A number of empirical studies (Greene, Hariton, Robins & Flye, 2011; Kasik, 2010, 2015; Zsolnai, 2013) have demonstrated that the effectiveness of social behavior is largely dependent on the richness of an individual's repertoire of social and emotional skills and abilities. These competencies play a crucial role in shaping adaptive and effective social behavior that corresponds to situational and contextual demands, facilitates successful participation in community life, and supports orientation within interpersonal relationships. Social skills thus encompass specific verbal and nonverbal patterns of behavior that regulate interaction and communication in social contexts.

Social skills determine specific verbal and nonverbal patterns of behavior that govern interpersonal interaction. Moreover, the development of social skills can be inferred from the functioning of emotional competencies, as emotional and social domains are deeply interrelated. Within social interactions, the ability to express, regulate, and recognize emotions—as well as to interpret the messages they convey—is of fundamental importance for effective communication, empathy, and relational attunement. Empirical research (Halberstadt, Denham & Dunsmore, 2001; Saarni, 1997, 1999) has shown that individuals who are able to understand their own emotions as well as those of others tend to be more successful in their interpersonal relationships than those who possess weaker emotional understanding (Zsolnai & Rácz, 2015). Consequently, social and emotional competencies are closely interrelated, and the presence and effective use of both exert a significant influence on social behavior and the formation of interpersonal relationships. In contemporary scholarship, these domains are increasingly discussed together under the integrated concept of *socio-emotional competence* ("socio-emotional competencies"). In the United States, a comprehensive pedagogical methodology and educational framework has been developed to foster social and emotional skills. The concept of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) emerged as a multidisciplinary initiative, created collaboratively by educators, researchers, practicing teachers, and psychologists, including Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Schwab-Stone, and

Shriver (Elias et al., 1997). These scholars recognized that, in order to achieve interventions at the societal level—aimed at cultivating communities composed of more empathetic, calm, and mentally healthy individuals—the educational system, and specifically schools, must serve as the primary site for implementation. Specifically, this pertains to *education for life*, or social and emotional learning. Researchers identified that, beyond the teaching of thematic subjects, it is essential to introduce curricula specifically aimed at life skills and social–emotional development. The goal was to design SEL programs that could be integrated into school curricula, grounded in the principle that every member of society has a right to learning and personal development. Consequently, socio-emotional development programs should be made universally accessible within the educational system. Daniel Goleman also became a significant advocate and disseminator of the SEL concept, as previously discussed in the context of emotional intelligence. With his book *Emotional Intelligence* (Goleman, 1995) and his extensive research and lecturing activities, Daniel Goleman popularized the concept of emotional intelligence and, later, social and emotional learning. To coordinate SEL research and programs, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was established in 1994 at the University of Chicago. Its mission is to explore effective methods for developing social and emotional skills, to promote the concept of social and emotional learning, and to design and evaluate related training programs. SEL programs have embedded the development of emotional intelligence components—such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, empathy, and relationship management—into school curricula. These EI components support students in effectively managing both themselves and their interpersonal relationships. Research has demonstrated that more advanced emotional competencies are associated with better academic and workplace performance, as well as more effective leadership styles (Petrides et al., 2004; van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004). Beyond academic and professional success, emotional and social competencies are positively correlated with broader indicators of life adjustment and well-being. Higher levels of socio-emotional competence are linked to elevated self-esteem, more adaptive coping strategies, greater life satisfaction, and improved psychological well-being (Bastian et al., 2005; Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Palmer et al., 2002; Salovey et al., 2002). Furthermore, research has shown that individuals with more advanced social and emotional competencies exhibit lower levels of stress and fatigue, as well as reduced burnout (Brown & Schutte, 2006; Saklofske et al., 2007; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002). Meta-analyses examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and physical, psychosomatic, and mental health (Schutte et al., 2007; Martins et al., 2010) report that the positive correlation between health and emotional intelligence indicates that higher social and emotional abilities are associated with better physical, psychosomatic, and mental well-being. Conversely, various personality disorders and depression are more prevalent in individuals with lower levels of emotional intelligence, according to Salovey and Schutte and their colleagues (Salovey et al., 1995; Schutte et al., 1998; Kun, 2011). These findings provide a clear rationale for the focus of the present research on the development of EI and SEL among pedagogy students. In brief, social and emotional learning helps children and young people acquire

and develop a range of attitudes, skills, and behavioral patterns that enable them to become competent individuals socially, emotionally, and academically. Social and emotional competencies, among other benefits, support the formation of quality interpersonal relationships, facilitate effective social problem-solving, aid in navigating challenging social situations, and enable the appropriate expression and interpretation of both negative and positive emotions (Frey, Fisher & Smith, 2022). All of these factors contribute to and influence an individual's mental and physical health. The wheel model developed by CASEL staff provides the most widely used overview of the primary domains encompassed by socio-emotional competencies. Based on the wheel model and CASEL's framework, SEL programs aim to develop the following areas:

1) Self-Awareness: The ability to recognize and accurately perceive one's own emotions, understand personal strengths, and cultivate self-confidence.
2) Self-Management: Skills related to stress management, self-discipline, self-control, emotion regulation, and intrinsic motivation.
3) Social Awareness: Empathy, the ability to understand others, acceptance of perspectives from diverse backgrounds, and openness to valuing diversity.
4) Relationship Skills: Communication competence, the ability to engage socially, skills in building relationships, and teamwork.
5) Responsible Decision-Making: The ability to interpret, assess, and evaluate different situations and choices, make ethical decisions, and anticipate their potential consequences.

Programs that target the development of any of these socio-emotional competencies are referred to internationally as *Social and Emotional Learning* (SEL) programs. By now, numerous studies have confirmed that these skills are not only teachable but can also be developed for any student by teachers working within school settings. According to CASEL, SEL is defined as "*the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions*" (CASEL, 2023). CASEL experts have also developed a ten-principle assessment framework and place strong emphasis on measuring the quality and effectiveness of SEL programs. Since then, numerous studies, evaluations, publications, and reports have been produced under CASEL's guidance. Subsequently, CASEL staff have conducted training for SEL specialists and school representatives and developed a variety of manuals, tools, activity collections, and policy guidelines, making them widely accessible. They also designed the first statewide socio-emotional development program and framework in the United States, covering grades from kindergarten through 12th grade. In 2004, this program was officially approved for implementation in Illinois schools. It is important to note that within the CASEL framework, SEL encompasses far more than the mere development of students' socio-emotional competencies.

Figure 1: The SEL framework
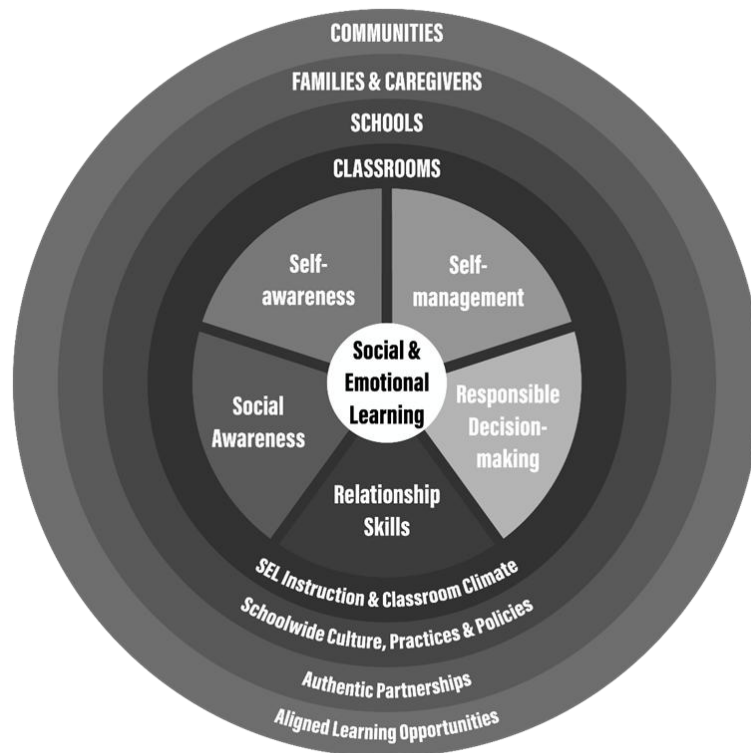
SEL also functions as a school-wide development framework. The teaching of SEL skills supports the entire school in creating a mindful and attentive learning environment. The development of socio-emotional competencies is not solely directed at students, as these skills are applied beyond an isolated classroom setting. According to the CASEL framework, SEL supports interactions at the classroom level, the whole school, with families, and within broader community contexts. Consequently, the development of teachers, school leaders, and parents is also essential. SEL thus comprises a set of skills that students use across multiple contexts, and, when considering the educational system as a whole, also involves the adults who interact with them (Frey, Fisher & Smith, 2022). Based on the introduction and implementation of SEL programs over the past decade, CASEL has concluded that adult socio-emotional learning is an essential prerequisite for the systemic sustainability of SEL in the United States. If the SEL approach is integrated into all adult interactions, it would not remain limited to a few schools but could become a cultural norm across a broader societal context (CASEL, 2023).

Positive Psychology

In light of the above, the present research is also connected to the theory of positive psychology. Given that SEL skills have been shown to contribute to and influence an individual's mental and physical health, SEL can be regarded as a preventive approach. It may be considered a tool for the prevention of physical and mental illnesses, psychological blocks, and the relational disturbances that often underlie them. From a

preventive perspective, SEL is closely connected to the theory of positive psychology, which emphasizes prevention rather than remediation in the context of mental health challenges. With the rise of positive psychology, interventions increasingly focus on promoting both individual and community-level development (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The development of social and emotional skills, and their integration into the school curriculum, can clearly be regarded as an interventionist approach, as it is intended to prevent psychological blocks and mental health problems. SEL programs not only offer solutions for addressing and managing existing issues (e.g., behavioral disorders, autism, antisocial disorders, ADD, ADHD, etc.), but also serve as tools for effective prevention. Research indicates that the level of socio-emotional competence has a direct impact on individuals' emotional and social lives, and consequently on their physical and mental health. The promotion of students' well-being and the development of their relationships are elements closely linked to positive psychology. Positive pedagogy emphasizes the importance of positive emotions, constructive human relationships, and enriching experiences within educational contexts, enabling teachers to create supportive and encouraging learning environments. SEL can be understood as a methodology that serves this purpose, as it specifically assists students in understanding, expressing, and regulating their emotions. In this way, SEL helps develop strengths, personality traits, and key psychological skills that, based on positive psychology research, contribute to an individual's mental and physical health, overall well-being, and the prevention of mental health problems.

Psychological Capital Theory

From the perspective of the sociology of education, my research is most closely connected to psychological capital theory. As outlined above, the practice of social and emotional education constitutes an investment in students' long-term mental well-being and health. Thanks to the "spillover effect" characteristic of forms of capital, these benefits extend beyond the educational context, producing positive effects in other areas of life as well. The spillover effect refers to the process by which an investment or integration in one economic sector (typically positive) produces ripple effects in other sectors of the economy. In the context of psychological capital developed through SEL, it can be argued that the enhancement of social and emotional competencies enriches the individual with psychological resources that also contribute to the accumulation of social capital, as conceptualized by Coleman. Social capital, after all, is realized in interpersonal relationships (Pusztai, 2015). Through social and emotional learning, individuals gain the opportunity to establish broader and deeper social connections (Kun, 2011). Their relational networks expand and strengthen, potentially spanning across social classes, which, according to Coleman's theory, represents a significant factor in compensating for social disadvantages. It can also be argued that the benefits of developing individual psychological capital ripple outward as social benefits—effectively transforming psychological capital into social capital. Social and emotional competencies have been shown to reduce school dropout rates, increase graduation rates, and support successful employment, which in turn are associated with lower unemployment, reduced crime, and

the spread of democratic values. Considering that the development of social and emotional skills proportionally increases the likelihood of graduation and employment, these effects can also be understood as a spillover into physical and economic capital. Accordingly, the development of psychological capital also increases access to economic capital. Drawing on Bourdieu's framework, it can even be conceptualized as a transformation into cultural capital. Social and emotional skills acquired and internalized through social and emotional learning, once stabilized, can become part of an individual's habitus, manifesting in their behavior and, from a Bourdieusian perspective, appearing as incorporated cultural capital. Thus, the development of psychological capital offers schools an opportunity to enhance academic outcomes, support students' mental health, and lay the foundation for future success in the labor market. Considering that psychological capital appears to be developable even through short-term intervention programs (Luthans et al., 2006), it is hoped that the planned three-month DMT-based SEL development programs in this research will produce measurable positive outcomes, alongside longer-term processes. In summary, it can be concluded that the development of psychological capital represents an intervention point within school life that encourages the realization of students' potential and contributes to both academic success and future life achievements. The components of psychological capital have already demonstrated their significance for students' psychological well-being and academic performance. Research generally indicates that the four components of psychological capital jointly support academic achievement, well-being, satisfaction, the development of other psychological resources, and the foundation for successful adult life (Avey et al., 2011; Jafri, 2013; Luthans et al., 2013). Based on these findings, the integration of social and emotional skills into school practice can be viewed as an application of psychological capital in an educational context. In other words, SEL represents a systemic approach to applying psychological capital, contributing to academic achievement as well as the psychological well-being of both teachers and students.

Dance and Movement Therapy (DMT)

Movement and dance therapy can be considered a genuine psychotherapeutic process when the bodily experiences that emerge during practice, together with the memories and associations linked to specific body parts, are verbally processed and integrated into a narrative framework. Thus, several conditions must be met for the method to be applied psychotherapeutically—one of the most important being its incorporation into verbal reflection and narrative meaning-making (Simon, 2021). In my research, I adapt the working methods and tools of movement and dance therapy, applying body-awareness techniques within a pedagogical environment—specifically in teacher education—as instruments for the development of social and emotional skills. I also regard this approach as a potential methodology of social and emotional education and learning. Nevertheless, the opportunity for verbal reflection is also integrated into the process. The methodology of movement and dance therapy is closely related to body-awareness techniques. A growing body of research in recent decades has explored the potential applications of

methods integrating body-awareness techniques, although this field still offers numerous opportunities for further investigation. Studies have emerged from medical, psychological, and pedagogical perspectives alike. In Hungary, however, relatively few analyses have been conducted—particularly those examining body-awareness practices from a pedagogical standpoint, which constitutes the primary focus of the present research. Across the various approaches to body-awareness, it can be stated that beyond their focus on bodily sensations, all of these methods engage with the recognition and regulation of emotional processes. Moreover, group-based body-awareness practices place particular emphasis on experiencing and working through relational competences. Each specific method prioritizes the development of different sets of abilities and skills. "*Empathic capacity appears to be more easily developed through active body-awareness methods, particularly in movement and dance therapy, as well as in the practice of tai chi chuan.*" (Korbai, 2019) A key component of emotional intelligence (EI) and social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies is emotion regulation and self-regulation, both of which are closely associated with the regulation of the autonomic nervous system. Considering the interconnection between body and mind, the application of dance and movement therapy (DMT) emerges as a legitimate and promising approach for fostering emotion regulation, empathy, and the development of SEL-related skills. Another essential element of EI and SEL competencies is self-awareness, which constitutes a prerequisite for self-regulation, since one can only regulate those internal states and processes that are consciously perceived and recognized. During dance and movement therapy sessions — even through simple movement exercises such as walking, running, or rolling — continuous self-perception, self-monitoring, and bodily awareness are cultivated, thereby strengthening the embodied foundations of self-regulation and emotional competence. (Merényi, 2004) There are both passive and active body awareness techniques. Methods based on passive body awareness techniques involve focusing on bodily sensations while remaining in a motionless, static state, such as in mindfulness, relaxation, meditation, or autogenic training practices. In contrast, the dance and movement therapy (DMT) approach that constitutes the focus of this study is more closely related to active body awareness techniques. As Korbai (2019) explains, "*In methods based on active body awareness techniques, attention to bodily sensations represents only one component of the process; practitioners observe and become aware of their bodily sensations in various postures and during movement. Here, attention is directed both inward—to the bodily sensations experienced during movement—and outward—to the connection with the physical and social environment and the bodily sensations arising from these interactions.*" Given that the research process involves testing a body awareness session based on Psychodynamic Movement and Dance Therapy (PMT) in the context of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) development, it is necessary to briefly introduce this particular therapeutic approach. The Psychodynamic Movement and Dance Therapy (PMT) approach, which builds on the unity of body and mind, was developed by Márta Merényi in the 1980s (Merényi, 2004; 2008). Today, a growing number of professionals in Hungary apply this method, and several hundred studies have already been published on its use and outcomes. Unlike most traditional and contemporary body

awareness techniques, which are typically individual or solitary practices, Psychodynamic Movement and Dance Therapy (PMT) emphasizes relational processes in addition to bodily awareness. In PMT, attunement to bodily sensations represents only one aspect of the therapeutic focus; interpersonal connection, movement-based interaction, and the symbolic use of shared space also play a central role in the process. (Korbai, 2019) "*Psychodynamic Movement and Dance Therapy (PMT) is a self-explorative and psychotherapeutic method that integrates the creative and healing potentials inherent in body-awareness exercises, movement improvisation, and dance with the tools of psychoanalytically oriented group therapy. It simultaneously attends to the dynamics, fluctuations, and tensions of individual bodily and emotional experiences, as well as to the emerging somatic and affective processes within the group, exploring their interrelations and the underlying group dynamics.*"[1] (Vermes, Felelős test. Exkarnáció és inkarnáció ritmusai, 2023) The PMT method can be described as a nonverbal psychotherapeutic process, in which interpersonal relationships are emphasized through group and paired movement exercises. The process highlights the importance of affective attunement, synchronization, nonverbal communication, and continuous intersubjective engagement. In PMT, relational work and creative improvisation are built upon the foundation of embodied, body-awareness experiences, integrating both individual somatic awareness and collective dynamics. Participants learn to move and dance both individually and in relational contexts, gaining the opportunity to "rewrite" not only their bodily self-perception but also the patterns of their interpersonal connections at the level of fundamental bodily experiences. (Incze, 2008) All of these relational aspects justify examining the PMT-based process at the core of this research from the perspective of social competence development. Dance therapy methods present an even more diverse picture in the international literature, as numerous other movement and dance therapy (DMT) group interventions exist. When mapping the effects of DMT on various psychological variables, Koch and colleagues (2014) reported in a meta-analysis that DMT effectively enhances quality of life and reduces clinical symptoms of depression and anxiety. Positive effects were also observed in subjective well-being, positive affect and emotions, and body image. The method shows promising results in the domain of interpersonal competence, though the authors note that the heterogeneity of available data indicates that further research is needed in this area. Since Koch and colleagues (2014) primarily reviewed individual DMT interventions in their meta-analysis, the relational competencies within the group-based PMT method may carry even greater significance (Korbai, 2019). This observation further justifies the implementation of the present study, which examines the connections between movement and dance therapy and social-emotional learning and development.

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[1]The translation is provided by the author of this article.

Other Related and Complementary Theoretical Domains

Given the research's connection to community-based education, its philosophical foundation is rooted in constructivism, whose first major proponent was the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. Constructivism represents a pedagogical model that encourages learners to adopt a participatory and interactive stance within the learning process. It is therefore a form of action-oriented teaching, the aim of which is to ensure that learners do not receive information passively but actively engage in the construction of knowledge. The constructivist model is grounded in the assumption that each individual develops through processes of self-construction. The main principles of constructivist theory that I highlight as particularly relevant to this research and its observational context include: *human interaction with the environment*, *the cultivation of meaning through lived experience*, and the notion of the *active organism*. From a psychological perspective, the study may also draw on Harry Stack Sullivan's interpersonal theory of personality, particularly in relation to examining the effects of movement improvisation on personality development and interpersonal relationships. Sullivan's central premise was that an individual's personality and *sense of self* evolve through interactions with their social environment and through the perception and interpretation of these interactions. Movement and dance therapy sessions provide a safe space for participants to experience and explore self-perception and self-awareness as individuals within a group context, through nonverbal, movement-based social interactions. Owing to the intrinsic relationship between bodily experience and the experience of the Other, it is also necessary to refer to the philosophies of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Emmanuel Lévinas, as well as to the broader phenomenological tradition. The work of the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty is particularly foundational for phenomenological and embodiment theories concerning the lived body and embodied perception. (Vermes, 2023) Phenomenologists reject the notion of objective research. They maintain that the analysis of everyday human behavior leads to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality. Rather than collecting conventional empirical data, phenomenologists focus on the study of conscious experience. They argue that individuals should be examined in order to understand the unique ways in which each person reflects and embodies the society in which they live. The philosophical grounding for the movement-therapeutic aspects of this research can be found in contemporary phenomenological inquiries concerning passive modes of relating, non-intentional feelings, moods that cannot be clearly identified as discrete affects, as well as kinaesthetic sensations and experiences of rhythm—all of which may serve as key dimensions of the movement therapy sessions I intend to study. (Vermes, 2023) As Merleau-Ponty emphasizes, he does not reject either the laws described by the natural sciences or socially constructed knowledge; rather, he calls attention to the fact that these can each contribute only a single dimension to the interpretation of reality, and that none of them can be totalized in explaining individual experience. In his view, perception cannot be universalized, as it is fundamentally shaped by individual bodily experience. (Kiss, 2021) Phenomenology contributes to addressing the mind–body problem by seeking to understand the extent to which our embodiment

determines and influences our experiences of the world, of ourselves, and of others. (Zahavi & Gallagher, 2008, p. 136)

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion illustrates the complexity of the theoretical framework underlying a study that aims to examine the impact of an adaptive movement and dance therapy process on the development of social and emotional competences among students of pedagogy. The researcher's central assumption is that through engagement in movement and dance therapy practices, pedagogy students can acquire—or further develop—skills such as empathy, emotional regulation, awareness and regulation of bodily sensations, self-acceptance and acceptance of others, focused attention, emotional containment, and a range of other relational, social, and emotional competencies. Possessing and refining these abilities may enable pedagogy students to become more authentic, emotionally attuned, and collaborative educators, capable of establishing high-quality interpersonal relationships with their students and fostering a supportive classroom climate. In this way, they may also more effectively facilitate the socio-emotional development of their students throughout their teaching careers. The movement and dance therapy process is expected to shape participants' social and emotional learning (SEL) by providing opportunities for them to experiment with and embody alternative behavioral patterns beyond their habitual modes of action and interaction. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that participation in such therapeutic movement practices may enhance the mental and physical well-being of teacher education students and promote their self-awareness and self-reflective capacities. These developments may help them attain a more integrated mind–body state, equipping them with the resilience and reflective awareness necessary to navigate the everyday challenges inherent in the teaching profession.

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Sadia Nur Habib – Balázs Németh

WHAT MOTIVATES ACADEMICIANS TO BE LIFELONG LEARNERS? A STUDY ON FACULTY MEMBERS WORKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BANGLADESH

Abstract

This paper investigates the motivational factors that drive academicians in Bangladesh to engage in lifelong learning and continuous professional development. Drawing upon Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the study identifies intrinsic and extrinsic motivators influencing faculty members' commitment to learning. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 105 academicians across higher education institutions through an anonymous online survey. Results indicate that intrinsic rewards and self-efficacy positively influence intrinsic and identified motivation, whereas extrinsic rewards play a significant but context-dependent role. The study highlights that in collectivist societies such as Bangladesh, extrinsic motivators, when aligned with individual values. can reinforce intrinsic motivation. Implications for institutional leadership and policy formulation to enhance academic professional development are discussed.

Introduction

The present world is characterized by fierce competition as in our modern economy and labor market, competition has become a defining and prominent phenomenon (Cristian, 2014). Another dominant feature of our time is volatility, marked by continuous and rapid change across every sector (Rehman et al., 2023). The fleeting nature of information, significant labor market fluctuations, and the changes in the life perspective of people have made continuous adult learning a necessity (Cristian, 2014; Niemi et al., 2015). In this context, investment in professional development is essential for truly fulfilling an organization's mission, vision, and goals (Cristian, 2014). It reflects a commitment to the growth and well-being of individuals, enabling them to thrive and contribute meaningfully to a shared purpose (Matiba, 2023). This is why continuous professional development and the need for lifelong learning have become major concerns for today's human resource managers.

The concept of lifelong learning extends beyond formal education and includes informal and non-formal learning activities. The domain of lifelong learning is much wider, and it is hard to have a unified definition of the concepts (Aspin et al., 2000; Duță & Rafailă, 2014). However, for this study, continuous professional development as formal learning is going to be addressed as lifelong learning. The studies conducted on the learning and teaching behavior of primary and secondary-level teachers have identified

motivation and self-directed learning as strong influencers in seeking continuous professional development for teachers (Hein et al., 2019). Continuous learning is not obvious; rather, it depends on the individual's motivation to learn (Shulman & Shulman, 2009). Teachers must dedicate their time and intellectual resources to foster meaningful learning and boost their professional know-how. Therefore, a teacher's motivation to participate in professional learning activities plays a vital role in shaping the effectiveness of continuous professional development (Belay et. al., 2024). Therefore, motivation for learning can be a good predictor of the learning and teaching activities of university faculties (Hein et al., 2019).

This study is designed to explore the different factors or forces that influence academics' motivation for continuous professional development in the context of Bangladesh The researcher in order to gather relevant literature searched the Scopus database using the keywords "*Academicians and Motivation and Lifelong Learning*", this search found no relevant article, then again, a search was done using "*Faculty and Motivation and Lifelong Learning*", this search yielded only 7 documents but none of them were directly related with the topic. Then again using the keywords "*Teacher and Motivation and Continuous Professional development*" was done, this time 177 documents were found, among those documents a good number of articles are related to digital literacy and language learning of teachers, and also a major proportion of articles about teachers' motivation about continuous professional development have investigated the primary and high school level teachers' motivation for continuous professional development. The question is why faculty motivation is less researched in comparison to that of students and K-12 teachers (Daumiller et al., 2020). On these grounds this study intends to address the following research questions:

1) What intrinsic factors motivate academics in Bangladesh to engage in lifelong learning?
2) What extrinsic factors motivate academics in Bangladesh to pursue lifelong learning?
3) Is there any impact of gender on the relationship between motivational factors and the lifelong learning intention of academics in Bangladesh?

Research Gap and Rationale

Daumiller et al. (2020) argue that the limited research on faculty motivation for learning may stem from the assumption that faculty members are already highly motivated. As a result, researchers may overlook this population, believing that no underlying problem requires investigation. Considering the substantial effort and time needed to earn a PhD (and its prerequisite degrees), the limited availability of academic positions (Woolston, 2015), and the generally low levels of salary satisfaction reported in the academic profession (Cyranoski et al., 2011), it is reasonable to assume that those who manage to become faculty members are highly driven individuals (Daumiller et al., 2020). Another factor contributing to the scarcity of research is the reluctance of scholars to involve their colleagues as participants. Also, methodological constraints, particularly the difficulty of

securing large and representative samples, pose challenges for conducting and generalizing findings on faculty motivation (Daumiller et al., 2020).

However, understanding faculty motivation remains important, as evidence suggests several concerning trends in faculty research and teaching despite their recognized value. Although research funding has increased in the USA, the number of articles published in frontline peer-reviewed journals has declined (Daumiller et al., 2020; Litwin, 2014). Also, institutions with high reputations are in jeopardy of balancing teaching quality and research goals (Daumiller et al., 2020; Eagan et al., 2014). This workload contributes to the high levels of stress and burnout frequently reported by academic staff members in studies conducted in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States (Catano et al., 2010; Daumiller et al., 2020; Kinman & Kinman., 2006; Winefield et al., 2008).

Research on teacher motivation is well established in the field of educational psychology, and several studies have examined teachers' engagement in lifelong learning. However, teachers' motivation for lifelong learning remains an underexplored topic (Goldsmith et al., 2014). Therefore, research initiative is needed to investigate the personal motivational factors that lead teachers to engage in lifelong learning for their professional development. Also, the quality of higher education in Bangladesh has yet to reach international standards as none of her universities are among the top one thousand universities at the QS world ranking or Times Higher Educational Ranking. This research might contribute to the understanding of their motivation for continuous professional development and how the situation can be improved.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Academics' motivation to engage in professional learning or lifelong learning is a multifaceted construct, as individuals may participate for a variety of reasons. Previous studies have identified and highlighted a range of factors that drive teachers' motivation for continuous professional development and lifelong learning (Belay et al., 2024), and these motives are typically classified as either intrinsic or extrinsic (Zhang et al., 2021). These forces range from intellectual curiosity and professional development to institutional demands and societal expectations (Abakah, 2023; Belay et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2021).

The rapid advancement of technology has made digital learning resources more accessible and expanded opportunities for global collaboration for academics. However, as mentioned earlier, the success of continuous learning and the intention to engage in lifelong learning depend on learners' underlying motivation to learn (Islam et al., 2015; Matiba, 2023). Motivation is crucial as it determines the success and the sustainability of learning engagement (McMillan et al., 2016).

Studies involving both faculty and schoolteachers have found that individuals who are strongly driven by external rewards are less likely to choose the teaching profession. At the same time, teachers tend to derive a sense of ego enhancement and personal fulfillment from their students' success, which in turn motivates them to engage in continuous learning and professional development to improve their performance (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Gopang, 2016; Hildebrandt & Eom, 2011; Nassar, 2018).

McMillan et al. (2016) also found that schoolteachers in Ireland enjoy participating in professional development activities when they perceive them as important for their personal and professional growth and when these activities meet their corresponding needs. In their study, personal curiosity, career advancement, and the desire to address a perceived need for improved performance were identified as key intrinsic factors for motivation to engage in professional development (Matiba, 2023; McMillan et al., 2016). In their study conducted on schoolteachers in China, Zhang et al. (2021) found that intrinsic motivators play a crucial role in the success of professional development. Factors such as teaching experience, self-efficacy, and conceptions of learning have been shown to influence teachers' motivation to participate in continuous professional development (Zhang et al., 2021).

Although teachers can be motivated by intrinsic motivators, they are not free from external influence (Hildebrandt & Eom, 2011; Matiba, 2023). In addition, studies have found that teachers are motivated by various workplace conditions, including interactions with coworkers, administrative support, opportunities for career advancement, and the desire for recognition from students, peers, and the broader community. They are also motivated by the professional autonomy that allows them to make decisions based on their expertise (Hirschhorn, 1993; Hildebrandt & Eom, 2011; Johnson, 1990; McMillan et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2021).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has been applied in the past to investigate volunteer motivational elements and faculty motivation in their job (Daumiller et al., 2020; Lam et al., 2010; Oostlander et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2021). In Self-Determination Theory, human motivation is explained as a spectrum extrinsic to intrinsic (Urhahne et al., 2023). When people's basic psychological needs are met, intrinsic motivation naturally arises and works due to the internal drive for self-development. On the other hand, when as individual works to attain a goal due to external influence like money or regulations it is termed as extrinsic motivation (Daumiller et al, 2020; Urhahne et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). Therefore, analyzing how social circumstances support or impede individuals' experiences of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, all of which are connected, can provide an important understanding of academics' motivation for lifelong learning (Daumiller et al., 2020). Using Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a theoretical framework, this research explores how intrinsic and extrinsic factors shape different forms of motivation—ranging from autonomous (intrinsic, identified) to controlled (external) regulation. The findings have implications for institutional policy, faculty support systems, and the design of professional development programs in Bangladesh and similar contexts.

In their study, McMillan et al. (2016) identified *"self-efficacy, conceptions of learning, prior learning experience and teaching experience"* at the individual level which are responsible for teachers' motivation to be lifelong learners (McMillan et al., 2016; Urhahne et al., 2023; Wigfield et al., 2000; Zhang et al., 2021). In this study, we classify these variables as intrinsic motivational factors. "*Self-efficacy*" refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific task successfully (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995; Wigfield et al., 2000). Research indicates that teachers with high self-efficacy are more

likely to be enthusiastic about engaging in continuous learning (Zhang et al., 2021 In their study, Leech et al. (2015) developed a scale to measure the motivation of faculty members for conducting research, from which the present study adopted the construct of "*intrinsic reward*" as an intrinsic motivational factor for learning. "*Conception of learning*" explains how learners perceive the intellectual process and accumulation of knowledge and learning. If educators perceive "*intelligence as fixed*", they are less likely to engage in learning, and if they perceive it as flexible or developable through learning, they are more likely to be motivated for continuous professional development (Zhang et al., 2021).

In their study, Zhang et al. (2021) identified "*collegial support, principal leadership, work pressure, emotional pressure and task autonomy*" as school-level motivational factors. These factors operate outside the individual and can elicit identified, introjected or externally regulated forms of motivation and drive for continuous learning; therefore, in this study, they are treated as extrinsic motivational variables. However, in Self-Determination Theory, autonomy and relatedness are termed as intrinsic factors for motivation. However, "*task autonomy*" and "*collegial support*" or "*peer support*" are studied as external factor in this study, as they are regarded as how the educator perceived the support and regulations of their workplace (Zhang et al., 2021). The extrinsic rewards variable is adopted from Leech et al. (2015) and Matiba (2023). Matiba (2023) conducted a study on faculties in Nigeria and found financial support as a variable for motivation. In this study, the term "*opportunities*" refers to financial and non-financial forms of institutional support, which are treated as extrinsic motivational factors given Bangladesh's status as a developing economy with an evolving higher education system.

Drawing on the existing literature, the present study examined the following research hypotheses using the research framework shown in Figure 1.

H$_1$: Intrinsic motivational factors positively influence academics' motivation for lifelong learning.

We divided the main hypothesis into H$_{1a}$-H$_{1i}$, sub-hypotheses to investigate the relationship between each factor and the different levels of motivation described in STD. So, H$_{1a}$-Sense of Efficacy influences controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{1b}$ Conception of learning influences controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{1c}$ Intrinsic rewards influence controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{1d}$ Sense of Efficacy influences identified regulation for lifelong learning; H$_{1e}$ Conception of learning influences identified regulations for lifelong learning; H$_{1f}$ Intrinsic rewards influence identified regulations for lifelong learning; H$_{1g}$ Sense of Efficacy influences intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{1h}$ Conception of learning intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning; and H$_{1i}$ Intrinsic rewards influence intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning.

H$_2$: Extrinsic motivational factors positively influence academics' motivation for lifelong learning.

The sub-hypotheses about the relation between extrinsic factors and level of motivation are the following: H$_{2a}$-Leadership influences controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{2b}$ Extrinsic rewards influence controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{2c}$ Peer

support influences controlled motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{2d}$ Leadership influences identified regulations for lifelong learning; H$_{2e}$ Extrinsic rewards influence identified regulations for lifelong learning; H$_{2f}$ Peer support influences identified regulations for lifelong learning; H$_{2g}$ Leadership influences intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{2h}$ Extrinsic rewards influence intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning; H$_{2i}$ Peer support influences intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning.

H$_3$: Gender has no impact on academics' motivation for lifelong learning.

Figure 1: Research Framework to study academics' motivation for continuous professional development in Bangladesh
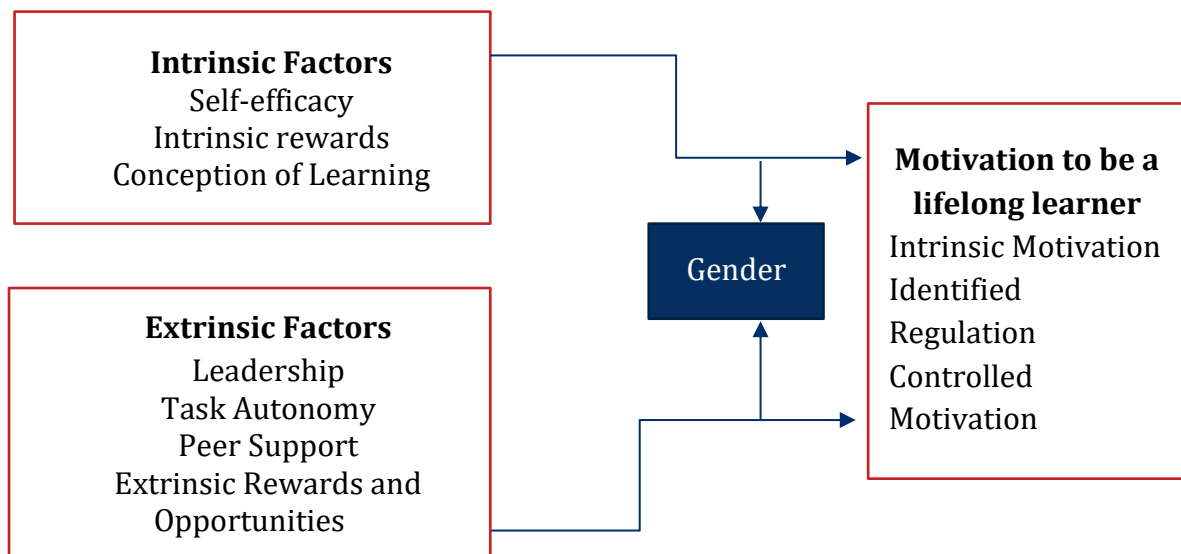
Source: Authors' elaboration

Methodology

Sampling

According to Bangladesh Education Statistics (2021), 30,976 faculties are working in tertiary-level education in Bangladesh. From the sample frame 30 institutions were selected, and 500 faculties were selected through stratified random sampling. The selected faculties were sent the questionnaire via email but after one week, only 7 responses were recorded. The researcher was then forced to change the sampling technique, and the snowball sampling technique was employed. So, 105 faculties responded who are working in 22 different higher education institutions in Bangladesh.

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire as given at Appendix 1, was developed based on validated scales. All items used a 5-point Likert scale.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0. To assess the validity and internal consistency of the measurement scales, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring with Varimax rotation was conducted. As the sample size is 105, factor loadings above 0.5 are acceptable and values above 0.60 are more acceptable (Samuels, 2017), the values above 0.60 have been accepted. Also, the test for sample adequacy was done using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy, the value is 0.792, which is above the reference value of 0.5 (Kaiser, 1974; Samuels, 2017); and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (*p* < .001), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Factor loadings and reliability statistics are summarized in Appendix 2.

Items with factor loadings below .50 were excluded from further analysis. The EFA resulted in a clear factor structure for most constructs. Notably, the Task Autonomy construct was removed from the model due to consistently low factor loadings across all items. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the retained constructs ranged from .595 to .928, with most exceeding the acceptable threshold of .70 (Hair & Tatham, 1995), indicating adequate to strong internal consistency.

Findings and Discussion

A total of 105 faculty members from higher education institutions in Bangladesh participated in the study. The demographic profile of the participants is presented in Table 1. The sample comprised 60 males (57.1%) and 45 females (42.9%). The majority of respondents belonged to the 31–40 age group (n = 73, 69.5%), followed by the 21–30 age group (n = 20, 19.0%). In terms of academic rank, most participants held positions as lecturers (n = 41, 39.0%) or assistant professors (n = 39, 37.1%). This demographic profile indicates that the sample primarily consisted of early- to mid-career academicians.

Table 1: Participant Information *(N = 105)*

	Participants	**N**
Gender	Male	60
	Female	45
Age Groups	21-30	20
	31-40	73
	41-50	11
	51-60	1
Designation	Lecturer	41
	Assistant Professor	39
	Associate Professor	17
	Professor	8

Source: Data analysis of the current study

The hypothesis testing results (Summarized in Table 2) revealed distinct patterns of influence among intrinsic and extrinsic predictors across three motivational outcomes derived from Self-Determination Theory. For intrinsic predictors, Conception of Learning

was the only significant predictor of Controlled Motivation (β = .232, *p* = .033). Sense of Efficacy uniquely predicted Identified Regulation (β = .243, *p* = .025), while Intrinsic Rewards significantly predicted Intrinsic Motivation (β = .198, *p* = .049). Sense of Efficacy and Conception of Learning did not significantly predict Intrinsic Motivation (*p* > .05).

For extrinsic predictors, Extrinsic Rewards emerged as the most consistent significant predictor, positively influencing Controlled Motivation (β = .283, *p* = .012), Identified Regulation (β = .281, *p* = .012), and Intrinsic Motivation (β = .231, *p* = .041). Leadership and Peer Support were non-significant across all three outcome variables (*p* > .05). Finally, gender did not moderate the relationship between motivational factors for lifelong learning intention (*p* > .05), supporting the null hypothesis.

Table 2: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

| Hypothesis	Predictor	Dependent Variable	B	β	*p*	Decision
H_{1a}	Sense of Efficacy	CM	-0.042	-0.046	.673	Rejected
H_{1b}	Conception of Learning	CM	0.243	0.232	.033	Accepted
H_{1c}	Intrinsic Rewards	CM	-0.110	-0.077	.451	Rejected
H_{1d}	Sense of Efficacy	IR	0.179	0.243	.025	Accepted
H_{1e}	Conception of Learning	IR	0.016	0.020	.854	Rejected
H_{1f}	Intrinsic Rewards	IR	0.023	0.020	.842	Rejected
H_{1g}	Sense of Efficacy	IM	0.163	0.187	.079	Rejected
H_{1h}	Conception of Learning	IM	-0.001	-0.002	.989	Rejected
$H1i$	Intrinsic Rewards	IM	0.265	0.198	.049	Accepted
H_{2a}	Leadership	CM	-0.039	-0.114	.332	Rejected
H_{2b}	Extrinsic Rewards	CM	0.203	0.283	.012	Accepted
H_{2c}	Peer Support	CM	-0.051	-0.058	.586	Rejected
H_{2d}	Leadership	IR	-0.005	-0.020	.863	Rejected
H_{2e}	Extrinsic Rewards	IR	0.160	0.281	.012	Accepted
H_{2f}	Peer Support	IR	-0.075	-0.108	.309	Rejected
H_{2g}	Leadership	IM	-0.019	-0.058	.624	Rejected
H_{2h}	Extrinsic Rewards	IM	0.156	0.231	.041	Accepted
H_{2i}	Peer Support	IM	-0.059	-0.072	.506	Rejected
H_3	Gender	LLM	—	—	> .05	Accepted

Source: Data analysis of the current study

Note: CM=Controlled Motivation; IR= Identified Regulation; IM= Intrinsic Motivation; LLM=Lifelong Learning Motivation; *B* = unstandardized coefficient; β = standardized coefficient. Significance level α = .05. For H3, gender showed no significant moderation effect (*p* > .05 for both male and female subgroups).

The findings of the study (summarized in Table 2 and Figure 2) indicate that external rewards and opportunities are the only extrinsic factor that plays a role in shaping different forms of motivation among Bangladeshi academics. The results suggest that these extrinsic rewards and opportunities are significant in influencing the intrinsic and controlled motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Findings revealed that intrinsic factors,

particularly intrinsic rewards and self-efficacy, were strong predictors of academics' motivation for lifelong learning. Intrinsic rewards were significantly correlated with intrinsic motivation (p < .05), while self-efficacy was positively associated with identified regulation (p < .05). Leadership and peer support, though valued qualitatively, did not exhibit significant quantitative effects. The socio-cultural, political, and economic condition of Bangladesh is quite different from the Western world and thus is suggested by the findings as well. In Bangladesh, politicians have a strong interest in higher education institutions as a source of youthful energy, so they often attempt to control universities through their affiliated student political organizations and also influence youth for their interests. In this complex environment, the leadership role is challenging, as suggested by the findings that the academics find the role of leaders insignificant in motivating them for professional development in Bangladesh. Also, the cultural stigma of face value might have been hindering peer collaboration and support for professional development (Zhang et al., 2021).

The results of the study challenge earlier assumptions that conceptions of learning function as an intrinsic factor predicting intrinsic motivation (Zhang et al., 2021). Instead, the findings show that they act as a significant factor for controlled motivation. The analysis also shows that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of identified regulation but not for intrinsic motivation. This suggests that academics do not perceive learning to be natural and enjoyable but rather coercive. This also might be the reason for their self-efficacy of learning to be positively related to identified regulation but not significantly related with intrinsic motivation.

Figure 2: Findings of the study
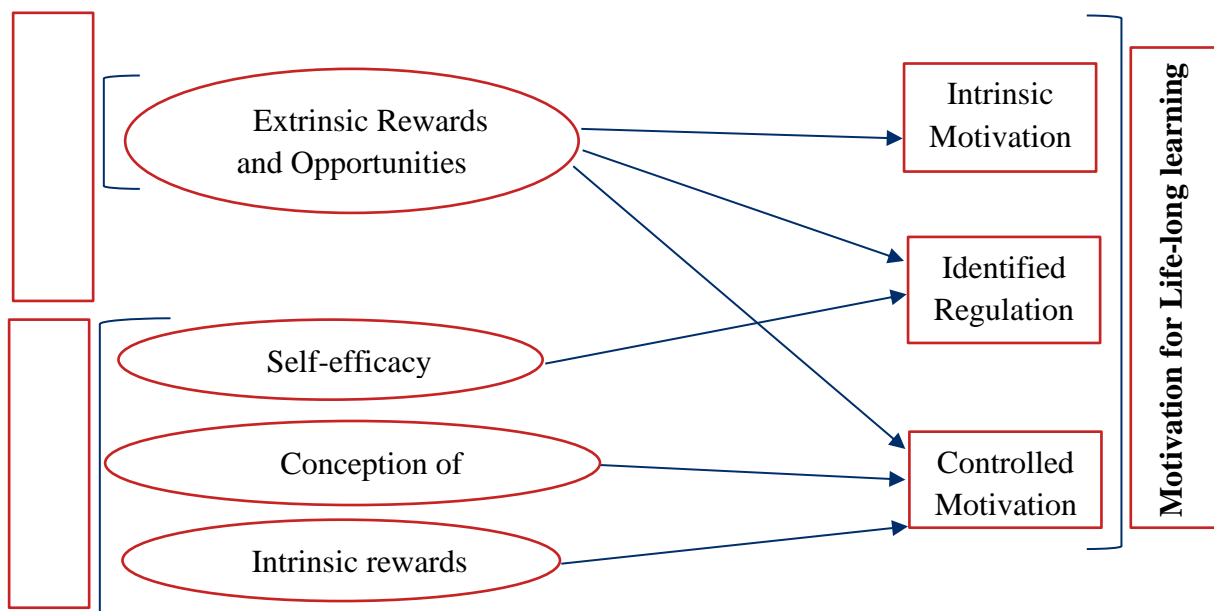
Source: Data analysis of the current study

Conclusion

The findings from this study have several practical and theoretical implications. Firstly, they highlight the importance of extrinsic rewards in shaping different types of motivation among Bangladeshi academics. While extrinsic rewards are often thought to weaken intrinsic motivation, they might be useful in certain socio-cultural environments, and the findings indicate that well-designed external incentives can enhance motivation when they align with individuals' values, interests, and needs. Policymakers, the government of Bangladesh, and university authorities should consider implementing reward structures that support faculty members' needs, thereby encouraging both intrinsic and identified motivation. The system should include performance- and learning-based rewards, such as providing additional pay rise for additional professional learning, which is currently absent. Although some universities offer salary increments for obtaining a PhD, this practice is not consistent across institutions. In addition to financial incentives, non-financial rewards tailored to faculty members' personal values and intrinsic interests should also be introduced. Secondly, academics seem to hold a negative perception of the conception of learning and display comparatively low levels of self-efficacy. This raises important concerns for professional development within higher education. Authorities should address these issues by strengthening pedagogical development at schools and tertiary level education. Thirdly, the non-significant role of leadership and peer support suggests that these factors may not directly impact motivation within the existing socio-cultural and political context of Bangladesh. However, leadership styles and peer interactions are complex constructs, and future research should investigate whether different types of leadership (e.g., transformational vs. transactional) or varying levels of peer support (e.g., collaborative vs. competitive environments) influence motivation differently. Additionally, qualitative studies could explore individuals' subjective experiences of leadership and social support to gain deeper insights.

Despite the above important findings, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, and the participants lacked diversity, which limits the generalizability of the results. Second, the use of self-reported survey data may have introduced some biases, as participants might have provided socially desirable responses rather than accurately reflecting their actual perceptions. Third, the study focuses primarily on formal learning among academics, which limits its ability to study and understand other forms of lifelong learning such as non-formal and informal learning, which encompasses a substantial portion of adult learning and life-long learning. Fourth, the study focused exclusively on higher education institutions, which may limit its ability to fully capture lifelong learning motivations in other academic or professional contexts, such as independent research organizations of the country. Fifth, external factors such as the influence of culture and social setting were not examined in the study.

Lastly, the relatively modest R^2 values across models indicate that additional variables likely contribute to motivation beyond those examined in this study. Future research should examine additional factors influencing motivation, such as personal goal-setting and emotional engagement. By expanding the scope of investigation, researchers can

provide a more comprehensive understanding of how motivation operates across different settings in Bangladesh. Furthermore, longitudinal studies and qualitative studies might shed more light on academics' experience in Bangladesh.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire of the Study

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
Teachers' Motivation for Learning					
I participated in learning because it was the requirement from the institution					
I participated in learning because I could demonstrate to others my willingness to accept new things.					
I participated in learning because I would feel uncomfortable if I refused to get involved.					
I participated in learning because I would like to strive for good performance.					
I participated in learning because I don't want others to think that I am incapable of doing it.					
I participated in learning because it involves important things that I should learn.					
I participated in learning because it is worthwhile to be promoted.					
I participated in learning because I am interested in it.					
I participated in learning because learning new teaching approaches is enjoyable.					
I participated in learning because I feel satisfied when I can overcome the obstacles in the process					
Self-efficacy					
I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough					
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.					
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.					
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.					
I can usually handle whatever comes my way.					
Conception of learning					
Learning is something we continue to do as long as we live					
Learning is actively exploring interests.					
Learning is accurately memorizing the content of materials.					
Learning means absorbing a wide range of knowledge.					

Learning takes much time and effort					
Intrinsic Rewards					
Conducting research and participating in learning provides me with feelings of satisfaction					
I feel great pleasure when I've learned something new through research and participation in different learning programs					
I participate in different learning programs and conduct research for the joy of it					
I enjoy doing research and learning for its own sake					
Leadership					
Shows appreciation when a teacher takes the initiative to improve teaching or to engage in other forms of professional development					
Helps teachers to put their emotions into words					
The administration helps teachers to reflect on new experiences that they have gained on the job					
Engages individual teachers in ongoing discussions about their personal and professional goals					
Encourages teachers to experiment with new teaching methods					
Creates sufficient opportunities for teachers to work on their professional development					
Extrinsic Rewards and Opportunities					
I want to receive awards for my scientific accomplishments and teaching excellence					
I participate in different learning programs as they are required for career advancement-promotion					
I participate in different learning programs as they are required to gain financial incentives and salary increases					
I participate in different learning programs as these provide non-monetary support for activities outside working hours (e.g. reduced teaching time, day off or study leave)					
I participate in different learning programs as scholarships are provided for them					
I participate in different learning programs as my family supports that					
Task Autonomy					
I have the freedom to determine my work priorities manage my workload					
I have the authority to allocate resources to accomplish my work tasks.					
I am trusted to solve problems and find innovative solutions					
My organization provides training and support to enhance my skills and abilities					
My organization recognizes and values my expertise and contributions					
Relatedness or Peer Support					
I am supported by the people whom I care about (students, colleagues, etc.) which motivates me to learn					
I experience warm feelings with the people I spend time with (students, colleagues, etc.) which encourages me to continue learning					
It is possible to take part in collaborative professional learning and research with colleagues (TALIS, 2018)					
My colleagues encourage me for different professional learning and continuous professional development					

My senior colleagues and or mentors believe in my abilities and push me for continuous professional development					

Source: Motivation Types-Adapted from "Teacher Motivation Inventory" (Lam et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2021); Self-efficacy: Adapted from "Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale" (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995); Conceptions of Learning: Adapted from Conception of learning Scale by Yokoyama et al. (2020); Intrinsic/Extrinsic Rewards: Adapted items from Leech et al. (2015). Leadership and Peer Support: Adapted from Zhang et al. (2021). Extrinsic Rewards and Opportunity- Two items were adapted from Leech et al. (2015) and 6 items were adapted from TALIS, 2018 questionnaire by OECD; Task Autonomy- Adapted from Wu et al. (2020); Peer Support- Adapted from Stupnisky et al. (2018) used three items to measure relatedness from these three items two were chosen for this study and three items was adopted from TALIS, (2018).

Note: SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Appendix 2

Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Variables	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted [AVE]
CM2	0.763	0.736	0.424	0.540
CM3	0.706			
IR1	0.771	0.710	0.443	0.569
IR2	0.738			
IM1	0.669	0.728	0.610	0.457
IM2	0.675			
IM3	0.686			
SE2	0.719	0.772	0.510	0.432
SE3	0.662			
SE4	0.585			
CL3	0.520	0.595	0.234	0.334
CL4	0.631			
IR1	0.838	0.757	0.558	0.502
IR2	0.582			
IR3	0.682			
L1	0.751	0.928	0.903	0.610
L2	0.831			
L3	0.838			
L4	0.786			
L5	0.719			
L6	0.755			
ER3	0.791	0.807	0.479	0.478
ER4	0.717			
ER6	0.543			
PS2	0.610	0.776	0.624	0.447
PS3	0.668			

PS4	0.808			
PS5	0.563			

Source: Data analysis of the current study

Note: KMO = .792. Items with loadings < .50 were excluded. Task Autonomy was removed due to low loadings.CM=Controlled Motivation; IR= Identified Regulation; IM= Intrinsic Motivation; SE=Sence of Self-efficacy; CL=Conception of Learning; L=Leadership; ER=Extrinsic Rewards; PS= Peer Support.

Absztraktok

Géczyné Simon Rózsa Anikó

Gyermekkor és jóllét: társadalmi konstrukciók, nevelési gyakorlatok és közösségi innovációk a 21. században

A tanulmány a gyermekjóllét fogalmának és a nevelési gyakorlatok összefüggéseinek vizsgálatára vállalkozik, különös tekintettel a 21. századi társadalmi kontextusra és a gyermekkor társadalmi konstrukcióként való értelmezésére. A szerző amellett érvel, hogy a gyermekjóllét nem pusztán fizikai és kognitív tényezők összessége, hanem mélyen beágyazott kulturális és társadalmi jelentésrendszerek által formált tapasztalat, amely új pedagógiai paradigmák kialakítását teszi szükségessé. A tanulmány kiemelt figyelmet szentel a jóllét-orientált és közösségi nevelési modelleknek, mint a gyermeki autonómia, érzelmi biztonság és társas kapcsolatok előmozdításának lehetséges terepeinek. Az alternatív pedagógiák, közösségi terek és szülői kooperációk példáin keresztül bemutatja, miként válhat a nevelés a társadalmi részvétel és a gyermekkor újraértelmezésének színterévé. A pedagógus szerepének újraértékelése mentálhigiénés szempontból szintén kulcsszerepet kap: a tanulmány rámutat arra, hogy a pedagógus saját jólléte elengedhetetlen feltétele a gyermekek érzelmi és társas fejlődésének. A szerző megközelítése elméletileg megalapozott, ugyanakkor gyakorlati példákkal illusztrált, és hozzájárul a gyermekközpontú, érzékeny és reflektált nevelési kultúra kialakításához.

Kulcsszavak: gyermekkor; gyermekjóllét; jóllét-orientált nevelés

Fazekas Barbara

Hangzó testamentum a személyes és a kollektív tragédiáról

A kutatás kerete egy repedés az időn, 2025 júniusában, ahol a levegőben sebek nyílnak, a statisztikák pedig nem számok, hanem a kollektív lélek lázlapjai. Ebben a beteg tájban Liszt Ferenc Funérailles című művének vizsgálata ezért amolyan sebészi beavatkozássá válik. A cél tehát a zongora fekete testének felnyitása, a benne rejlő ontológiai végrendelet exhumálása, mert a hipotézis egy suttogás a mélyből: a zene maga egy szabályozatlan tér, egy menedékjog a felejtés törvényei elől, ahol Chopin utolsó köhögése és az aradi vértanúk vére egyetlen közös vérkeringésben egyesül.

Ehhez a boncoláshoz az eszközök elengedhetetlenek. A szike a zenehermeneutika, amellyel a zenei testet rétegeire bontjuk; a megidézett szellemek pedig Hegel, Sartre, Camus és Heidegger, akik a hangjegyek között kísértenek, és tanúvallomást tesznek. A nagyító a történeti kontextus, amely láthatóvá teszi az 1849-es letörölt vérnyomokat a kottapapíron. És amit ezek az eszközök feltárnak, az maga az ítélet. Az eredmény ugyanis az, hogy a Funérailles nem zene, hanem egy rituálé, egy performatív perújrafelvétel a Történelem ellen. A diadalmas középrész egy tündöklő csalás, a remény egy tiszavirág-életű szimulákrum, amit a gyász örök törvénye végül érvénytelenít.

A mű jogértelmezési bizonytalansága így a gyengesége helyett a fegyvere, hisz ettől válik univerzális törvényszékké. És ebben rejlik a kutatás haszna is. Elméletileg egy új térképet ad a gyász anatómiájához, gyakorlatilag pedig felmutatja a művészetet mint ellenmérget. Mint egy akusztikus oltást a közösségi amnézia ellen, egy bizonyítékot arra, hogy a hangzó szépség képes joghatóságot adni annak a fájdalomnak is, amiről a világ inkább hallgatna.

Kulcsszavak: gyász; zongora; filozófia

Vetési Erika – Schiller Emese

Útkeresés a digitális világban: Szisztematikus szakirodalmi áttekintés a digitális szülőség fogalmi értelmezéséről és vizsgálati megközelítéseiről

A digitális technológia által irányított korszakban egyre fontosabbá válik annak megértése, hogyan alakítják a szülők szerepüket a digitális környezetekben (Benedetto et al., 2020; Modecki et al., 2022). A digitális szülőség, mint a technológiai, oktatási és szociokulturális tényezők által formált, többdimenziós jelenség, egyre inkább kutatott (Livingstone et al., 2015; Mascheroni et al., 2018). Jelen tanulmány célja, hogy megvizsgálja, miként jelenik meg a digitális szülőség fogalma a 2020 és 2024 között megjelent szakirodalomban, továbbá feltérképezze a kutatásban alkalmazott módszertani megközelítéseket.

A kutatás céljainak elérése érdekében szisztematikus szakirodalmi irodalmi áttekintést végeztünk a PRISMA 2020 irányelveinek megfelelően. Az adatbázisok közül a Web of Science szolgált az irodalomkutatás alapjául, melynek eredményeként 19 tanulmány került kiválasztásra teljes körű elemzésre. A tartalomelemzést MI-alapú kódolási eszközök segítették (pl. Edwards et al., 2020) a fogalmi és módszertani mintázatok feltárásában.

Az eredmények azt mutatják, hogy a digitális szülőség egy összetett, kontextusfüggő gyakorlat, amely adaptív megközelítéseket követel meg, és melyet egyéni, kapcsolati, valamint kulturális tényezők egyaránt alakítanak. Emellett a kutatási módszerek sokszínűsége is tükröződik a vizsgált tanulmányokban. A kutatás elméleti szintű hozzáadott értéke a digitális szülőség mélyebb megértése, különös tekintettel a kapcsolati és szociokulturális tényezőkre. Gyakorlati vonatkozásban az eredmények rámutatnak azokra az oktatási programokra és fejlesztési lehetőségekre, amelyek támogatják a szülők digitális írástudását, érzelmi kapcsolódását, valamint hatékony közvetítési stratégiáinak kialakítását.

Kulcsszavak: digitális szülőség; szisztematikus irodalomkutatás; digitális mediáció

Ábrahám Gréta – Heléna Kolip

A magyar és szerb felnőttképzés egyik aspektusa

Az egész életen át tartó tanulás (LLL) olyan fontos társadalmi-gazdasági kihívásokra adhat választ, mint a versenyképesség és a foglalkoztatás növelése, az esélyegyenlőség és az életminőség javítása. Az egész életen át tartó tanulás megvalósításában a felnőttképzőknek kulcsfontosságú szerepük van (Farkas, 2014). A differenciált tevékenységek és kompetenciák különleges követelményeket támasztanak a felnőttképzők szakmaiságával szemben, ami az interfész területén végzett munkában többféle cselekvési logika közötti egyensúlyozást eredményez. Ahhoz, hogy a felnőttképzők folyamatosan összehangolják mindennapi munkájuk gazdasági, bürokratikus és szakmai követelményeit, elengedhetetlen a „hibrid szakmaiság" elnevezésű koncepció (Noordegraaf, 2015). E tanulmány célja, hogy betekintést nyújtson a magyarországi és szerbiai felnőttképzésbe, összehasonlítsa azokat, és megvizsgálja a korai gyermekkori oktatók szakmai továbbképzését biztosító felnőttképzők tevékenységét, kompetenciáit és a hozzájuk kapcsolódó professzionalizmust. A kutatás a következő kérdésekre keresi a választ: Melyek a felnőttképzők főbb tevékenységei és kompetenciái? Melyek a két ország közötti különbségek és hasonlóságok? Hogyan értelmezhető a felnőttképzők hibrid szakmaisága? A kutatás keretében félig strukturált szakértői interjúkat készítettek egy szerb és egy magyar felnőttképzővel, valamint elemezték a felnőttképzésre vonatkozó jogszabályokat (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013, Felnőttképzési törvény, 2013) és a tanárképzési tanfolyamokat szabályozó rendeletet és kormányrendeletet (Pedagógus-továbbképzési kormányrendelet, 2024). Mivel mindkét ország oktatási rendszere a kontinentális típus alapvető jellemzőit mutatja, sok hasonlóságot találunk a területek, tevékenységek és kompetenciák tekintetében. A különbségek a két ország eltérő gazdasági és kormányzati rendszerének tudhatók be. A felnőttképzés és -oktatás általában sokféle gyakorlatot ölel fel, amelyek számos más területtel összefonódnak. A hibrid professzionalizmus elméletének és a felnőttképzés gyakorlatának kapcsolatát a bemutatott interjúalanyok is megerősítik.

Kulcsszavak: felnőttképzés; szakmaiság; kompetenciák

Botos Bettina

A szociális-érzelmi tanulási készségek fejlesztésére szolgáló integrált nonverbális, testtudatosságot fejlesztő módszerek elméleti áttekintése a tanárképzésben

A tanulmány azt vizsgálja, hogy milyen elméleti keretek között lehet a nem verbális, testtudat-alapú módszereket – különösen a Tánc- és Mozgásterápiát (DMT) – a tanárképzésbe integrálni a szociális és érzelmi tanulás (SEL) kompetenciáinak fejlesztése érdekében. A kutatás az egyre növekvő társadalmi és oktatáspolitikai igényekre reagál, amelyek a tanárok szociális és érzelmi készségeinek fejlesztését hangsúlyozzák. A tanulmány az érzelmi intelligencia, a testtudat-elmélet, a pozitív pszichológia és a pszichológiai tőke megközelítéseit kapcsolja össze, és amellett érvel, hogy a testalapú, tapasztalati módszerek hatékonyan erősíthetik a tanárok empátiáját, érzelemszabályozását, önismeretét és kapcsolati kompetenciáját. A DMT elveinek beépítése a tanárképzésbe hozzájárulhat a leendő pedagógusok rezilienciájának és reflektív képességének fejlődéséhez, valamint az érzelmileg biztonságos, támogató tanulási környezet megteremtéséhez. A kutatás így az egészség- és jóllétközpontú, holisztikus tanárképzés megújításához kíván hozzájárulni a testorientált, művészetalapú pedagógiai innovációkon keresztül.

Kulcsszavak: szociális és érzelmi tanulás (SEL), tánc- és mozgásterápia (DMT), tanárképzés, testtudat, érzelmi intelligencia, pszichológiai tőke.

Sadia Nur Habib – Németh Balázs

Mi motiválja az akadémikusokat az egész életen át tartó tanulásra? Tanulmány a bangladesi felsőoktatási intézményekben dolgozó oktatókról

Jelen tanulmány azokat a motivációs tényezőket vizsgálja, amelyek a bangladesi akadémikusokat az egész életen át tartó tanulás és a folyamatos szakmai fejlődés felé ösztönzik. Az önmeghatározás elméletére (SDT) támaszkodva a tanulmány azonosítja azokat a belső és külső motivációs tényezőket, amelyek befolyásolják a oktatók tanulás iránti elkötelezettségét. Kvantitatív megközelítés alkalmazásával, névtelen online felmérés keretében 105 akadémikus adatait gyűjtötték össze felsőoktatási intézményekből. Az eredmények azt mutatják, hogy a belső jutalmak és az önhatékonyság pozitívan befolyásolják a belső és az azonosított motivációt, míg a külső jutalmak jelentős, de a kontextustól függő szerepet játszanak. A tanulmány rávilágít arra, hogy a kollektivista társadalmakban, mint például Bangladesben, a külső motiváló tényezők, ha összhangban vannak az egyéni értékekkel, erősíthetik a belső motivációt. Megvitatják az intézményi vezetés és a szakpolitika kialakításának következményeit az akadémiai szakmai fejlődés elősegítése érdekében.

Kulcsszavak: egész életen át tartó tanulás, oktatói motiváció, belső és külső tényezők, önmeghatározás elmélet, felsőoktatás, Banglades.

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