



An Overview of Constitutional Education in Upper-Secondary School in Albania

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Abstract

Constitutional education holds significant value in shaping conscientious and engaged citizens within a democratic society. Thus, the paper aims to analyze the narrative viewpoint and structure in educational media regarding knowledge about legislation and its role in regulating interpersonal and interinstitutional relationships. From a methodological perspective, it relies on desk analysis to examine the approach to constitutional education in Civics curriculum, and Civics textbooks for the tenth grade in current use in upper-secondary education. Additionally, the paper uses a survey to gather information about the student's knowledge in the field. The findings reveal the prevalence of an authorial perspective, a limited presence of multiperspectivity, a detachment of knowledge from concrete situations, the predominance of cognitive dimension in the didactic apparatus and others.

Keywords: constitutional education, civics curriculum, civics textbooks, authorial narrative, cognitive dimension

1. Introduction

Democracy requires dedicated citizens who actively participate in the public sphere. Schools play a pivotal role in preparing engaged citizens in democratic societies. According to Paulo Freire, the mission of the school extends beyond transmitting knowledge to be mechanically memorized by young individuals; it involves engaging them as collaborators in the knowledge production process.¹ In this context, the educational system should not only transmit knowledge about human rights, democracy and the rule of law, but it should also contribute to shaping active and responsible citizens who actively participate in upholding and nurturing these values and principles.² Consequently, schools should operate based on John Dewey's concept as a "society in miniature,"³ allowing students to embody democratic values, exercise their rights, and assume responsibility for their actions both as individuals and members of a community.⁴

Constitutional education takes place in the subject of Civics in the tenth grade of upper-secondary school. It includes the treatment of the fundamental law of the state – the Constitution, as well as primary and secondary legislation that serve as the basis for the functioning of three organs of the government and public administration. Furthermore, it

1 Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York/ London: Continuum, 2000, p. 80.

2 *Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture, Volume 1: Context, concepts and model*. Council of Europe, 2018, p. 15.

3 John Dewey. *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. Dehli: Aakar Books, 2004, p. 40.

4 Carla Marschall, "The Power of a Democratic Classroom," *Edutopia*, 27 July 2021, <https://www.edutopia.org/article/power-democratic-classroom/>

addresses the interactions among citizens and between citizens and these institutions. Thus, constitutional education plays a crucial role in shaping students democratic mindset, which is essential for the effective functioning of the law and democratic institutions.⁵

Although the acquisition and use of legal knowledge contribute to “strengthening active citizenship and greater social cohesion,”⁶ this topic has not yet attracted the attention of researchers in the field of education. In order to fill this gap in the existing literature and introduce an innovative perspective, the study raises the following research questions: How does the curriculum of Civics for the tenth grade approach constitutional education? What and how is the knowledge about legislation conveyed in the Civics textbooks? To what extent do students comprehend Constitution and other existing laws? By addressing these questions, the study offers a comprehensive overview of the educational system’s stance on constitutional education, as well as it encourages stakeholders to reflect on and take measures to improve the content and the way legal knowledge is conveyed to the younger generation.

2. Methodology

The study employs desk analysis to examine the approach to constitutional education in the Civics curriculum for the tenth grade, utilizing the following analytical categories: its theoretical conceptualization, the curriculum model and the content guidelines. Moreover, it qualitatively and quantitatively explores the presentation of knowledge about legislation in alternative textbooks of Civics for the tenth grade, focusing on multiperspectivity, contextualization of content, the rights-responsibility relationship, (non)respect of human rights, and the didactic apparatus.

In addition, the study utilizes a survey to collect information about students’ legal knowledge, an indicator of their education for democratic citizenship. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part gathers socio-demographic data about the respondents, including gender, current grade, and the city where they attend upper-secondary school. The second part collects information about students’ knowledge regarding the separation and balance of power, categories of individual rights, the individual’s interaction with public institutions and relationships with others in various sectors of social life. The study incorporates both open-ended and closed-ended questions, providing students the opportunity to express their opinions freely and choose from multiple response alternatives. While the processed survey data do not represent the constitutional education of all upper-secondary school students nationwide, they allow for generalizations concerning the overall level of their legal knowledge.

3. Sample

The analysis of constitutional education in upper-secondary school in Albania includes the Civics curriculum developed by the Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education and three Civics textbooks for the tenth grade approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports. The textbooks, published respectively by Albas, Erik and Pegi publishing houses, are currently in use in both public and non-public schools. Furthermore, the study involves the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from a survey conducted among 302 students nationwide. The criteria for surveyed students were based on the geographic location of the upper-secondary school to ensure broad geographic coverage, their current grade (X-XII), and whether the upper-secondary school belongs to the public or non-public sector. The surveyed students attend upper-secondary school in Tirana, Shijak, Durrës, Elbasan, Berat, Korça, Laç and Shkodra.

4. Constitutional Education and the Curriculum of Civics 10

The Civics curriculum aims for students “to build and develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that a democratic society requires; to develop independently and comprehensively; to contribute to their own and Albanian society’s development and well-being and to constructively face life’s challenges.”⁷ Based on these objectives, the analysis of the curriculum of civics for the tenth grade reveals:

1. *Adoption of a normative approach.*⁸ The curriculum underscores the presentation of fundamental principles

5 *Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture, Volume 2: Descriptors of Competencies for Democratic Culture. Council of Europe, 2018, p. 4; Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture, Volume 1, p. 7.*

6 *Kuvendi i Republikës së Shqipërisë, Vendim Nr. 47/2019 “Për miratimin e strategjisë për edukimin ligjor të publikut 2019-2023”, p.3, https://www.idp.al/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Vendimi_nr_47_dt_18_4_2019.pdf*

7 *Ministria e Arsimit dhe Sportit, Instituti i Zhvillimit të Arsimit, Programi i Qytetarisë, Klasa 10. Tiranë, 2016, p. 3.*

8 *Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves, “Normative Political Theory”, Teoria polityki 1, 2017, p. 176.*

that form the basis of democratic governance in the country and emphasizes the significance of adhering to these principles for ensuring peaceful coexistence in society. Thus, the imparted knowledge following the curriculum guidelines aligns the existing reality with the envisioned ideal. Therefore, a distinction between the principles, norms and values essential for the functioning of a democratic society and the societal reality is lacking.

2. *A competency-based curriculum.* It allocates 70 teaching hours to address significant topics related to the civic and political education of students. These topics include law, the Constitution, human rights, education, health, the environment, consumer rights, labor rights, road safety, the right to information, media law, and community coexistence (co-ownership), etc.⁹ Its aim is to build key competences in the field of democratic citizenship,¹⁰ such as acquiring knowledge about human rights, democracy, the rule of law, public policies, etc., preparing students for active participation in civic life, and enhancing their ability to solve problems at local and broader community level. However, when these competencies are presented in the program according to thematic areas in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, cognitive dimensions prevail among them in relation to the "constructivist learning,"¹¹ which strengthens civic engagement in political and public life.
3. *Incomplete comprehensiveness in constitutional education.* While the curriculum of Civics 10 addresses crucial themes for shaping the democratic character of students, its coverage is not exhaustive. The topic "Human Rights" deals with various categories of human rights, such as civil, political, social, cultural, etc. While some fundamental human rights are outlined, the rights of minorities are omitted. Additionally, the topic details specific documents and institutions related to human rights, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the European Court of Human Rights, etc. However, there are no references to significant acts highlighting the rights of childhood for special care and support, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child from 1989,¹² ratified by the Albanian parliament on December 11, 1991, or institutions like the State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights established in 2006.¹³ In the topic "The Constitution of Albania," it is mentioned the role of constitution as the fundamental law of state, protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, the separation and balance of powers, and the relationship between freedom and equality. However, there is no guidance on the treatment of referendums as a tool for citizen participation in a functional democracy. In the topic "Work and the Rights to Work," the discussion encompasses Albanian legislation on employment, employment contracts and conditions, and social insurance, but no references are made to the role of trade unions in safeguarding workers' interests or their right to strike.¹⁴

5. Constitutional Education in Civics Textbooks

Constitutional education in textbooks of Civics for the tenth grade students is of great importance for the formation of democratic citizens in the following directions: first, students become familiar with the legal framework, the organization of power, institutions, institutional interactions, etc., which provide an understanding of the political reality of their country. Second, the knowledge gained in the subject of Civics raises awareness among young people about their role in democracy. Third, theoretical preparation along with awareness of their role in democracy contributes to increasing civic engagement to "preserve" and improve democracy in the country. Considering these perspectives, textbooks of Civics 10 (Albas, Erik, Pegi) for upper-secondary school contain certain limitations, including:

1. *Lack of multiperspectivity.* Textbooks exhibit mainly an authorial narrative style. The author's narrative is prevalent in almost the entire theoretical content of Civics 10 from Erik publishing house, lacking references to specific authors or excerpts from readings. Similarly, the treatment of concepts in Civics 10 published by Albas is dominated by an authorial perspective, and the majority of instructional units contain the section "Do you

9 Programi i Qytetarisë, Klasa 10, pp. 22-34.

10 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

11 Rolf Gollob, Peter Krapf dhe Wiltrud Weidinger eds., *Pjesëmarrja në demokraci. Veprimtari mësimore për qytetarinë demokratike dhe të drejtat e njeriut, për shkollën e mesme*, Vëll. IV, Botim i Këshillit të Evropës, 2010, p. 19.

12 Konventa mbi të Drejtat e Fëmijës. Miratuar nga Asambleja e Përgjithshme e Organizatës së Kombeve të Bashkuara më 20 nëntor 1989, <https://www.crca.al/sites/default/files/publications/KDF%20shqip.pdf>

13 "Advokojmë për të drejtat e fëmijëve," UNICEF Shqipëri, <https://www.unicef.org/albania/sq/konventa-e-t%C3%AB-drejtave-t%C3%AB-f%C3%ABmij%C3%ABve-kdf>

14 Kushtetuta e Republikës së Shqipërisë. Tiranë: Qendra e Botimeve Zyrtare, 2017, p. 15.

- know that..." designed to convey new information in the form of curiosities. On the other hand, the authorial narrative in Civics 10 published by Pegi is supplemented with references to sources or other authors that reinforce the authorial approach, but the presentation of alternative perspectives on the discussed issues is lacking.
2. *The contextualization of content through the Albanian case varies across different textbooks.* Chapter II, which focuses on the Constitution of Albania in all three textbooks of Civics 10 (Albas, Erik, Pegi), addresses concepts such as the separation of powers, human rights, freedom, the principle of equality, etc., within the local context. The presence of the Albanian case is more pronounced in Civics 10 published by Albas and Pegi compared to the one published by Erik, especially when discussing various terms and concepts related to rights, such as law, sustainable development, the right to healthcare, the right to education, the right to information, etc. However, in all three textbooks, the contextualization through the Albanian case is generally illustrative and lacks reliance on systematic, critical studies that would stimulate debate on the issues covered. Additionally, inaccuracies are present in topics set in the local context. For instance, authors of Civics 10 (Erik), in the topic 2.1 "The Constitution, the fundamental law of the state," state that "Albania has had a constitution since the 19th century" (p. 19). Conversely, in Civics 10 published by Pegi, in the section 2.1 "The Constitution and the right to work," it is mentioned that: "The Constitution of Albania does not guarantee the right to work" (p. 129).
 3. *Disproportionate treatment of rights and responsibilities.* Civics textbooks for the tenth grade students (Albas, Erik, Pegi) examine rights predominantly through the lens of individual rights, their classification, and the legal framework at both the local (national, specifically in the context of Albania) and international levels, drawing from significant documents of the United Nations and the European Union. The discourse on the relationship between rights and responsibilities across all three textbooks tends to emphasize rights, which occupy the majority of instructional units in Chapter III titled: "Human Rights." Furthermore, in the topic 3.2 "The category of human rights and their importance," (pp. 40-42) of Civics 10 published by Pegi, the need for protecting rights is legitimized based on the development of social and political realities, especially influenced by liberal democracy. While Civics 10 (Erik) introduces the idea of "respecting the rights of others as a prerequisite for claiming one's own rights" (p.35). The disproportionate treatment of rights and responsibilities is also evident in the chapter dedicated to the environment. Instructional units in this chapter of all three Civics textbooks (Albas, Erik, Pegi) focus more on individual responsibilities for environmental preservation, emphasizing the consequences of our environmental behaviors and actions for future generations, rather than on the right of each individual to live in a healthy environment. Similarly, the content of the chapter "Coexistence in the Community" in textbooks of Civics 10 (Albas, Erik, Pegi) centers on fulfilling the obligations of community members for the maintenance of shared property rather than their rights to harmonious coexistence in communal spaces.
 4. *Limited and disproportionate treatment of children's rights and/or relevant documents or institutions for the protection of children's rights in relation to citizens' rights.* Textbooks of Civics 10 (Albas, Erik, Pegi) place little emphasis on the rights of children and the institutional guarantees that states currently provide for their protection, exhibiting a disproportionate treatment compared to citizens' rights. More specifically, Civics 10 (Albas) discusses Article 13 of the Convention on Rights of the Child, which ensures their right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information in the section 10.3.3 "The Role of the Commissioner for the Right to Information" (p.132), but the textbook lacks contextualization of children's rights in relation to specific cases of their violations. Similarly, Civics 10 (Erik) gives scant attention to the treatment of children's rights within the broader context of human rights. In concrete terms, The Convention on the Rights of the Child is briefly mentioned in topic 3.4 "Key Conventions on Human Rights" (pp. 38-39), and children's rights are identified within the framework of the covenants in topic 3.5 "The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (pp. 40-41). Likewise, Civic 10 (Pegi) lacks a specific focus on children's rights, except for "Practical Activity" (p. 54), which introduces students to some of the rights of children, including the right to be informed and educated. Additionally, topic 3.3 "The Fundamental Rights of Human Beings and International Institutions" (pp. 43-45), identifies children's rights through the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The disproportionate and limited treatment of children's rights in relation to human rights, the overall lack of contextualization, and the failure to highlight specific cases of their rights violations disconnect students from the Albanian reality, thereby limiting their ability to act as active citizens in the defense of their rights.

5. *The presentation of specific cases of human rights violations within the Albanian context is notably restrained.* In Civics 10 published by Albas, there is an imbalanced emphasis on the relationship between ensuring rights and legal provisions, leading to a lack of focus on rights violations. This trend is similarly evident in cases related to the infringement of children's rights. The section 4.4.2 "Problems of the School Today" under the broader topic 4.4 "Changes of the School Over the Years and Its Problems" (pp. 48-49), identifies various problems of the Albanian school system, particularly the impossibility of fulfilling the right to education adequately. Similarly, Civics 10 (Pegi) has also a limited treatment of violations of children's rights. Specifically, only 3.7 "Practical Activity" (pp. 54-55) within Chapter III "Human Rights," and section 8.4.5 "Protection of Minors" under the overarching topic 8.4 "Working Conditions" (pp. 136-138) discuss issues of child labor exploitation in Albania. Likewise, Civics 10 published by Erik dedicates a disproportionately limited space to the violations of children's rights in Albania. Issues, such as: child labor exploitation, begging, denial of the right to education, and discrimination, are identified solely in the topic 3.8 "Freedom and Basic Rights in the Fundamental Law of the Country" (pp. 46-47).
6. *Civics textbooks for the tenth grade pay little attention to referendums.* Civics 10 published by Erik in Chapter II, "The Constitution of Albania," does not contain any reference to referendums. In the topic 2.3, "The Necessity and Importance of Improving the Constitution" (pp. 20-21) of Civics 10 (Albas), the referendum is addressed from a historical perspective, referring to the vote and approval through a referendum of the Constitution in 1998. Meanwhile, Civics 10 published by Pegi, in section 1.2, "The Constitution and the Form of the State" (pp. 24-25), simply mentions the referendum as a mechanism for constitutional changes. Consequently, Civics textbooks do not give due importance to referendums as a tool for "increasing citizen participation"¹⁵ in decision-making on state or socially significant matters.
7. *The treatment of the right of workers for union organization and strikes is lacking.* Civics textbooks published by Albas and Erik do not mention the right of employees to voluntarily join trade unions, aimed at representing and safeguarding their economic, professional, and social rights and interests, as outlined in Article 50 of the Constitution and Article 176 of the Labor Code. Additionally, these textbooks do not address the right to strike for workers as a mechanism for resolving their demands. An exception is made by Civics 10 published by Pegi, which briefly identifies unions and strikes as mechanisms provided by the Labor Code for the protection of the rights of employees in section 8.2.3, "Rights of Employees and Their Protection" (p. 130).
8. *Civics textbooks incompletely address media as the fourth estate and the importance of the right to information as a mechanism to increase accountability of local and central authorities towards the public and civic participation.* Civics 10 published by Albas lacks discussion on media law and the role of both traditional and new media in shaping public opinion. Specifically, topic 10.1 "Information, its Importance, and Means" (pp. 126-127) covers the right to information from a historical perspective, and topic 10.3 "International and Albanian Legislation on Information and Media" (pp. 130-131) makes references to legal sanctions of the right to information.

The first two instructional units of Chapter X "The Right to Information and Media Law," of Civics 10 (Pegi) delve into technical aspects of various means of information, both traditional and new, without adequately emphasizing the media's role as the fourth estate in a democratic society.¹⁶ Despite highlighting the importance of guaranteeing and protecting the right to information, it is not treated as a mechanism that increases the responsibility of public authorities for their actions and empowers the citizen and society, which "enables a more effective governance system."¹⁷ Conversely, Civics 10 published by Erik outlines provisions from the Law on Audiovisual Media, the Law on the Right to Information, etc., in the topic 10.2 "The Law on the Right to Information" (pp.149-151), and topic 10.3 "Albanian Legislation for Print and Electronic Media" (pp.152-153). However, there is no context given to the media landscape in the country and the exercise of the right to information as a tool that conditions government transparency and facilitates civic participation in public affairs.

9. *The cognitive dimension prevails in the didactic apparatus of the instructional units.* As shown in Figure 1, the majority of questions in all three textbooks of Civics 10 (Albas, Erik, Pegi) aim to develop subject competences, requiring students to memorize information from the text and reproduce it mechanically.

15 Majja Talvikki Setala, *Theories of Referendum and the Analysis of Agenda-Setting*, Thesis submitted for the PhD-degree, The London School of Economics and Political Science, 1997, p. 6, <https://etheses.lse.ac.uk/1485/1/U109490.pdf>

16 Dr. Faruk Borova, "Roli i medias si pushtet i katërt në demokraci". *Univers* 19 (19), 2018, pp. 299-307. <https://doi.org/10.59164/uni.vers.v19i19.3000>

17 Eralda Methasani (Çani). "E drejta e informimit dhe korniza ligjore", https://www.academia.edu/6736396/E_Drejta_per_Informim

Questions that foster analytical and critical thinking among students, involving judgment competences, vary in their specific emphasis across textbooks. Civics 10 published by Erik aims to develop subject and judgment competences in an almost balanced manner. Whereas in the other two texts, only ¼ of the total number of questions in the instructional units develops judgement competences.

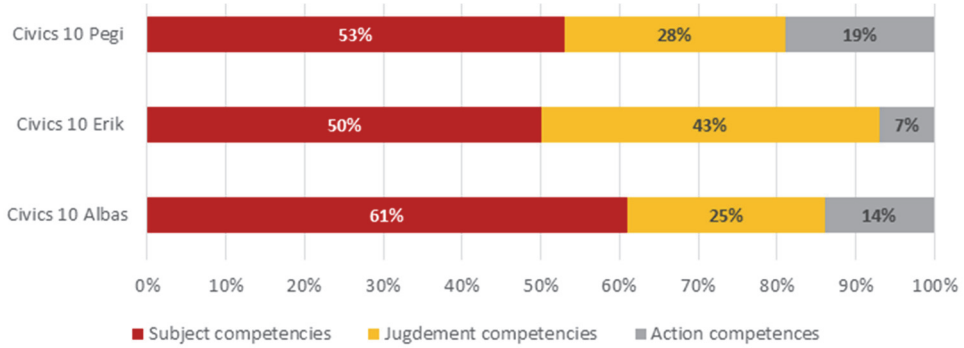


Figure 1. The distribution of questions based on the competences they foster.

The lowest frequency is observed in questions that stimulate learning through experience and practice, thus developing action competencies. Therefore, the distribution of questions in the didactic apparatus indicates the importance given to acquiring knowledge in relation to critically adopting or applying them in practice. However, it is not sufficient for students to simply be aware of positive and negative rights; they should exercise them, starting in the school environment, which Dewey describes as a “microsociety,” and extending into the broader community.

6. Overview of the Legal Knowledge of Upper-Secondary School Students

6.1 Socio-demographic data about the respondents

The largest portion of respondents (42%) are pursuing upper-secondary education in Central Albania (Tirana, Shijak, Durrës, Elbasan), followed by respondents attending upper-secondary school in the northern part of the country (Laç, Shkodra) and those in the southern part (Fier, Korça), as depicted in Figure 2.

In which city do you attend upper-secondary school?

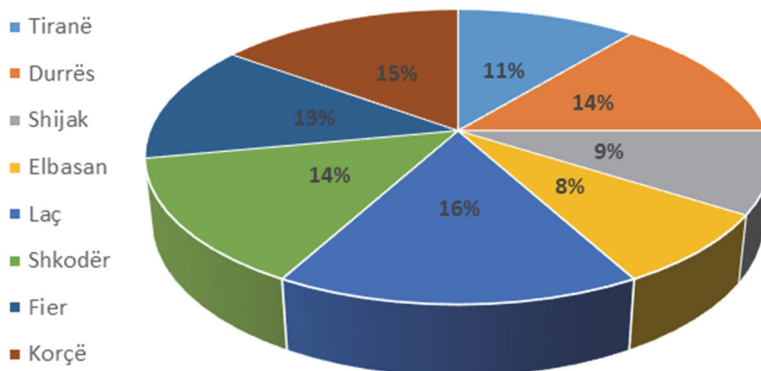


Figure 2. The city where the respondents attend upper-secondary school

Figure 3 illustrates a nearly balanced distribution of respondents across all three grades of upper-secondary school. It contributes to the objectivity of the study results regarding the sustainability of constitutional education since the knowledge has been acquired as early as the tenth grade. From a gender perspective, 62% of the respondents are female, while 38% are male.

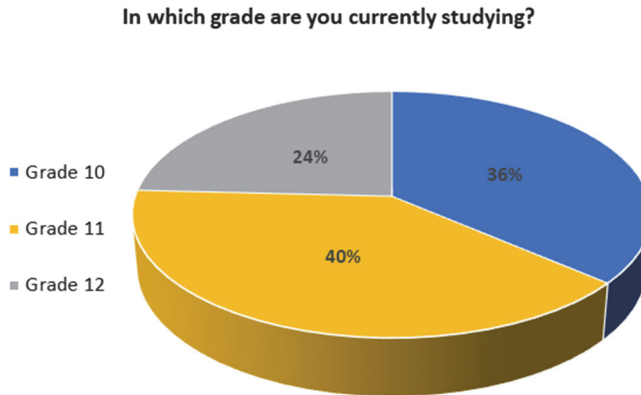


Figure 3. The grade in which respondents are currently studying

6.2 Do students of upper-secondary school have sufficient knowledge of national legislation?

Respondents were asked several questions to understand the level of their legal knowledge acquired in upper-secondary education. When asked about the year of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, almost half of the respondents answered 1998, as seen in Figure 4.

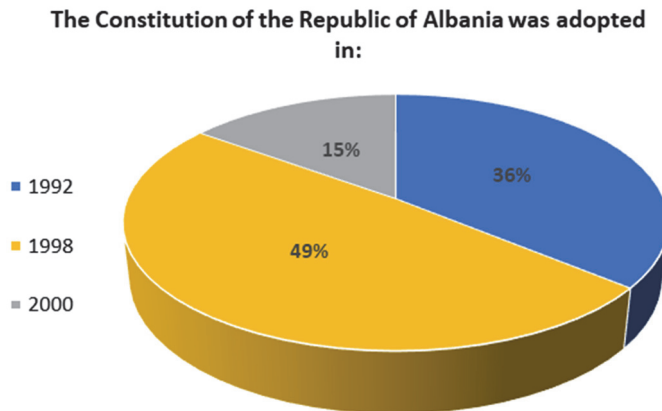


Figure 4. The year of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania according to the respondents

Only 72% of the participants provided responses to the question concerning the separation of powers, which forms the basis of the governance system in Albania. Out of these respondents, slightly over 1/3 correctly identified the three branches of power: legislative, executive, and judicial. The remainder mentioned administrative-territorial divisions into counties, municipalities, and communes, the political system in Albania, and the main political parties, including the Socialist Party, the Democratic Party, and the Socialist Movement for Integration (now the Freedom Party). These details are presented in the figure below.

What is the separation of powers on which the governance system in Albania is based?

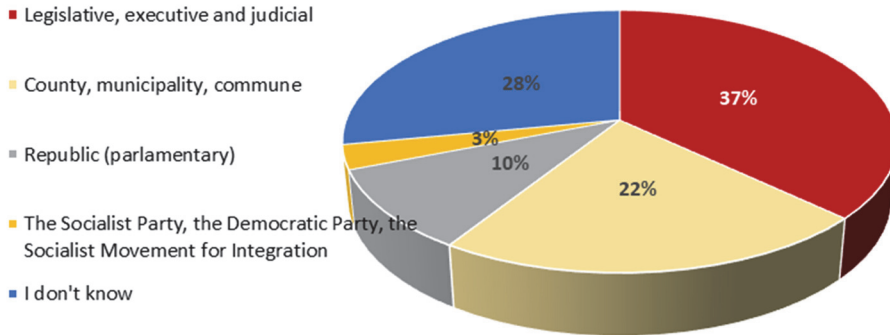


Figure 5. Opinion of the respondents on the separation of powers in Albania

In response to the question about human rights categories, 33% of the participants replied, “I don’t know.” Among those who answered, 42.4% accurately listed civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as rights related to development and the environment. Additionally, over 15.8% listed specific human rights, such as the right to expression, education, healthcare, etc., instead of mentioning the broader categories. The rest of the respondents referred to constitutional principles like equality before the law, state sovereignty, the separation and balancing of powers, etc., or to rights based on age or gender (children’s rights, women’s rights). A small number of respondents indicated that rights are not respected in their school.

Mention the categories of human rights:

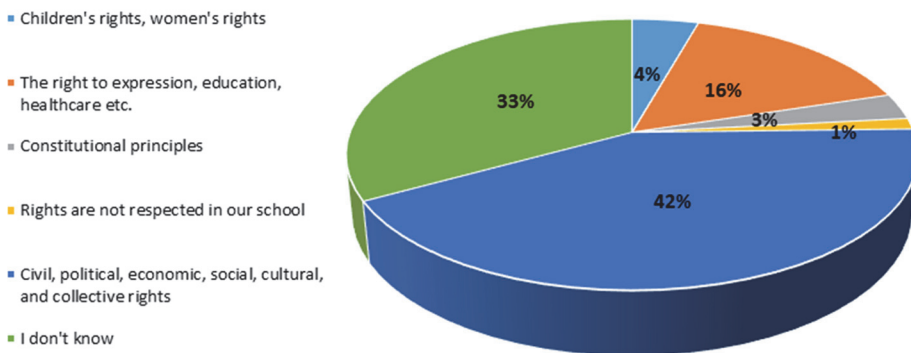


Figure 6. Opinion of the respondents on the categories of human rights

Respondents were provided with a list of seven human rights from various categories and were asked to identify which one is guaranteed in the Constitution of the Republic of Albania. It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents (76.4%) selected the right to education, followed by the right to expression (69.6%). In contrast, the right to organize was chosen less frequently by the respondents, as illustrated in Figure 7.

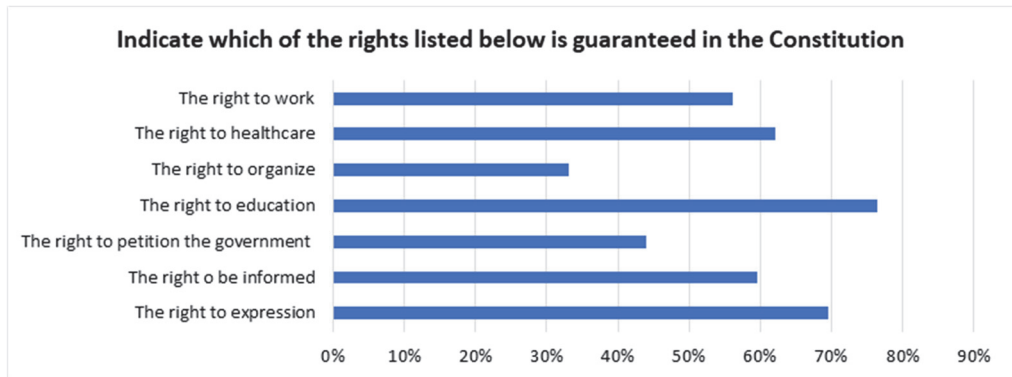


Figure 7. Opinion of the respondents on the rights guaranteed in Constitution

In addition, respondents were presented with several questions related to instances of respecting or violating human rights guaranteed by the Constitution. In response to the question “If someone slanders you, do you think they bear legal responsibility?” two-thirds of the respondents answered affirmatively (Figure 8).

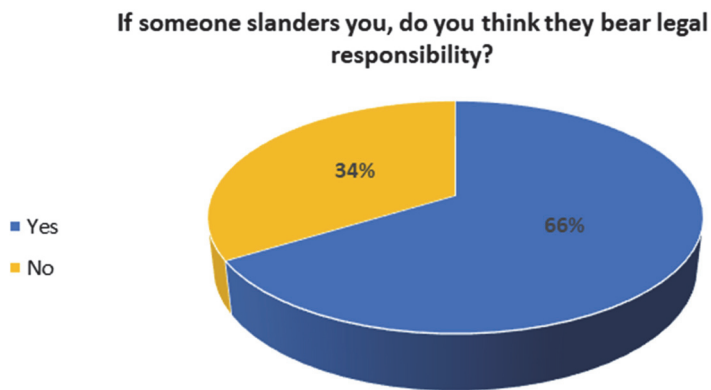


Figure 8. Opinion of the respondents on whether someone who slanders them bears legal responsibility

Similarly, when asked whether the publication in a research report of your personal data, which you declared during the completion of the upper-secondary school registration form, constitutes a legal violation, over 60% of the respondents expressed a positive view. Meanwhile, in response to the question, “Closing your Facebook account, if through a post you incite religious hatred, does it constitute a violation of the freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution?” 64.5% of the respondents answered affirmatively, unaware that inciting religious hatred is punishable under Article 265 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania.¹⁸

18 Kodi Penal i Republikës së Shqipërisë. Miratuar me ligjin nr.7895, datë 27.1.1995. Botim i Qendrës së Botimeve Zyrtare. Dhjetor 2014, p. 82.

Your personal data, which you declared during the completion of the upper-secondary school registration form, are published in a research report. Does this constitute a violation of your personal rights?

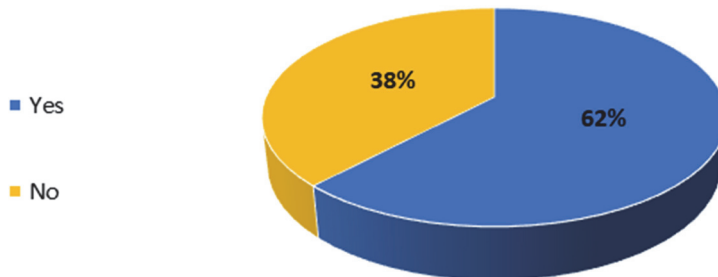


Figure 9. Opinion of the respondents on whether the publication of personal data constitutes a violation of their personal rights

Closing your Facebook account, if through a post you incite religious hatred, does it constitute a violation of the freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution?

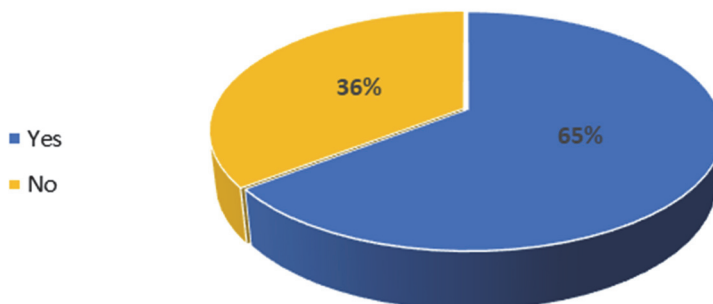


Figure 10. Opinion of the respondents on whether closing an account on Facebook, if inciting religious hatred through a post, constitutes a violation of the right to freedom of expression

Most respondents are familiar with the right to information about the activities of public institutions, as guaranteed in Article 23 of the Constitution. Only 29.1% of the respondents answered negatively when asked whether they have the right to formally request information about the decisions made for the activities that will take place during the November Festivities from the Students' Government, even if they are not members of this body at school.

Do you have the right to formally request information about the decisions made at the meeting of the Students Government?

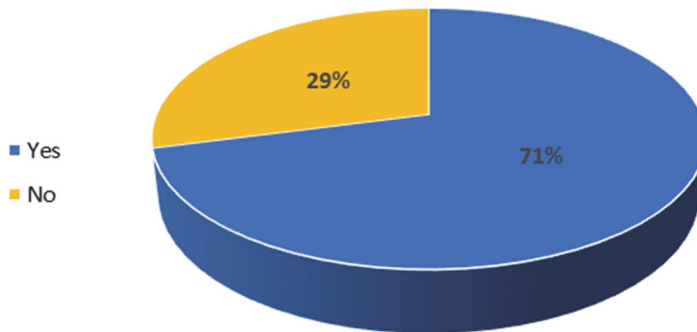


Figure 11. Opinion of the respondents on whether they have the right to be informed about the decisions of the Students Government.

When asked about the institution that gives the final assessment of the constitutionality of a law, 60.8% responded with the Constitutional Court, followed by 25.5% who mentioned the President and 13.7% who indicated the Parliament. Regarding the question of whether non-recognition of the law relieves one of legal responsibility, over 45% of the respondents answered affirmatively, as illustrated in Figure 12.

Non-recognition of the law relieves one of legal responsibility:

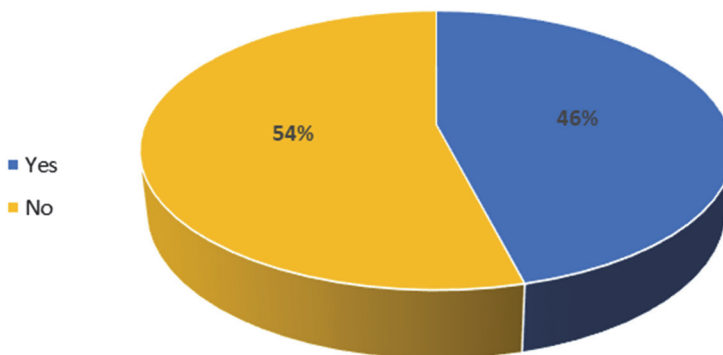


Figure 12. Opinion of the respondents on whether non-recognition of the law relieves them of legal responsibility

7. Conclusion

Constitutional education is essential for democratic citizenship, which is based on the “fundamental principles of human rights, pluralistic democracy, and the rule of law.”¹⁹ It entails acquiring and applying legal knowledge that governs individuals’ interactions with public institutions, shaping their conduct “across various aspects of life, including family,

¹⁹ Programi i Qytetarisë, Klasa 10, p. 5.

work, legal-civil relationships, and their decisions to safeguard health, safety, the environment, etc.”²⁰ Therefore, the development of legal and civic competences among students in upper-secondary education holds significant value, enabling them to exercise their rights and fulfill responsibilities, actively engage in addressing matters of public concern, and contribute to the effective functioning of the rule of law.

The examination of key elements in the educational process, such as the Civics curriculum, Civics textbooks for the tenth grade and students' knowledge reveals several issues concerning constitutional education for young people: First, there is a detachment of knowledge from the local context,²¹ implying the transmission of information without adequately referencing national, cultural, and institutional situations, which would empower students to solve real-world problems.²² Second, there is a prevalence of an authorial narrative, with limited inclusion of local or foreign legal texts. The limitations include citation of specific articles and a shortage of diverse reading materials or alternative perspectives on the discussed issue. Third, there is either a lack of inclusion or a superficial treatment in the subject matter related to constitutional education for the younger generation. This includes issues such as the right to a referendum, the right to unionize, the right to strike, the disproportionate treatment children's rights - citizen rights or rights-responsibilities, and the role of media as the fourth power. Fourth, there is an abundance of cognitive dimension in the didactic apparatus compared to questions fostering learning through practice and experience. Fifth, there is evidence of upper-secondary school students acquiring and applying fragmented legal knowledge, as observed in the analysis of survey data. These issues highlight the need for improvement in the content, methodological, and didactic dimensions of educational tools related to constitutional education for young people. Such improvements are crucial for cultivating actively engaged, participatory, and responsible citizens in a democratic, multicultural society, and within the context of ongoing development.

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21 Pëllumb Karameta, "Mësimdhënia tradicionale prodhon analfabetë funksionale. Kuptojeni, ju lutem!" *Portali Shkollor Albas*, <https://www.portalishkollor.al/news/pellumb-karameta-mesimdhenia-tradicionale-prodhon-analfabete-funksionale-kuptojeni-ju-lutem>

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