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# Athens Journal of Social Sciences

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The current issue is the first of the eleventh volume of the *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* (AJSS), **published by the [Social Sciences Division](#) of ATINER.**

Gregory T. Papanikos  
President  
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## **Explaining Electoral Successes in Greek Parliamentary Elections: Is it the Economy Again?**

*By Gregory T. Papanikos\**

*This paper asks the following question: can the macroeconomic fluctuations of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) explain the electoral success of political parties? Notwithstanding other important determinants such as the charisma of the leader of a popular political party or ideology, the economy may very well explain electoral successes. In this paper, I use a very simple variable to account for the economy: the rate of growth of GDP. It is claimed that years of relative higher growth are associated with the incumbent government retaining its power, while years of zero or negative growth rates are related with the fall of an incumbent government. The period between 1974-2023 shows evidence of Greek economic growth and the impact on elections and therefore the hypothesis cannot be rejected that the economy plays a central role in explaining electoral successes, and especially failures, of incumbent governments.*

**Keywords:** *Greece, elections, economy, GDP, political parties, time series, policy, political leaders*

### **Introduction**

In Greek politics, ideological and charismatic leaders have played an important role in determining electoral successes. However, it seems that the performance of the Greek economy—as primarily measured by the rate of growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—seems to be an important determinant of electoral successes, despite the ideologies and charisma of political leaders. The purpose of this paper is to test this simple hypothesis using descriptive statistical evidence and a narrative of the Greek political process after the fall of the Colonels in 1974. This hypothesis is not formally tested, but is simply inferred from a descriptive analysis of the data.

This paper is organized into six sections including this introduction. The next section briefly discusses some theoretical underpinnings in determining electoral successes, emphasizing some economic aspects of it. In the following section, the rate of growth of Greek GDP since the 1960s is examined, giving an overall background of the economic performance of the Greek economy. In section four, election results since 1974 are related to the Greek economic growth, including the last two elections of 2023. These recent elections of 2023 are further examined in section five where additional macroeconomic indicators are introduced to reinforce the idea of a strong correlation between the economic and electoral successes or failures. The last section concludes.

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\*President, Athens Institute for Education and Research, Greece.

## The Performance of the Economy and Electoral Successes<sup>1</sup>

The economic analysis of the voting process is based on the work of Antony Downs (1957). In a democracy, it is through elections that governments are appointed.<sup>2</sup> Voters are attracted to politicians through being offered policies. The Downs's Median Voter Model assumes that political parties supply such policies in order to meet the demand of the median voter.

Economic policies are included in the supply of policies offered by political parties. The other variables are ideology and political leaders' personal characteristics such as charisma and ethics.<sup>3</sup> In general, we may classify the supply of political parties' policies into economic and noneconomic.<sup>4</sup> The personal and political ideology of a leader as well as their personality attributes, including charismatic traits are important noneconomic variables, but the emphasis in this paper is how the leaders differ in their record of managing the economy<sup>5</sup> and leaders' personal charisma. These two characteristics are demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that it is possible that a leader's popularity (charisma) may win elections even if the economy is perceived as not performing well under his/her leadership.<sup>6</sup> However, if s/he lacks charisma and the challenger is more charismatic, the leader may lose elections even if the economy is booming and

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<sup>1</sup>This section of the paper is partially based on a relative work I did for the recent (2023) Turkish elections; see Papanikos (2023a).

<sup>2</sup>I discussed the issue of democracy in Papanikos (2011, 2016, 2017a, 2020a, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2023); see also the comments by Meydani (2022) and Petratos (2022) and a number of recent papers by Carrera (2022), Çelik et al. (2022), Coulter and Herman (2020), de Caria Patricio (2022), Fruncillo (2017), Gilby (2021), Igwe (2021a, 2021b), Marchetti (2020), Obot (2019), Parziale and Vatrella (2019), Rafapa (2018), Reid (2019) and Verharen (2020).

<sup>3</sup>In ancient Athens, as reported by Plutarch in his *Parallel Lives (Aristides)*, when there was a referendum to ostracize Aristides (540–468 BCE), who had built a reputation of being a fair man-politician, a voter approached on the day of the vote without recognizing him and asked to put down the name of Aristides because he did not know how to write it on the ballot. When he asked what had Aristides done to him, he responded 'nothing, I do not know the man, but I am disturbed to hear everywhere that he is fair'. Plutarch describes the story as follows: γραφομένων οὖν τότε τῶν ὄστρακων λέγεται τινα τῶν ἀγραμμάτων καὶ παντελῶς ἀγροίκων ἀναδόντα τῷ Ἀριστείδῃ τὸ ὄστρακον ὡς ἐνὶ τῶν τυχόντων παρακαλεῖν, ὅπως Ἀριστείδην ἐγγράψει. τοῦ δὲ θαυμάσαντος καὶ πυθομένου, μή τι κακὸν αὐτὸν Ἀριστείδης πεποίηκεν, "οὐδέν," εἶπεν, "οὐδὲ γινώσκω τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ἐνοχλοῦμαι πανταχοῦ τὸν Δίκαιον ἀκούων." ταῦτα ἀκούσαντα τὸν Ἀριστείδην ἀποκρίνασθαι μὲν οὐδέν, ἐγγράψαι δὲ τοῦνομα τῷ ὄστρακῳ καὶ ἀποδοῦναι. τῆς δὲ πόλεως ἀπαλλαττόμενος ἤδη, τὰς χεῖρας ἀνατείνας πρὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐξάτο τὴν ἐναντίαν, ὡς ἔοικεν, εὐχὴν τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ, μηδένα καιρὸν Ἀθηναίους καταλαβεῖν, ὃς ἀναγκάσει τὸν δῆμον Ἀριστείδου μνησθῆναι. (Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Aristides*, 7).

<sup>4</sup>Of course, all policies have economic effects but this is not an issue discussed here.

<sup>5</sup>This is a subjective evaluation. Huberman et al. (2018) have demonstrated this as follows (p. 597): "What does this question about economic conditions capture? First, what are people thinking about when they give an answer regarding economic conditions "as a whole": are they thinking about themselves (i.e., pocketbook) or national economic indicators (i.e., sociotropic)? Second, are respondents shifting their answers to signal something about their party (i.e., partisan cheerleading) and/or do they shift their economic decision-making due to these beliefs?"

<sup>6</sup>This seems to be the case in the recent Turkish elections where the incumbent president won the elections even though his recent record was not very good; see Papanikos (2023a).

will definitely lose the elections if the economy is perceived by voters as underperforming. Charismatic leaders and booming economies guarantee reelections.

**Table 1.** *Election Results, the Economy and Leaders*

<b>The sitting leader is</b>	<b>more charismatic than the Challenger</b>	<b>less charismatic than the challenger</b>
<b>Economy</b>		
The economy is perceived by voters as performing well	The leader is reelected	?
The economy is perceived by voters as not performing well	?	The leader is not reelected

Source: Papanikos (2023a).

The main hypothesis then becomes whether the economy is more significant than anything else in determining electoral successes and failures. The Greek election successes and failures of leading political parties which governed Greece are used to test this hypothesis. The analysis is descriptive. The overall Greek macroeconomic performance is examined in the following section of this paper, thus setting the historical background of the analysis that follows.

### **Greek Economic Growth, 1961-2023**

This section provides an overview of the Greek economic growth since the 1960s using the real GDP.<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, the rate of growth of per capita GDP could be used, but this would not change the picture presented here.

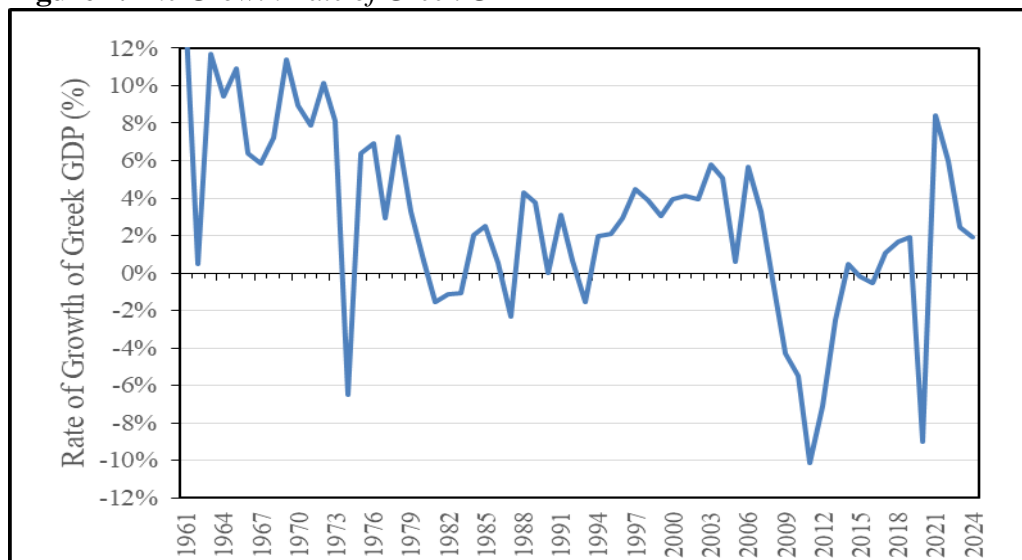
Figure 1 gives the rate of growth of GDP from 1961 to 2024. The last two years are estimates provided by the European Commission. As shown in the graph, during this long period of economic growth over more than sixty years, the Greek economy experienced three very serious economic troughs. All of which are explained if the historical circumstances surrounding these sharp downturns are taken into consideration. In what follows in this section, I briefly discuss these three downturns because they all had an impact on the electoral successes of political parties and leaders as outlined in the next section.

The first trough occurred in 1974. Turkey invaded Cyprus and since then, occupies almost 36.2% of the island. This occupation still plays a role in the internal and international Greek politics. At the time in 1974, this invasion and occupation created political havoc in Greece. The risk of a full-fledged Greek-Turkish war was imminent. Apart from any other domestic and international political repercussions this invasion had, Greece's booming economy at the time experienced a deep decline in investment and as a result of a sharp drop in GDP growth. From 8.12% in 1973, it fell to -6.5% in 1974. This resulted in a serious political crisis; not so much because of the economic downturn but because of the Greek junta's failure to respond militarily to the Turkish invasion. The Greek

<sup>7</sup>In Papanikos (2014a & 2019) I have examined in more detail the Greek macroeconomic performance.

dictatorship collapsed and democracy was reestablished. In 1974, the first free elections<sup>8</sup> were held in this post-dictatorship period as analyzed in the next section of this paper.

**Figure 1.** *The Growth Rate of Greek GDP*



Source: Eurostat (AMECO database).

In 2011, the Greek economy experienced its worst drop in the rate of growth of GDP ever seen before in peace years. The growth rate dropped to -10.13%. This is the result of many factors, internal and external, as I have analyzed in my book (Papanikos, 2014a) and my paper (Papanikos, 2015a). In a nutshell, the Greek economy was hit hard by an external macroeconomic shock. The so-called Great Recession which started in the USA in late 2007 spread very quickly to Europe, hitting the Greek economy the hardest among all European Union (EU) countries.<sup>9</sup> Many reasons can explain this asymmetric effect, but as I argued in Papanikos (2015a), an overvalued euro made the shock impact even worse. At a time just before the Great Recession, one euro was traded at 1.3 US\$. Today in 2023, it is almost at a parity. Undeniably, Greek economic policymaking was a disaster throughout the entire period of adopting the euro as the new national currency. In Papanikos (2014a), I explain in detail what happened and how Greece could not cope with its worst recession in peace years. The Great Recession changed the entire Greek political spectrum which will be analyzed in the next section. It brought into the political foreground new political parties and new leaders – that many serious commentators rightly claimed—would never have a political chance if it were not for the Great Recession.

<sup>8</sup>As a matter of fact, these were the first free elections of the entire period after the second world war. Prior to 1974, not all political parties were allowed to run for elections.

<sup>9</sup>This also has had an effect on Greek voters' attitudes towards the EU along with other issues that relate to Greece's role in the wider area of the Mediterranean Basin; see Papanikos (2008 & 2017b).

The last trough occurred in 2020 when the Greek GDP growth dropped by 9.03%. This time the cause was the global effect of the pandemic.<sup>10</sup> The Greek economy bounced back immediately in 2021 with a rate of 8.43%. Despite the Russia invasion of Ukraine,<sup>11</sup> the Greek economy continued to perform relatively well, and will be further discussed in the fifth section of this paper where the recent elections of 2023 are discussed.

These economic troughs are of great interest to this paper because they relate to electoral failures of incumbent governments irrespectively of how charismatic or ideological a prime minister may be. Figure 1 depicts what has happened to the Greek economy after the end of second world war in 1944 and a dire Greek civil war that ended in 1949.<sup>12</sup> Both wars destroyed the Greek private and public infrastructure. However, by the late 1950s (not shown in the graph) and into the 1960s, the rate of growth of Greek GDP reached historically-unprecedented high rates of growth. Many commentators at the time were describing this achievement as a Greek economic miracle.

The following three decades (1970-2000) were marked by lower growth rates. However, beginning in the new 21<sup>st</sup> century there was high economic optimism because Greece became one of the founding members of the eurozone. In 2002 the euro was adopted as the new official national currency in Greece, joining other EU countries. The first decade of the new century did not refute these great positive expectations. The average growth rate of the 2001-2007 period was 4.06%, but faced a downturn during the next decade (2011-2020)—this was the worst of the entire period shown in the graph. The average growth rate of the decade was -2.43% making this time period the worst economic performance ever in Greece, thanks to the joint effect of the Great Recession and the pandemic.

The first four years of the third decade are marked by relatively higher-than-average growth rates. On average, the growth rate of this four-year period is expected to reach 4.69% which, as shown below, is higher than the average growth rate of the EU countries.

The next section links these macroeconomic fluctuations to electoral successes and failures of both political parties and leaders.

## Successes and Failures in Greek Elections

After the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, Greece has enjoyed its longest-ever period of freedom. Elections were held throughout this period to elect members of parliaments and of course leaders and political parties. Table 2 gives the years that Greece had parliamentary elections since 1974 and Table 3 shows the annual GDP growth rates.

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<sup>10</sup>I have examined the economic impact of COVID 19 in Papanikos (2020b, 2020c, 2021a, 2021b, 2012c).

<sup>11</sup>In a series of papers, I have discussed various facets of the Russian-Ukraine war; see Papanikos (2022d, 2022e, 2022f, 2022g, 2022j).

<sup>12</sup>I have examined the civil war of the 1940s in my book, see Papanikos (2020d).

**Table 2. Greek Elections**

	Dates	Results and Notes	Growth
1	17 Nov 1974	A new leader emerged victorious as a prime minister with 52.72%	-6.50%
2	20 Nov 1977	The incumbent prime minister was reelected with 41.84%.	2.93%
3	18 Oct 1981	A new prime minister was elected with 48.07% but the incumbent elected prime minister became the President of the Greek republic and a new prime minister was appointed by the ruling political party at the time.	-1.58%
4	2 Jun 1985	The incumbent prime minister was reelected with 45.82%.	2.52%
5	18 Jun 1989	No political party could form a government. A coalition government was formed.	
6	5 Nov 1989	No political party could form a government. A coalition government was formed.	3.78%
7	8 Apr 1990	A new prime minister was elected with 46.89%.	0.00%
8	10 Oct 1993	The incumbent prime minister failed to be reelected and a new prime minister emerged victorious with 46.88%.	-1.55%
9	22 Sep 1996	The incumbent prime minister died in 1996 and the ruling political party elected a new prime minister who called a new election. He won with 41.49%	2.90%
10	9 Apr 2000	The incumbent prime minister was reelected with 43.79%.	3.95%
11	7 Mar 2004	The incumbent prime minister did not run for reelection but remained at the post until the elections. A new political leader was elected by the ruling political party. In the elections the incumbent prime minister lost and a new prime minister was elected with 45.36%	5.05%
12	16 Sep 2007	The incumbent prime minister was reelected with 41.87%	3.27%
13	4 Oct 2009	The incumbent prime minister failed to be reelected and a new prime minister emerged victorious with 43.92%.	-4.31%
14	6 May 2012	The elected prime minister quitted among unprecedented economic crisis. An emergency government took over and new elections were called but government was formed. There was a wide dispersion of votes among many political parties. Seven political parties won seats in the Greek parliament from all political spectrum including for the first time a Nazi party.	-7.11%
15	17 Jun 2012	A coalition government was formed mainly by the two parties which ruled Greece since 1974 with a new prime minister.	-7.11%
16	25 Jan 2015	The incumbent prime minister failed to be reelected and a new prime minister emerged victorious with 36.34%.	-0.17%
17	20 Sep 2015	The incumbent prime minister called again elections because he lost the majority in the Greek parliament and regained it with 35.46%	-0.17%
18	7 Jul 2019	The incumbent prime minister failed to be reelected and a new prime minister emerged victorious with 39.85%.	1.88%
19	21 May 2023	No government was formed and new elections were called even though the incumbent prime minister got a higher percentage of the popular vote and increased drastically his difference with the second party but because of the new electoral system introduced by the previous government he could not get a majority in the parliament.	2.45%
20	25 Jun 2023	A strong majority was established by the leading party.	2.45%

In total, Greece has had 20 parliamentary elections. On average, one election per 2.5 years. The entire electoral period of the 50 years (1974-2023) is characterized by relative political stability with very few exceptions which are characterized by repeating elections in a short period of time (a few months) because the parliament failed to support any political coalition to govern Greece.

However, it should be emphasized that at no point in time during this period democracy and free elections were undermined, even during the deep economic crisis of the 2010s which brought into surface a Nazi party; a threat to what Greece had achieved all these years. Now this party is outlawed because of criminal acts they committed including a murder.

What does the evidence of Table 2 show? Does the economy matter? A look at Table 2 shows that after ruling a few years, no incumbent political party and prime minister was reelected at a year of negative or zero economic growth—even when the dictatorship collapsed in 1974 leaving behind a negative growth rate (-6.5%). The other years that reelection was not achieved when the GDP growth rate was zero or negative were (in parentheses the GDP growth rate of the year): 1981 (-1.58%), 1990 (0%), 1993 (-1.55%), 2009 (-4.31%), 2012 (-7.11%), 2015 (-0.17%). Incumbent governments did not achieve to be reelected even though the rate of growth was positive: in 2004 (5.05%) and in 2019 (1.88%). In all other elections, the incumbent prime minister or the ruling party was reelected: 1977 (2.93%), 1985 (2.52%), 1996 (2.9%), 2000 (3.95%), 2023 (2.45%).

**Table 3.** Greek Economic Growth (% of GDP), 1974-2024

Year	Growth	Year	Growth	Year	Growth
<b>1974</b>	<b>-6.50%</b>	1991	3.08%	2008	-0.33%
1975	6.37%	1992	0.68%	<b>2009</b>	<b>-4.31%</b>
1976	6.91%	<b>1993</b>	<b>-1.55%</b>	2010	-5.47%
<b>1977</b>	<b>2.93%</b>	1994	1.99%	2011	-10.13%
1978	7.28%	1995	2.08%	<b>2012</b>	<b>-7.11%</b>
1979	3.28%	<b>1996</b>	<b>2.90%</b>	2013	-2.49%
1980	0.68%	1997	4.48%	2014	0.45%
<b>1981</b>	<b>-1.58%</b>	1998	3.86%	<b>2015</b>	<b>-0.17%</b>
1982	-1.14%	1999	3.07%	2016	-0.51%
1983	-1.08%	<b>2000</b>	<b>3.95%</b>	2017	1.08%
1984	2.03%	2001	4.13%	2018	1.69%
<b>1985</b>	<b>2.52%</b>	2002	3.91%	<b>2019</b>	<b>1.88%</b>
1986	0.52%	2003	5.80%	2020	-9.03%
1987	-2.30%	<b>2004</b>	<b>5.05%</b>	2021	8.43%
1988	4.32%	2005	0.60%	2022	5.96%
<b>1989</b>	<b>3.78%</b>	2006	5.64%	<b>2023</b>	<b>2.45%</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>3.27%</b>	2024	1.93%

Note: in bold are the election years of the period.

A number of conclusions emerge from the above descriptive evidence. Firstly, there is not a single instance of an election where an incumbent prime minister and

his political party was able to be reelected during a year of zero or negative economic growth. Secondly, reelections were not achieved even in a year with a positive economic growth; this happened in 2004 and in 2019.

Possible explanations for the 2004 results could be that the difference of the previous elections between the two parties who competed in the 2000 elections was only 1.05% and the incumbent prime minister had ruled Greece for eight years. However, it should be mentioned that the elections were fought not between the incumbent prime minister and the challenger, but with a new leader who emerged after the prime minister at the time resigned from the presidency of his political party but retain his position as prime minister until the next elections were held. Thus, the result can be explained by both voters' fatigue and the charisma of the challenger.

The 2019 elections had different characteristics. It was a coalition government which disarranged just before the elections of 2019 over an important national issue: the new agreement with North Macedonia. Many Greeks, especially in Northern Greece, voted with this in mind.

The elections of 2012 deserve further analysis because they were held at a year of the worst performance of the Greek economy in an election year. GDP fell by 7.11% in 2012 which shattered the political landscape which had been constant since 1974. For the first time, the two ruling parties at the time collaborated to form a new government. In addition, a new party and a new leader emerged as the opposition party in the 2012 and as a ruling party in 2015. It was the first time that a party other than New Democracy and PASOK formed a government. This case study can be also interpreted as being the effect of economic performance on election results. In a series of papers and books, I have examined both the elections of 2012 and the following elections of 2015; see Papanikos (2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e, 2015f, 2015g, 2015h, 2015i).

In general, the economic performance of Greece seems to be associated with the probability of a leader or a political party to be reelected. A good economic performance increases the probability of reelection but is not guaranteed. What seems to be guaranteed is that a negative or zero GDP economic growth rate never secured a reelection. These overall conclusions are further reinforced by analyzing in more detail the most recent elections of 2023. This is discussed in the next section.

### **The 2023 Elections**

As a case study, the 2023 elections deserve a more detailed analysis because for the first time the incumbent prime minister not only increased its percentage of popular vote, but increased tremendously its difference from the second party. As a matter of fact, the percentage of the incumbent leader is greater than the sum of the percentages of the second, third and fourth party together.



Table 4 gives the elections results of the double 2023 elections. I only report results for the first three parties which in the past had ruled Greece with a prime minister coming from their own party.

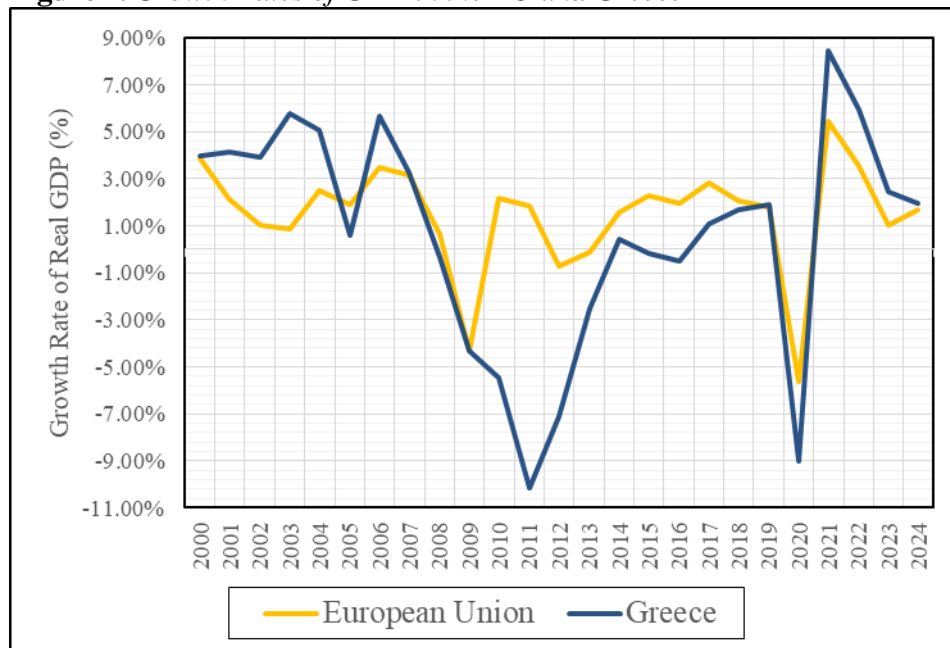
**Table 4.** *The 2023 Election Results*

Political Party	May 2023	June 2023
New Democracy	40.79%	40.56%
SYRIZA	20.07%	17.83%
PASOK	11.46%	11.84%

Has the Greek economic performance anything to do with such surprising results? The answer is yes. I use a few indicators to validate this claim. Figure 2 compares the rates of growth of the Greek GDP with the growth rate of the EU.

This indicator is very important in Greek politics and is used by political parties to either criticize the government if they are in opposition and take credit if they rule. Greece has experienced a long period of economic underperformance relative to the EU throughout the period during and after the Great Recession of 2009. It is only in the last three years (2021-2023) that the Greek economy is outperforming the EU. This period is almost identical with the ruling by the incumbent government which was elected in mid-2019. In 2019, the growth rate of EU was lower than the Greek one by 0.08%. The 2020 was a bad year for the Greek economy relative to EU; a difference of 3.38% but this was accepted by the Greeks because nobody would have predicted the pandemic and its detrimental impact on the Greek economy, particularly its tourist sector as I have explained in Papanikos (2020b). In 2021 the economy bounced back at a higher rate than the average EU rate. The difference was 2.99% and similar were the results of 2022 of 2.43% difference and this year the difference is expected at 1.42%.

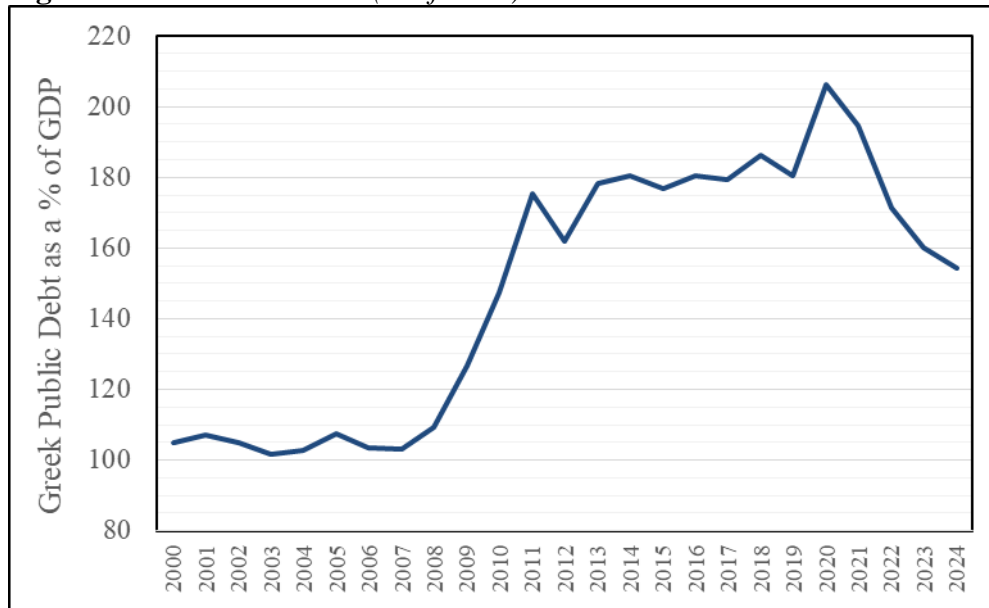
**Figure 2.** *Growth Rates of GDP in the EU and Greece*



Summing up these comparisons, if the Greek voters care about the economy relative to the average EU, then it is not surprising that Greeks voted for the incumbent leader at an even higher rate than they did in the previous elections of 2019 that brought them to power.

The growth of GDP is only one indicator. Another thorny economic issue in Greek politics is the huge sovereign debt. Figure 3 gives the Greek public debt as a percentage of GDP.

**Figure 3.** Greek Public Debt (% of GDP)



In 2020, the Greek debt was 206% of GDP which was the highest ever. Since then, the Greek public debt is declining at a very high rate. It dropped to 195% in 2021, to 171% in 2022 and it is expected to further decline to 160% in 2023 and 154% in 2024.

The performance of the incumbent government of 2019-2023 to cope with the politically notorious Greek public debt is an additional factor that can explain the electoral successes of the incumbent prime minister.

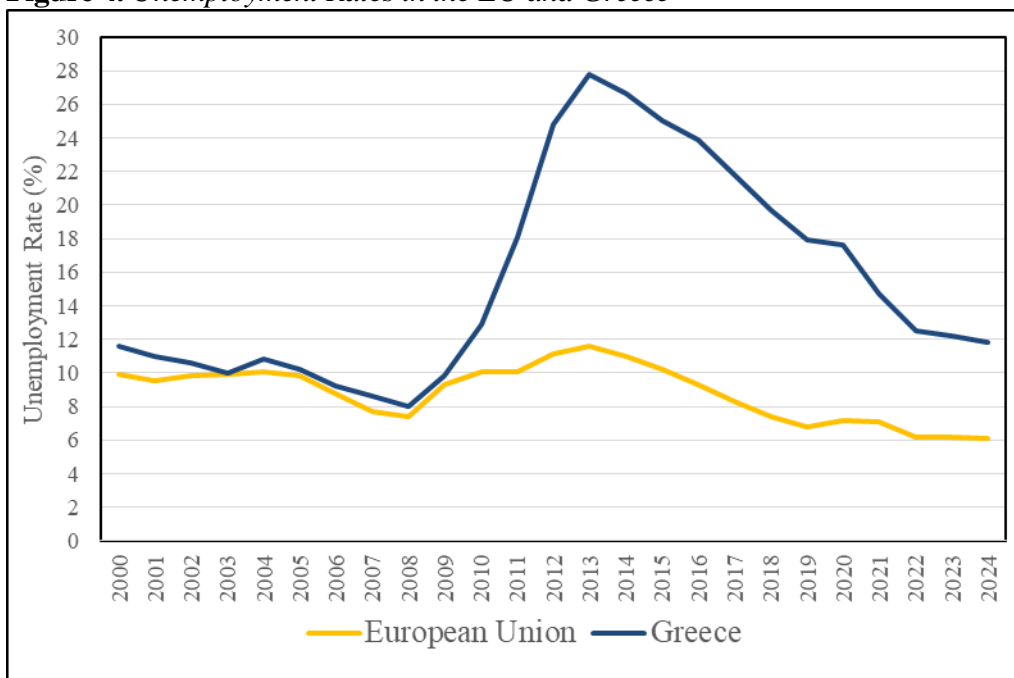
The unemployment rate is another indicator which is used in political debates. Figure 4 shows the record of the Greek economy relative to the average unemployment rate of all EU countries.

In the beginning of this century, which is also the beginning of the eurozone years, the Greek unemployment rate was about the same as the EU average. After 2009, the Greek unemployment rate is picking up at a faster rate than EU. By 2013 the Greek unemployment rate skyrocketed reaching 27.8%. The same year the EU average was 11.3%. Since 2019, the Greek unemployment rate has been dropping at almost the same rate as the EU rate.

The unemployment rate is still very high, but voters' expectations seem to be optimistic that the rate will continue to decline and sooner or later will converge to the EU average. Presumably, the Greek electorate credits the incumbent government for making this possible. As a matter of fact, the prime minister used the labor

market developments to campaign that he deserves a second term. His argument is that in the next four years, he aims to not only lower unemployment rate, but at the same time increase the real wages, both the minimum wage and the average wage. It echoed well to Greek voters' ears.

**Figure 4.** *Unemployment Rates in the EU and Greece*



The last important indicator is the inflation rate which became an important political issue after the Russian invasion of Ukraine because it raised the price of energy, and as a result, many consumers' goods and services. Greece's performance was as good as in other EU countries with similar characteristics. There are no data for inflation rate for the total area of EU after 2022. Instead, I use the inflation rates of Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal because these countries are usually used in the Greek politics for making comparisons.

There was no problem of inflation rate in all these countries from 2000 to 2021. Figure 5 compares the inflation rates of Greece and Portugal during the 2000-2024 period just to demonstrate the point that there was no problem of inflation.

After the Russian invasion, the inflation rate jumped to almost double digits in Greece and in the other countries which are used here for comparison (see Table 5).

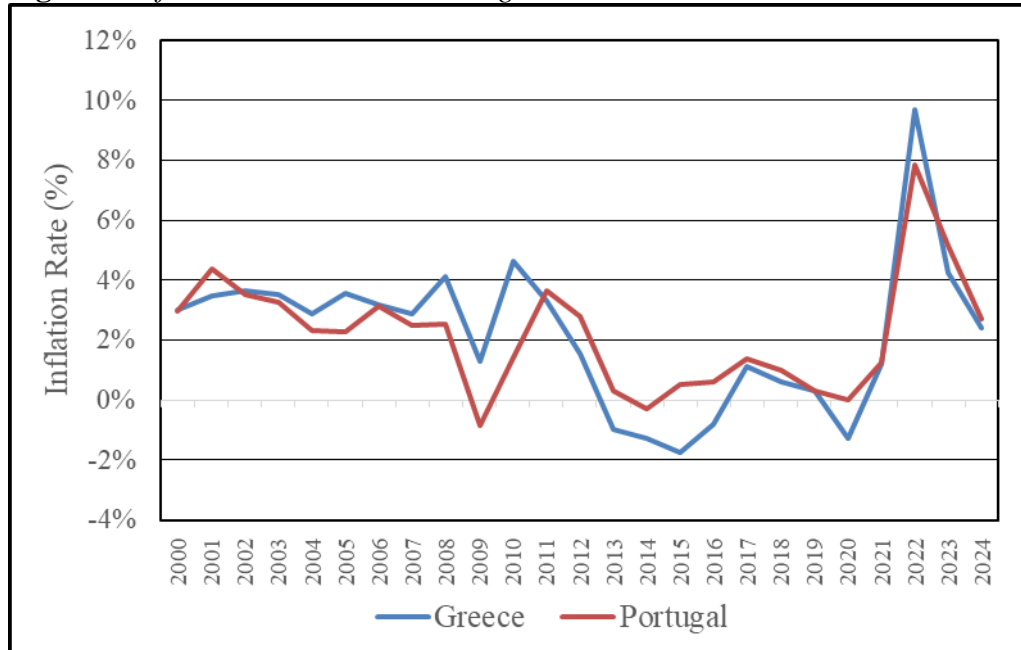
Greece's inflation records in 2022 were the worst among the four countries but the differences were not too far off. Actually, they were less than 2%. In 2023, an election year in Greece, the inflation rate was lower than the Italian and Spanish inflation rate, but trailing by less than one third of a percentage point the Portuguese inflation rate.

Summarizing this section, it is more than obvious that the economic developments during the term of the incumbent government (2019-2023) were

very positive using the main macroeconomic indicators of growth rates, debt/GDP ratio, unemployment and inflation rates.

This paper does not claim that these economic Greek achievements were the results of a meticulous and effective macroeconomic policy, but rather were most probably the result of a positive and conducive world economic developments.

**Figure 5.** *Inflation in Greece and Portugal*



**Table 5.** *Inflation Rates in Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal, 2020-2024*

Year	Greece	Spain	Italy	Portugal
2020	-1.28%	-0.38%	-0.10%	0.00%
2021	1.20%	3.18%	1.85%	1.26%
2022	9.69%	8.31%	8.21%	7.84%
2023	4.24%	4.05%	6.09%	5.14%
2024	2.42%	2.73%	2.91%	2.70%

For example, the Greek tourist sector performed extremely well in 2022 and continues this year at an even higher rate, which by itself can explain the good economic performance.

This favorable world environment cannot be credited to the Greek government but many voters perceived that some credit should be given to the incumbent and therefore they presumably voted for the incumbent prime minister.

## Conclusions

The hypothesis that the economy does play a role in shaping electoral outcomes cannot be rejected. This is more evident when an election year is associated with zero or negative economic growth rate. These elections were never

won by an incumbent prime minister and/or his political party. In this case, other factors such as the ideology and personal charisma of a leader does not seem to play a role.

On the other hand, positive economic growth rates during a year of parliamentary elections are in most cases associated with reelection with two notable exceptions: 2014 and 2019. Noneconomic factors seemed to have played a more decisive role in both these elections. In the 2004 elections there was most probably a voters' fatigue with having the same party ruling them for so long (from 1993 to 2004). In the 2019 elections, the agreement that the government at the time signed with North Macedonia most probably weighed more in Greek voters' decision than the positive economic performance.

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## **Promoting Cross-Cultural Psychology Research in the Caribbean: Best Practices in Intersectionality**

*By Sandra Gonsalves-Domond\**

*Given the Caribbean region's post-colonial history with entrenched and daunting challenges of: structural racism, patriarchy, and colorism as epiphenomenal outcomes, it is imperative that cross-cultural investigators using 21<sup>st</sup> century research paradigms honed and crafted from strengths-based approaches interrogate issues surrounding national, cultural identity, and cultural hybridity. Additionally, push-pull factors in migration, acculturative influences, psychological resilience, and coping strategies within non-pathologizing frameworks of inclusivity and intersectionality are fodder for empirical research. These holistic perspectives borrow from multiple perspectives in Black Psychology paradigm shifting as they reject and deconstruct Eurocentric models in explaining Black psyche and behaviors. The discursive frame around subaltern voices, is that, it deracinates "grand" theories, splinters and challenges hegemonic assumptions. Moving from the mechanistic, binary constructions placing a premium on only quantitative models with a concomitant devaluation of qualitative approaches, this author argues that the kinds of cross-cultural research that offers the most qualitatively-rich analysis is ethnography, as this approach embraces concepts of lived epistemological realities of participants. As a cross-cultural tool, it triangulates participant observations, interviews, and case studies. The ethnographic report generated from this data-gathering methodology and comprised of multiple sections, illuminates the following: the uniqueness of indigenous psychologies; provides important historical contexts; addresses issues of language, cultural rituals, and norms; and grounds the work within multidisciplinary perspectives offering more integrative, cogent analyses of cultural phenomena. Further, even research ensconced in knowledge-production for academic consumption should hue to the penultimate, translational goals of nation building, community flourishings, and human capital development.*

**Keywords:** *cross-cultural research, Caribbean psychology, intersectional research*

### **Promoting Cross-Cultural Psychology Research in the Caribbean: Best Practices in Intersectionality**

In 2021, The American Psychological Association as well as the American Psychiatric Association issued apologies about their ubiquitous complicity in advancing dehumanization, zero-sum gain paradigms of racial hierarchy and structural racism through historic errors of commission and omission. In their recent internal reckonings, they organizationally pledged to move toward anti-racist agendas, and to actively promote unfettered equity through the alliterative

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three “I” words: “reconciliation, repair, and renewal” (p. 1). This paper, therefore, provides a model for the axiom, or fodder for the argument promulgated here, for the generation of an autonomous Caribbean Psychology within best practices of intersectional research ideas which expand and sharpen the capacity for more inclusive, global investigations. In alignment with the fulsome embrace and transparent valorization of indigenous psychologies, the APA’s apology essentially jettisons a “hegemonic science” of Whiteness. Heather McGhee’s scholarly work (2021) entitled, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Cost Everyone And How We Can Prosper Together,*” draws back the veil, providing concrete examples that elucidate not only the wholesale socioeconomic cost of racial antipathy, but the bankruptcy exacted on our moral compass when individualistic and misguided racialized interests fail to advocate for the collective liberation and solidarity of all of us.

Post-colonial and generative cross-cultural psychologists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, donning interrogative prisms cannot *uncritically* import Western perspectives which Berry et al. (1992) refer to as a kind of “scientific acculturation” into multiracial Caribbean spaces. Regional psychologists must embrace their stories, legacies, and assume full ownership of them, both in terms of strengths to support and elevate, but, with equilibrium, wrestle with some of the internal limitations thwarting nation-building and human capital development efforts. Supporting the foregoing, within this threaded vein, it is imperative to “guard against an *unexamined* exportation of ideas and methods developed in one culture to other cultural/linguistic communities” (Erkut et al. 1999, p. 206). Drilling down, this leitmotif of indigenous psychology contests or protests the intrusion of European-based psychological discourses that have no bases in pan-universalism or respect for global south paradigms (Berry et al. 2011).

Psychology is my disciplinary and intellectual home, but my academic publications have urgently bypassed silo disciplinary lanes into necessary, multidisciplinary lens (Gonsalves, 1986, Gonsalves-Domond 2020). As a preamble to my introduction and a contextual placeholder, I arrive at the quintessential threshold of this issue of promoting cross-cultural research on the Caribbean as an academician who has not only been shaped through the prism of my immigrant, diasporic, Afro-Jamaican experiences, but concurrently ferreting out meaning within overlapping and nested transcultural lens. *My eyes are trained on best practices of including excluded voices, and in grounding lived epistemologies.* A central thesis that I have deliberately embraced, is the view, that promoting research on the Caribbean, values the emic/community-derived approaches where any changes or improvements can best be achieved by elevating and championing plural, community-centered voices and stakeholders. This should optimally be achieved at the grassroots levels, marshalled as seedbeds to facilitate change, and incorporating a plethora of voices and inclusive humanity. Hazardous a generality, those at the privilege tip of Caribbean societies are often less motivated and invested in transformational changes because of the wide-ranging dividends exacted from the status quo of intersectional, institutionalized class and race-based hierarchies.

Adding credibility to the foregoing, Thompson (2016) asserts that “[T]he Caribbean region is included among parts of the global community whose

psychology stories are conspicuously missing from the discipline's historiography" (p. 17). In the conduct of cross-cultural research, there is a need to widen the aperture, as this is congruent with 21<sup>st</sup> century realities, with the *readjusting* calculus of national impacts. Additionally, let me state that this critical and constructive discourse is situated in the context of having pioneered and taught *Cross-Cultural Psychology* and a capstone *Black Psychology* courses over the past two-and-a-half decades. The overarching frameworks of my positionality as a college professor for 43-years have furnished me with invaluable prisms into my pedagogy, and in meta-reflections on mechanisms of how to translate ideas into a blueprint for the conduct of interdisciplinary psychological research on the Caribbean (Gonsalves-Domond 2021).

The Caribbean is an exciting admixture or collage of cultural and ethnic plurality, comprised of more than 7000 individual islands dotted over one million square miles. The region is comprised of 12 sovereign and 12 dependent territories in over 200 miles of Caribbean Sea. The Caribbean archipelago, although undergirded by similar transatlantic narratives of the savage enslavement of African peoples, is not monolithic given its plural colonial histories. However, as Comitas and Lowenthal (1973) accurately notes, "we see ourselves as closely linked." Derek Walcott in his 1992 Nobel Prize speech speaks of an "Antillean experience" that overlay a regional set of experiences. However, the fact is, the Caribbean experience is by no means monolithic given the infusion of contract laborers from India, China, and the Iberian Peninsula in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its aftermath (Mintz, 1981). These socioracial and ethnic heterogeneity have exacerbated fissures and created fault lines under colonial rule with its deployed stratagems of divide-and-conquer. Echoing a similar sentiment, Lamming (1985), a well-respected, Bajan intellectual in a brilliant essay entitled, *The Intellectual in the Caribbean* illuminates the argument that the study of, and interpretation of the Caribbean should be "regional in character." He is demonstrably spot-on about regional variations among: Anglophone, Francophone, Spanish, and the Dutch Caribbean. Presciently drilling down on the concept of regional identity, Lamming asserts the animating imperative, "Scholarship should therefore be committed unapologetically to the forging of a *regional consciousness* in every territory to make it impossible, with time, for anyone of that region to be regarded as an alien by any part of that region" (p. 18). Yet, an equally important, cautionary, counter-narrative is one advanced by Jackson (2005) about the dangers of yoking disparate domains of Caribbean experiences such as Afro-Creolization with Indo-Creolization especially at it relates to Guyana.

Historically, cross-cultural investigations of the Caribbean region were conducted primarily by cultural anthropologist working in the area of family studies. The predominant focus was on Black, working class families viewed through the lens of deficit-deficiency models. Attendant foci were on psychopathologies and paternal absences. There is a paucity of published findings on Indo-Caribbean, Syrian-Caribbean, Lebanese-Caribbean, Chinese-Caribbean, and Euro-Caribbean women, men, and children. Therefore, epistemological experiences have to be grounded in diverse sociocultural and ethno-political realities. It is important to note that cross-cultural psychology as a hybrid area of

specialization emerged out of the historic crucible of World War II, and therefore guided by global-European experiences (Berry et al. 2011).

The Caribbean region remains under the COVID-19 pandemic threat, has some of the heaviest disease burdens, and the greatest investment needs on myriad levels (Sam-Aguda et al. 2022, Umakanthan et al. 2022). Chimanda Adichie, a Nigeria writer in her iconic 2009 TED video warns against in her presentation, *The Danger of a Single Story* that single stories encroach on the dignity of a people, “flatten their experiences,” perpetuate stereotypes, and permit power hierarchies—that is, people in positions of power to control singular narratives they promulgate and enforce. Promotion of cross-cultural research, and in my view, eschewing and disrupting the dominant binary about basic vs. applied research to a more respectful combination in the Caribbean, expand the stories and epistemological understandings of our plural, cultural, racial, gendered, and socioeconomic realities.

As we vacate the earliest sets of investigations in cultural anthropology to current cross-cultural research, robust and ambitious attempts to validate indigenous psychological spaces surrounding the region came in the 2016 edited work of Drs. Jaipaul Roopnarine and Derek Chadee’s, *Caribbean Psychology: Indigenous Contributions to a Global Discipline*. A generative volume, it engages in the necessary, paradigmic shift in knowledge production, consumerism, agency, and ownership; Ava Thompson, the first contributor in that edited volume asserts, Caribbeanists must “interrogate our own psychological traditions” (Roopnarine and Chadee, 2016, p. 1). Caribbean Psychologists, and here I am utilizing an intercultural referent have “double-dutched” alongside their African-American counterparts to center their voices, and continue emancipatory work (Pardlo 2007). Additionally, it is incumbent on Caribbean scholars to write their own psychobiographies as well. Adler and Singer (2023) in their recent co-edited, special issue in the *Journal of Personality* offer “counter narratives to the dominant discourse” of change agents, but failed to include any Caribbean-American, Caribbean, or Pan-Caribbean change agents to highlight.

Black Psychology is the forerunner of Caribbean Psychology. Black Psychologists in the United States began a robust, interrogative relationship with Eurocentric psychology in 1968 when 58 professionals attending a Conference in San Francisco protested the racism and blatant lack of inclusion in the American Psychological Association. They formed ABPsi, the Association of Black Psychology to reject the APA’s jaundiced view of the Black community (Parham et al. 2011, Belgrave and Allison 2019). A core component of their grievances is that, “APA ignored the opportunity to take a formidable stand to address poverty, racism, and social concerns affecting African, APA-Americans” (p. 2, 2021 Apology document). The philosophical foundations of Black Psychology expounded by Nobles (1972) in a still-relevant article entitled, *African Philosophy: Foundations for Black Psychology* stated in his first paragraph that Black Psychology is “more than the experience of people living in ghettos or having been forced into the dehumanizing conditions of slavery” (p. 47). He advanced what was then a “new” narrative, and what remains a clear-eyed imperative that Black psychology must be grounded and steeped in an African philosophy. He writes, that Black Psychology’s, “unique status is from the positive features of

basic African philosophy which dictates the values, customs, attitudes and behaviors (sic) of African in Africa and the New World” (p. 47).

### **Best Practices in the Conduct of Cross-Cultural Psychological Research about the Caribbean**

This paper now puts in sharp relief, a blueprint in the best practices in the conduct of Caribbean research in psychology. It is noteworthy, that as the author ponders a smorgasbord of informational sources, a wide net is cast for inclusion of documents, reports, working papers, policy documents that are designated as “grey research.” Curating these resources have value, as one builds scholarship outside of traditional academic machines in what is still perceived as novel areas of research. Dr. Jaipaul Roopnarine, an eminent developmental psychologist and Caribbean scholar refers to the need for “decolonizing psychology curricula worldwide” (Jaipaul L. Roopnarine, personal communication, July 1, 2022). Aligning with that strategy, Caribbean and African-American psychologists are echoing and manifesting that promising complexity for change. Contextually, Caribbean research is fecund; it also ascribes to what I refer to as “terra incognita,” the unknown and unpacked territory in areas of research. The dire need to intentionally privilege and foreground theories based on authentic epistemologies of diverse Caribbean peoples is incontrovertibly urgent and timely. The author’s view, is that, the collective arsenal of research on this region must be reflective of mapping multiple identities based on island specificities, integrate cross-disciplinary notions with attention to layers of intersectionalities. Operationally, “[A]n intersectional approach ...views race, class, and gender as categories that interact with systems of social and power relations in society. Intersectionality conceptualizes these categories as mutually constructed and fluid, continually shaping and shaped by dynamics of power” (Erkut et al. 1999, pp. 446–447). So, in essence, this kind of research is generative, advocacy-focused, and models intersectionality; it must reflect both contemporaneous, post-colonial realities and global south imaginations, while feeding the continuous loops of development into re-imaginings.

Further, the work of the preeminent scholar and sociologist, Dr. Patricia Hills-Collins (2022) in her published work entitled, *Black Feminist Epistemology* provides a pathway for the conduct of research within an Afrocentric approach, and by extension guidance on Caribbean research. Dr. Hills-Collins examines Black female positionality and experiences as critical to knowledge-production. She advocates that Black women scholar-activists view the world as holistically interrelated, using tools of intersectionality *as opposed* to separate, distinct or compartmentalized views in knowledge acquisition. Her arguments are that as conversations with participants become curated, centering the issues and grounding the work on different problematics of socially constructed variables of race, social class, and gender, one must then proceed on an egalitarian basis. Further, anchoring research in historical analyses provides veritable sure-footedness. Although not rejecting quantitative analyses, Hill-Collins does not

privilege these methodologies; she proffers the notion that the kinds of work academic Black scholars perform, mostly ethnographic, a triangulation of observations, case study analyses, and interviews lend themselves to qualitatively-rich descriptions aligning with humanism-existentialism as philosophical lens. Orality, emphasis on collective survival, and emotional vitality are all strengths of the Afrocentric and Caribbean diasporic traditions that find threaded connectivity with research on the Caribbean. Researchers ought not to assume hegemony over the people we understand. Participants are not “subjects” as that very semantic usage denotes and connotes unequal, colonial, or differential power relationships.

Understanding privilege, power, gender relationships, colorism, social class, and social inequalities are all part of the frames that must be incorporated into Caribbean analyses and cross-cultural psychological research. Hills-Collins asserts that, Black women in particular must be studied from Afrocentric and womanist perspectives. Although points of overlap are found here, the finer points of departure, are that, Caribbean indigenous diversity with its multiracial, multiethnic region must be intentionally interwoven to reflect distinct, unique, and specific epistemological realities. Caribbean literary studies add critical and confirmatory analyses as well to new paradigms in Caribbean psychological research (Hodge 1979, Davies and Fido 1994, Wynter 2003, Ramlochon, 2020). Given the multicultural and multi-lingual diversity in the region of not only Africans, but Indians, Chinese, and Middle Easterners, research lens should be incontrovertibly broadened to include and center those unique cultural, socio-religious historiographies and approaches in Caribbean research.

The importance of centering and the dangers of marginalization are noted. One such example is salient. A significant political revolution occurred in 1979 when Grenada under the leadership of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop’s *New Jewel Party* shifted ideologically to the left. Using deconstructive, feminist lens of analyses, Lambert (2020) in her book, *Comrade Sisters: Caribbean Feminist Revisions of the Grenada Revolution*, adds a detailed, veritable, cautionary tale about the missteps and blind-spots of a social movement in which patriarchal hierarchies, marginalize, decenter, and diminish radical, female voices. Lambert’s work and others support best practices in social movements about the importance of solidifying community-based, progressive leadership in national development couched in layers of inclusivity. Multi-gendered and multiracial inclusive coalition-building in leadership structures in the Caribbean must be part-and-parcel of the blueprint for long-term, sustainable change.

Distilled from the region’s history is a cascading set of multicultural experiences, based in part on slavery, colonial, postcolonial, contemporaneous and sovereign histories. Therefore, an authentic knowledge-production strategy must interrogate vestiges of the subjugated past, invert Eurocentric, canonical beliefs and assertions, and eliminate uncritical allegiances to models that are anachronistic, misogynous, classist, reductionistic, and/or myopic. In fact, knowledge-production especially when conducted by culturally-rooted researchers with a deep structural understanding and respect embraced by a culturally relativist approach can yield qualitatively-rich data (Gonsalves-Domond 1985, 2002, Gonsalves and Bernard 1983, Berry 2008, 2013, Berry et al. 1992).

Moreover, the explicit corollary, is that, Caribbean Psychology is intersected with multiple cognate disciplines, several of them include: history, economics, anthropology, African diasporic studies, Caribbean literary studies, sociology, public health and epidemiology. These accentuate the finer points of explicating the complex nature of human experiences. Cross-Cultural Psychology research in the Caribbean must be interdisciplinary and multilayered; it can never be unidimensional. Additionally, Caribbean psychology must also embrace all of the languages of the region to enhance regional access: English, Spanish, Dutch, Creole (Kreyol), and Papiamentu. Language is inextricably linked with culture and cognition.

Yousef et al. (2013) identify in their chapter entitled, *Fieldwork and Data Collection* the usual qualitatively-rich methodologies. They include atypical methodologies such as finding archival data to shape meaningful conversations. The operational definition of discursive analysis is “a methodology employed in collecting naturalistic data on a range of texts types, including narrative, media, communication, political speeches” (p. 84). It is worth repeating here that, ethnography provides content-laden data, and can illuminate pathways to promote lofty and explicit goals such as group-actualization and the maximization of potentialities. The combined methodologies permit by their very nature “closeness” to the people studied in a shared psycholinguistic space, and can help build a ladder-up and literature of strength-based Caribbean behaviors and cultures. The engineering of superordinate, societal goals can forge solidarity among diverse interests or what Heather McGee refers to as a *solidarity dividend*. Further, in inserting a perspective that is decidedly humanist-existential, research that is rooted in transformational progress with applied, translational orientations to the arc of social justice can potentially serve not only as a singular guiding principle, but indeed, a most collective one for Caribbean nations.

It is imperative that cross-cultural investigators using 21<sup>st</sup> century research paradigms honed and crafted from strengths-based approaches interrogate issues of national and cultural identity, push-pull factors in migration, acculturative influences, psychological resilience and coping within non-pathologizing frameworks of Afrocentricity (Palmer 1995). *The challenge, as I reflected on this topic, was not what to study*. There are myriad variables and researchable issues that traverse the developmental trajectory from in-utero issues up to and including the psychology of aging. I would argue that any area of inquiry across the lifespan, from enhancing more positive pregnancy outcomes, parental ethno-theories, to studying gerontology, death and dying would contribute to national development.

I struggle to “weigh for prioritization” the importance of the following research and abandoned the task at least for the moment. Here’s my take on recommendations for critical features of Caribbean research. *This is an evolving document and work in progress and should not be perceived as definitive*.

We are still in the midst of the 21<sup>st</sup> century COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing existential crisis of climate change. As two co-occurring humanitarian crises, the Caribbean region continues to struggle to obtain vaccines, boosters, medical supplies within fragile, medical infrastructures. Psychology, as part of the multidisciplinary panoply of fields such as public health and epidemiology can

research best practices in the following: disseminating vaccine information, and can lean-in on ways to overcome vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. Epidemiology and statistics can be effective tools used by public health research campaigns to validate or assess vaccine efficacy and to provide predictive models of risks.

Further, it is my belief that basic and applied research are mutually reinforcing, but, in the Caribbean, I would argue that the need to build and create a portfolio for greater *applied research* given the evolving nature of our regional spaces and the dire need to upgrade the social and material realities of Caribbean people across the region are invaluable in the through-line to national development (Lambert et al. 2007, Lambert et al. 2013, Taylor et al. 2020). The foregoing statement dovetails with the paradigm shifting in public health. Referred to as ethics-in-practice, this branch of philosophy examines the nexus of goodness and value to how core values might inform research. In essence, this kind of research bypasses the quotidian aspects of development to the active pursuit of nation building and human capital development. The author fully supports an additive model, as the listing of research is by no means exhaustive. Best practices within intersectional frames for the conduct of cross-cultural psychology research include the following ten recommendations:

1. research that connects to national development and humanitarianism, and thereby, from social justice imperatives improve the quality of lives and mental health status of Caribbean folks through interrogations on sexual identities; ways of building self-esteem, culture-specific syndromes (i.e., “seeing duppies”), help-seeking behaviors, diagnosis, clinical practice, and the efficacy roles of traditional, ethno-medicines, and ethno-spirituality (i.e. Obeah, voodoo) to name a few;
2. work that deconstructs flawed assumptions, eliminates cultural illiteracy, ethnocentrism, patriarchy, misogynoir, elitism, and reduces intragroup, intergroup prejudice and stigma;
3. work that fosters collaborations across global spaces and inter-regionally and throughout the diasporic Caribbean experience to reduce health care disparities and improve reproductive health, and maternal-child issues at the judicious intersections or fulcrum of public health and epidemiology;
4. generative thinking that provides pathways to increasing respect for oral traditions, promoting culturally competent, mental health providers, and by extension service delivery models of mental health-positive psychology;
5. psycho-philosophical work on the role of humanism in shaping optimal individual and community development within paradigms of cultural identity development;
6. multifaceted work that interfaces with a Public Health Research Agenda especially with WHO, UNICEF, Amnesty International, and Women Development Agencies. WHO has established Millennium Goals worth exploring such as reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, ensuring sustainability, removing barriers to disability, and eradicating poverty;

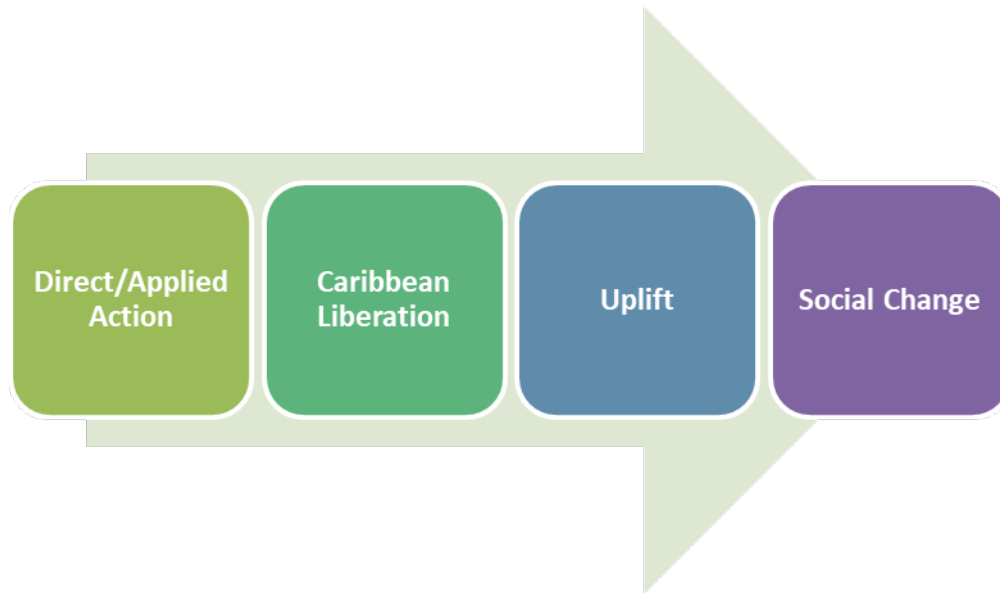


7. intellectual work that cross-fertilizes with all accredited Caribbean academic institutions, inviting researchers, scholar-activists to visit, teach, engage in research and conduct studies in the region expanding multiple narratives. We must in the momentum toward nation building assess the present state in the Caribbean. We must then proceed to utilize representative samples and stakeholders across the spectrum as to what change(s) would improve the quality of Caribbean lives across regional variabilities;
8. create innovations in researching culturally competent ways to implement changes and evaluate implementation efficacy. We have evaluative tools to achieve maximization of these outcomes;
9. promote shared work that connects Caribbean-American Psychologists in partnership and solidarity with the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi). Here, I envision special issues devoted to Caribbean Psychology and creatively generating ideas for improvement of African-descended people in the diaspora; and
10. work that connects cross-cultural psychology to Caribbean literature, literary studies, racial and self-identity, labor, dislocations, and liminality.

## **Conclusion**

Reshaping conversations and interrogations around the banality and toxicities of traditional research-gathering is what define this burgeoning area of Caribbean psychology. Further, best practices in intersectionality speak to holistic integration of all socially constructed variables in the co-creation and interchanges of lived epistemologies. There is a palpable urgency and a clarion call especially among scholar-activists to work assiduously in achieving better research and material outcomes for the Caribbean region as one strives to improve this vital region. The relationship between intersectional cross-cultural psychology research which yields direct/applied action can be correlated with Caribbean liberation and ultimately social change in this linear model (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Relationship between Cross-Cultural Research and Outcomes in the Caribbean



The importance of conducting psychological research in the region is inflective and catalytic; this is especially meaningful when conducted by dialectical thinkers who can pivot from narrow perspectives, are able to ponder the fulsome merits of diverse perspectives using tools of intersectionality, and by extension can insert themselves into national and regional conversations. The need to publish empirical work in Caribbean psychology builds upon existing and expanding frameworks, and fortify a legacy of publications and brain trust that serve to increase human capital development, cultural competency, and augment nation building for this and future generations of Caribbean people including scholars-activists.

In conclusion, intentionality in laying down the foundational cornerstones in the conduct of significant Caribbean psychological research with best practices can achieve systemic, positive changes in the region.

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## Reproductive Changes in the Population of the Republic of Croatia

By Marija Ileš\* & Domagoj Karačić<sup>‡</sup>

*Knowledge of demographic trends is the basis for policy making, both economic, social, health, etc., as well as population policy. The Republic of Croatia has been facing demographic problems for many years, mainly an increase in the elderly population with a simultaneous decrease in the reproductive base and the number of young people. Croatia is one of the countries in the post-transition stage of population characteristics, characterized by the transition of the total fertility rate from a low positive rate to a level that no longer ensures the renewal of generations, and the mortality rate, which is determined by increasing life expectancy. In the Republic of Croatia, fertility is measured by the periodic total fertility rate, which indicates the average expected number of live births that a woman of fertile age (15 to 49 years) would give birth to. The total fertility rate of 2.1 children is often cited in the literature and among the public as the numerical level of generational change, while the Republic of Croatia has recorded a total fertility rate below this level for decades, i.e., 1.48 (2020). Another important characteristic of the post-transition period is late childbearing. The age limit for marriage and readiness to have a first child is increasing. The average age of a mother at the birth of her first child increased from 23.5 years (1960) to 29 years (2020), which significantly shortens a woman's reproductive time. Due to numerous factors, the number of live births has decreased from 95,560 children in 1960 to 35,845 children in 2020, a decrease of 59,715 live births. The subject of this work is a study of the reproductive determinants of population development in the Republic of Croatia, focusing on the determination of the factors influencing fertility and the quantitative presentation of demographic indicators. The aim of this work is to find the cause of declining fertility. Therefore, this work analyzes the factors that influence fertility. Due to the resulting birth deficit, it is necessary to take measures to promote births. Therefore, in the concluding remarks, recommendations are given for improving the demographic situation in the Republic of Croatia in the context of promoting births and increasing fertility.*

**Keywords:** reproductive changes, fertility, Republic of Croatia, total fertility rate

### Introductory Considerations

For a better understanding of the reproductive changes in the Republic of Croatia, the demographic changes in the phases of demographic transition are considered first. Research on the history of population development shows several stages of development characterized by certain relationships between the

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components of natural population movement (birth rate and mortality), specific trends in the movement of these components, as well as appropriate changes in various population structures (Wertheimer-Baletić 1999, p. 105). Before considering the stage of demographic transition in more detail, it is necessary to define basic demographic terms. The term natural population movement implies the presence of biological or natural factors and processes in the basic flows of this movement. The basic components of natural population movement are the birth rate and the death rate of the population, resulting in a natural increase (more births than deaths) or, conversely, a natural decrease in the population. The theory of demographic transition is a modern theory that presents the development of the population as a process of gradual development conditioned by the overall process of socio-economic and cultural development.

The first theorists who tried to generalize the resulting demographic changes in the first half of the 20th century were Thompson and Notestein (Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, p. 51). The changes they considered were related to the components of natural population movement (birth rate and mortality) in developed Western European countries. A significant contribution to demographic theory in the field of the historical process of demographic transition was made by the American demographer Ansley J. Coale with his empirical research on the example of Western European countries. The father of the theory of demographic revolution is the French demographer Adolf Landry, who considered the processes in France. Notestein and Thompson used the term "demographic transition" instead of the term "demographic revolution" for the process of changes in the numerical level of birth, mortality and natural growth occurring over time (Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, p. 54). The term "demographic transition" is considered to be more comprehensive in content and more scientifically appropriate for studying the process of applying the level of vitality rates. The American demographer F. W. Notestein presented a complete theory of demographic transition according to characteristic historical stages, which are recognized in the world demographic literature.

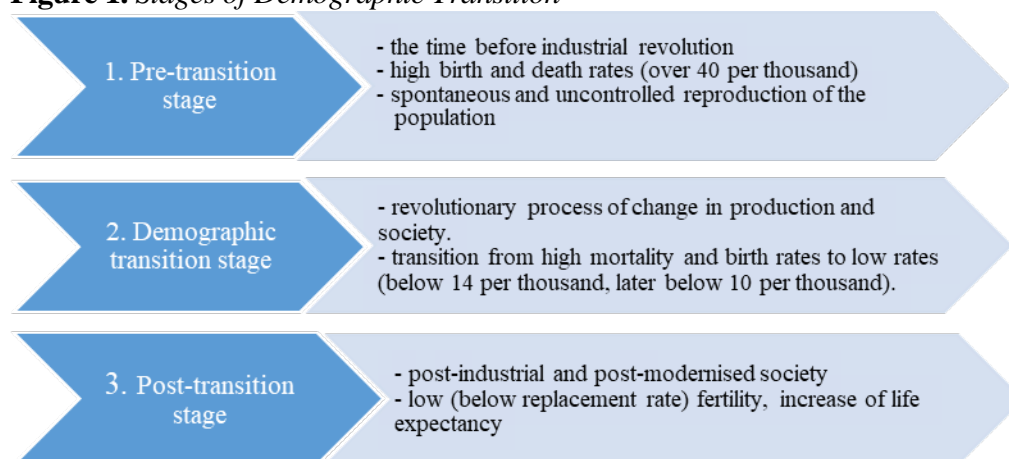
According to Wertheimer-Baletić (2016, p. 52), the theory of demographic transition considers population development as a process of staged development, i.e. a development process that takes place through characteristic stages of development and is conditioned by the overall process of socioeconomic development in the broadest sense of the term. The basic assumption of the theory of demographic transition is the interdependence of the process of modernization and economic development with the changes in the components of natural population movement. Wertheimer-Baletić (2016, p. 52) states that the demographic transition paradigm is based on empirical research that demonstrates a strong negative correlation between the numerical level of vital rates (births and mortality), on the one hand, and the level of socioeconomic development, as measured by the per capita income of these countries, on the other. Moreover, Notestein (1945, p. 36) notes that population growth is a dependent variable that is highly influenced by technological, social, economic, and political developments in the future. Numerous other authors also note that industrialization and urbanization, as components of the modernization of society, are factors that lower the birth rate. Economic and social development, improvement of health care, expansion of

education, increase in living standards, etc., have led not only to a decrease in mortality, but also to a decrease in birth rate and fertility as the main dynamic components of population development, changes in which clearly characterize the process of demographic transition.

Demographic transition is a process that began in Western European countries from the end of the 18th and 19th centuries and affected most other parts of the world in the second half of the 20th century. "The process of demographic transition in the narrow sense includes the consideration of changes in the direction and numerical level of the components of natural population movement, especially the birth rate and mortality, as well as their causes" (Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, p. 53). The process of demographic transition is usually considered using a three-stage model of population development through a significant reduction in the numerical level of birth and mortality rates (Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, pp. 53, 54). This process, as mentioned above, began in most Western European countries with a decline in the mortality rate at the end of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century, followed by a decline in the birth rate (end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century).

Following Notestein (1945), Wertheimer-Baletić (2016, p. 55) lists the following characteristic stages of the demographic transition, shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Stages of Demographic Transition**



Source: Wertheimer-Baletić (2016, p. 55).

The pre-transition stage is characterized by high birth and mortality rates, leading to the dominance of the young population. Moreover, the broad child base of the age structure has the shape of a pyramid.

Since the demographic transition stage is the central stage in which the demographic transition process takes place, it is divided into three substages: a) the early transition stage, b) the middle (central) transition stage, and c) the late transition stage (after Bowen 1955, in Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, p. 56). The early transition stage is characterized by an increase in natural population growth, i.e. demographic expansion. It is caused by a sudden decrease in mortality rates with unchanged high birth rates. The age structure has the shape of a pyramid with a numerically larger base of children. The central (middle) stage began in some

Western European countries as early as the beginning of the 19th century, while in most countries it took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was characterized by a decline in the birth rate and a simultaneous decline in mortality. It should be noted that the decline in mortality was somewhat slower than the decline in the birth rate. The result is a decline in natural population growth. Then, the age structure undergoes radical demographic transitional changes; in it, the increase in the share of young people slows down, while the share of the working-age population grows and an increase in the share of the elderly population is observed (Wertheimer-Baletić 2009, p. 115). Notestein considered the process of declining birth rate as a direct consequence of the modernization process of society, which includes economic and social changes caused by numerous consequences of the industrial revolution and the social processes accompanying it (Notestein 1953, p. 54). The third stage within the demographic transition is the late transition sub-stage, in which the birth rate continues to decline, faster than the death rate. It is characterized by an aging population and an increase in the proportion of the elderly population in the total population, while the number of the working-age population continues to increase. "Natural growth began to decline, and the tendency to stabilize and balance the birth and mortality rates at a relatively equal numerical level, leading to the zero level of the natural growth rate, became increasingly evident" (Wertheimer-Baletić 2016, p. 57). During the process of demographic transition, there was also a change in the age structure of the population, i.e., a shift in the relative numerical majority from younger to older age groups. Empirical studies show that demographic transition in the area of change in age structure has a significant impact on the overall socio-economic development of the country. Wertheimer-Baletić (2009, p.116) states that in comparison to the overall development of the country, the age structure of the population is changing from a pyramid shape, which has a large and growing number of young people (0-14 years), to a hive shape, in which the number of young people is decreasing, and to the urn shape, which is characterized by a predominantly older population.

The basic characteristic of the post-transition stage in comparison with the demographic transition stage is the decrease in the birth rate due to the greater intensity of the effect of socio-psychological factors, while in the demographic transition stage the factors of economic development had the main influence. Already in the middle and late transition stages, socio-economic, socio-psychological, and socio-cultural factors begin to dominate the trend toward declining fertility and changes in family structure. In 1949, Blacker hypothesized that there are two substages of the post-transition stage. The first substage of the post-transition stage, or low stationary stage of the demographic cycle, is characterized by low birth and death rates. The second substage of the post-transition stage is characterized by an actual excess of deaths over births and, unless compensated by immigration, a decline in population numbers (Blacker 1949, pp. 95, 97).

In the context of the demographic transition, it is necessary to interpret the concept and characteristics of the second demographic transition. "The beginning of the second transition can be arbitrarily set to the year 1965. In between was



World War II and the baby boom that followed. The key demographic feature of the second transition is a decline in fertility from just above the "replacement" level of 2.1 births per woman, which ensures that births and deaths balance and the population remains stationary in the long run, to a level well below replacement. Two key concepts characterize the norms and attitudes that underpinned the first and second demographic transitions and highlight the contrasts between them: altruistic and individualistic. The first transition to a low birth rate was dominated by concern for the family and offspring, while the second transition emphasized individual rights and self-realization" (Van de Kaa 1987, p. 5).

According to the formal demographic-statistical criteria adopted by the theory of demographic transition, the Republic of Croatia is in the post-transition stage of population development in terms of the numerical level of the components of population reproduction (birth rate and mortality).

After the introductory consideration of demographic changes through the stages of demographic transition, since the subject of this work is reproductive changes in the Republic of Croatia, it is necessary to define what population reproduction is. Population reproduction (according to Wertheimer-Baletić 1999) in a broader sense means the process of renewal of generations of the population, in which fertility and mortality are jointly involved. However, the narrower understanding of population reproduction refers only to the female population, i.e. the part of the population that is directly involved in the process of biological reproduction. For the purposes of this paper, reproductive changes are considered in the narrower sense.

## **Literature Review**

### *Fertility Factors*

This chapter presents an analysis of works dealing with fertility, i.e. factors that influence fertility. As part of the literature review, 30 relevant sources were evaluated. In identifying works dealing with the above topic, the Google Scholar database was used, and the works were collected through the portal of electronic resources for the Croatian academic and scientific community of the National and University Library in Zagreb. In identifying the papers for analysis, papers dealing with health/medical factors affecting fertility were excluded.

**Table 1.** Literature Analysis - Chronological Presentation of the Published Works and Their Main Fertility Factors

	Author (s)	Year of publication	Recognized fertility factors
1	Riemer, R.; Whelpton, P.K.	1955	Social and psychological factors
2	Schultz, P.	1973	Economic factors
3	Birdsall, N.; Jamison, D.T.	1983	Socioeconomic factors, cultural and institutional factors
4	Borg, O.M.	1989	Economic factors
5	Barro, R.J.	1991	Economic factors
6	Hakim, A.; Mahmood, N.	1994	Socio-demographic and cultural factors
7	Martine, G.	1996	Social and economic factors
8	Wertheimer-Baletić, A.	1999	Social and economic factors
9	Panopoulou, G.; Tsakoglou, P.	1999	Socioeconomic factors
10	Hoem, B.	2000	Economic factors
11	De Sandre, P.	2000	Socioeconomic factors
12	ESHRE Capri Workshop Group	2001	Social and economic factors
13	Wertheimer-Baletić, A.	2003	Socioeconomic factors
14	Pinnelli, A.; Di Cesare, M.	2005	Socioeconomic factors
15	Ghannam, A.R.	2005	Socioeconomic factors
16	Adhikari, R.	2010	Demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural factors
17	Sobotka, T.; Skirbekk, V.; Philipov, D.	2011	Economic factors
18	Čipin, I.; Medimurec, P.; Vlah Jerić, S.	2016	Socioeconomic factors
19	Nasrpour Parvin, R.	2016	Economic factors
20	Wang, Q.; Sun, X.	2016	Socio-political and economic Factors
21	Wertheimer-Baletić, A.	2016	Socioeconomic, socio-psychological, cultural, socioeconomic factors
22	Awad, A.; Yussof, I.	2017	Demographic and socioeconomic factors
23	Tropf, F.C.; Mandemakers, J.J.	2017	Social factors
24	Čipin, I.; Medimurec, P.	2017	Economic, cultural and social factors
25	Lutfiah, U., Besral, B.; Herdayati, M.	2017	Individual and regional factors
26	Anderson, B.A.	2017	Regional and cultural factors
27	Kurkin, R.; Sprocha, B.; Sidlo, L.; Kocourkova, J.	2018	Socioeconomic factors
28	Akrap, A.	2019	Economic factors
29	Lim, S.	2021	Socioeconomic factors
30	Aitken, R.J.	2022	Socioeconomic and educational factors

Based on the literature previously analyzed and presented in Table 1, the dominance of socioeconomic factors as influencing fertility is evident.

According to Wertheimer-Baletić (2003b, p. 404), it is necessary to analyze the demographic and social determinants of population reproduction in order to evaluate the potential of biological or sociobiological reproduction of the population, especially from the point of view of the need to ensure the renewal of generations. There are three important determinants that can be quantified:

1. trends in the total number of females of childbearing age (15-49), i.e., the childbearing contingent of the female population;
2. changes in the age structure of the childbearing contingent of the female population;
3. specific fertility rates by age.

The first two determinants are demographic determinants of population reproduction, while the last determinant is a social determinant influenced by various interrelated social conditions and factors - economic, social, cultural, political, and traditional. The demographic determinants of fertility are influenced by socioeconomic, health, political, and other factors. In the continuation of the work, exactly these determinants will be analyzed in order to present the reproductive changes in the Republic of Croatia.

### *Reproductive Changes in the Republic of Croatia*

In this paper, the concept of reproduction in the Republic of Croatia is considered in the narrow sense, which implies the reproduction of the population under the influence of only the components of natural movement and includes only the female population.

### **Methodology**

Quantitative data from secondary sources were used for the analysis of reproductive changes in the Republic of Croatia: Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Eurostat and published relevant scientific works.

It is important to note that the 2011 census data are not directly comparable to the 2001 census data or to data from previous censuses because the statistical definition of total population used in the 2011 census differs from that used in previous censuses. Data from the six censuses conducted after World War II, i.e., the 1948, 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991 censuses, refer to the permanent population, i.e., persons residing in the Republic of Croatia, whether or not they were present at the place of residence at the time of the census and regardless of the duration of absence from the place of residence. The 2001 census applied the concept of "usual residence" for the first time in defining the total population and introduced a period of one year or longer as a basic criterion for including or excluding a person from the total population. The 2011 Census also applies the concept of "usual residence" and, for the first time, introduces intent to be absent/present as an additional criterion for inclusion or exclusion of a person from the total population. Although the data from both censuses, 2001 and 2011, are based on the concept of "usual residence," they are not directly comparable. This is partly because of the intent of absence/presence, which was not collected in the 2001 census, and partly because the 2001 census included in the total number of residents persons who were absent for a year or more but returned to their permanent residence on a seasonal and monthly basis (these persons are not included in the total number of residents in the 2011 census) (Croatian Bureau of Statistics).

As mentioned earlier, there are three basic determinants of reproduction, and it is these that will be analyzed in this chapter. The following sections analyze quantitative data on trends in the total number of females of childbearing age according to the 1961 to 2021 censuses, changes in the age structure of the childbearing proportion of the female population (according to the 1961 to 2021 censuses), and specific fertility rates by age (from 1961 to 2020). Finally, the assumptions for fertility rates by age and type of projection were analyzed for the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2030 to 2100.

## Analysis and Discussion

Natural population movement (fertility-mortality, birth-mortality) is the dominant component of total population movement in most countries of the world. In a narrow sense, natural population movement refers to the birth rate and mortality in a given population group. In a broader sense, natural movement includes the movement of married and dissolved marriages, the separate recording and analysis of marital and nonmarital live births, family structure, birth order, and the frequency of births in the family and associated population, multiple births, maternal age at the time of birth, movement in the number and proportion of stillbirths, abortions, infant deaths, deaths by age and sex, and cause of death (Gelo et al. 2005, p. 35). In this paper, population reproduction is considered in a narrower sense by taking into account the components of natural population movement in the Republic of Croatia.

In populations where the process of demographic transition is complete, as in the case of the Republic of Croatia, an important dynamic component of natural population movement is birth rate/fertility, while mortality is a relatively stable variable under these conditions (Wertheimer-Baletić 1992, p. 277). From 1950 to 2020, there is a trend of decrease in the number of live births and natural population growth, which has a negative balance since 1991 (more deaths than births). The number of live births in the period from 1950<sup>13</sup> to 2020<sup>14</sup> decreased by 62.47%, i.e., by 59,655. At the same time, the number of deaths increased by 15,662 or 37.87%. This shows that the death rate is significantly lower compared to the decrease in the birth rate. If we consider the total population of the Republic of Croatia, the population growth in the second half of the 20th century showed a significant slowdown. The number of inhabitants increased until 1991, when the trend of negative population growth began. Thus, in 1991, 4,784,265 people lived in Croatia (Wertheimer-Baletić 1992, p. 291, according to the 1991 census), while the total number of inhabitants, according to the data of the State Statistics Office, was 4,047,680 in 2020, which means a decrease of 15.39%. The consequences of the natural population decline are partly reflected in the population losses due to the war and emigration during the homework in the first half of the 1990s, as well as in an unfavorable economic situation.

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<sup>13</sup>1950: live births 95,500, deaths 47,292 (Wertheimer-Baletić 1992, p. 277).

<sup>14</sup>2020: live births 35,845, deaths 57,023 (Croatian Bureau of Statistics 2021b).

According to the 2021 census, the total number of inhabitants of the Republic of Croatia decreased by 9.64% compared to 2011<sup>15</sup>, i.e., it decreased by 413,056 people (Table 2), a negative trend is also observed in the number of children born (-11.38%), i.e. an absolute decrease of 4,689 children was recorded. Based on the presented trends, it is possible to calculate the time of population doubling, but in our case of the Republic of Croatia, a negative doubling would be the time when the population decreases to half of the current level.

**Table 2.** Trends and the Doubling Time

	2011	2021	% of change 2021/2011	T <sub>double</sub>
<b>Total number of population</b>	4,284,889	3,871,833	-9.64	71.9
<b>Number of births</b>	41,197	36,508	-11.38	

During the ten-year period, the population declined by 9.64%, so for the purposes of this calculation, we can assume that the average annual rate of decline is 0.964%. It would take 71.9 years for the population of the Republic of Croatia to drop to half of its current level. The doubling time is calculated according to the following formula:

$$T_{double} = \ln(2) / (\text{year decline rate})$$

The trend in the total number of women of childbearing age followed the trend in the total number of the population. The total number of women increased by 292,150 (13.44%) from 1961 to 1991. From 1991 to 2021, the number of female population decreased by 18.32%. The above trends also apply to the number of women of childbearing age. From 1961 to 1991, the number of women of childbearing age increased from 1,064,914 women to 1,149,407 women (Table 3), and from 1991, there was a downward trend in the number of women of childbearing age. According to 2021 data, the number of women of childbearing age was 807,308, a decrease of 257,606 women of childbearing age from 1961. Moreover, the proportion of the childbearing contingent in 2021 decreased by 8.9% compared to 1961. This can be explained by the aging of the population and out-migration.

**Table 3.** Number of Women of Childbearing Age in the Censuses from 1961 to 2021

Year	Total number of female population	Women of childbearing age	Part of the fertile contingent (%)
1961	2,173,492	1,064,914	49.0%
1971	2,287,173	1,174,488	51.4%
1981	2,374,579	1,152,704	48.5%
1991	2,465,642	1,149,407	46.6%
2001	2,301,560	1,080,121	46.9%
2011	2,218,554	972,948	43.9%
2021	2,013,963	807,308	40.1%

Source: Wertheimer-Baletić (2003a, p. 36), Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2021a).

<sup>15</sup>Censuses of 2011 and 2021 were selected because of the consistency of the concept which applies the concept of "usual residence".

Table 4 provides an overview of the age structure of women from 1961 to 2021 according to the censuses conducted every 10 years.

**Table 4. Women of Childbearing Age by Age (Censuses from 1961 to 2021)**

Year	Women of childbearing age	Childbearing age				
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-49
1961	1,064,914	145,320	165,623	177,634	174,997	401,340
1971	1,174,488	192,318	176,308	134,871	162,043	508,948
1981	1,152,704	165,133	178,791	181,347	167,840	459,593
1991	1,149,407	159,381	157,609	169,648	180,658	482,111
2001	1,080,121	145,930	149,892	145,831	147,511	490,957
2011	972,948	119,259	128,203	141,650	144,621	439,215
2021	807,308	92,215	103,607	105,816	113,408	392,262

Source: Wertheimer-Baletić (2003a, p. 38), Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2021a).

Table 4 shows two important trends that point to the issue of female fertility in the Republic of Croatia. Regardless of the change in the census methodology from 2001 onwards, there is a decline in the number of women, as shown by a comparison between 2011 and 2021, where the number of women of childbearing age decreases by 17%. Looking at specific age categories of women of childbearing age, there is a decline in all categories, with the highest rates of decline in the 25 to 29 years (-40.43%) and 20 to 24 years (-37.44%) categories according to the 2021 census compared to the 1961 census.

Table 5 shows the analysis of women of childbearing age from 1961 to 2021, on the basis of which conclusions can be drawn about the peculiarities of each period that have influenced the ratio of the age structure of women of childbearing age.

**Table 5. Age Structure of Women of Childbearing Age (Censuses from 1961 to 2021)**

Year/ Childbearing age	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-49
1961	13.6%	15.6%	16.7%	16.4%	37.7%
1971	16.4%	15.0%	11.5%	13.8%	43.3%
1981	14.3%	15.5%	15.7%	14.6%	39.9%
1991	13.9%	13.7%	14.8%	15.7%	41.9%
2001	13.5%	13.9%	13.5%	13.7%	45.5%
2011	12.3%	13.2%	14.6%	14.9%	45.1%
2021	11.4%	12.8%	13.1%	14.0%	48.6%

The category of representation of the age structure of women of childbearing age from Table 5 provides important insight into the categorization of women by age structure and for each time period, and based on these data, a representation and analysis of each 10-year period can be made in terms of demographic policies, impacts, and actions related to fertility issues. In all observed census years, women of childbearing age between 35 and 49 accounted for the largest share, and this share increased significantly in 2021 compared with 1961. With the exception of 1971, the smallest proportion of women of childbearing age was between 15 and 19 years old. Looking at the proportions of women by age between the censuses, it is clear that the proportion of women in the younger age group (from 15 to 34

years old) decreased, while at the same time the proportion of women in the older age group (from 35 to 49 years old) increased in 2021 compared with 1961. Based on the previous analyses, it can be concluded that the total childbearing contingent is decreasing and the childbearing contingent is ageing, i.e., the number of women with low fertility is increasing.

The specific fertility rate indicates the ratio between the number of live births to women of a given age and the estimated number of women of the same age. These rates are influenced by social factors and thus represent a social determinant of population reproduction. They are influenced by various interrelated social conditions and factors - economic, social, cultural, political, and traditional.

Table 6 shows specific fertility rates by maternal age (per 1,000) from 1960 to 2020, from which certain conclusions can be drawn for reproductive policy by specific age groups.

**Table 6.** *Specific Fertility Rates by Maternal Age (per 1,000)*

Maternal age/Year	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
15-19	44.0	46.9	45.4	29.0	15.8	11.9	7.6
20-24	153.1	133.6	159.3	131.0	83.3	55.1	39.5
25-29	122.3	96.9	107.3	114.0	92.9	98.7	88.0
30-34	70.7	53.1	50.8	48.2	57.8	84.8	99.5
35-39	35.9	22.5	17.2	15.5	24.2	35.9	50.7
40-44	12.7	5.9	4.2	2.8	5.3	6.0	10.9
45-49	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.5

Source: Wertheimer-Baletić (1985, p. 268). Wertheimer-Baletić (2003a, p. 40). Croatian Bureau of Statistics (n.d.b).

Age-specific fertility rates declined in almost all five-year age groups (with the exception of ages 30 to 34 and 35 to 39) during the observation period from 1960 to 2020. The numerical level of specific fertility rates above the value of 100 is found until 1990, after which this rate does not exceed 100 in any age group of women. Numerical levels of specific fertility rates above 100 are visible only in the age groups from 20 to 24 years and from 25 to 29 years until 1990, with a larger share in the total number of live births held by the age group from 20 to 24 years of the mother. The increase in the specific birth rate in the 15-19 age group in the period up to 1980 can be explained by early marriage, the low age of women at the birth of their first child, and the increase in marriages in younger age groups. After 1990, the tendency for the total number of women of childbearing age to decrease intensifies, the aging process of the childbearing contingent continues, and there is a decline in specific fertility rates in the younger age groups of mothers. This can be partly explained by the wartime aggression against Croatia in the early 1990s, which certainly had an impact on the unfavorable demographic trends. In addition, Wertheimer-Baletić (2003a) notes that the post-transition feature of population reproduction came to the fore during this period, in particular the emergence of aging of the age structure of the fertile contingent and the impact of social determinants on the further reduction of specific fertility rates by age and the shift of the fertility focus to older age groups.

Considering the data on the number of children born according to the age of the mother based on the 2011 and 2021 census, Table 7 calculates the percentage

change 2021/2011 and the Z-score to observe the reproductive changes under the influence of the age factor, i.e. the age of the woman. According to the 2021 census, there is an increase in births at older ages with a significant decrease in births at younger ages of the mother (up to age 30). The largest decrease is in the age group of mothers between 15 and 19 years (-55.3%), then between 20 and 24 years (-38.9%) and between 25 and 29 years (-26.9%). The reason for the decrease in the number of children born at a younger age among women can certainly be seen in the postponement of births, but it should also be taken into account that the Republic of Croatia is facing the problem of population aging, i.e., the population base at a younger age is decreasing. For the calculation of Z-score, the average and standard deviation were calculated taking into account individual data for the period 2011 to 2021 (10 years). Positive Z-score values indicate a deviation above the average, while negative values indicate a deviation below the average. A positive deviation (above average) was observed in the younger age groups of mothers in 2011, while a negative deviation (below average) was observed in the older age groups of mothers, which is also consistent with the observation of the absolute values of the number of children born, where it is obvious that they have more children mothers at a younger age (< 35 years) compared to mothers at an older age (> 35 years). The results for 2021 are exactly the opposite of 2011: women at an older age (> 35 years) gave birth to an above-average number of children, while women at a younger age (< 35 years) gave birth to a below-average number of children.

**Table 7.** Z-score (Number of Live Births According to Mother's Age)

Mother's age	Number of live births		2021/2011	Z -score		Average	St. dev
	2011	2021		2011	2021		
15-19	1,412	631	-55.3%	1.58	-1.83	1,050	229
20-24	6,902	4,288	-37.9%	1.75	-1.22	5,362	880
25-29	13,934	10,187	-26.9%	1.62	-0.83	11,456	1,534
30-34	12,678	12,360	-2.5%	0.05	-0.91	12,662	332
35-39	5,291	7,384	39.6%	-1.72	1.84	6,305	588
40-44	922	1,582	71.6%	-1.64	1.91	1,227	186
45-49	41	71	73.2%	-1.91	0.69	63	12

The total fertility rate is defined as the average number of live births that a woman would give birth to at her fertile age (15 - 49 years) under the conditions of the same specific fertility rates as in the observed year. According to the available data from Croatian Bureau of Statistics (n.d.a) the total fertility rate in 2020 was 1.48.

According to Baseline projections presented in Table 8 (Eurostat 2021a) the total fertility rate will remain unchanged (1.48), while a growth trend will then occur. The total fertility rate is projected to be 1.54 in 2050 and 1.68 in 2100, according to the baseline projections. The assumption for fertility rates according to the sensitivity test: lower fertility (Eurostat 2021b) is 1.23 in 2050 and 1.34 in 2100, respectively. From the presented analyses, it is clear that the rate of 2.1 children, which is often mentioned in the literature and in the public as the



numerical level of generation change, will not be reached, i.e., the simple reproduction of the population is not guaranteed in the Republic of Croatia.

**Table 8.** Assumptions for Fertility Rates by Age and Type of Projection

Year	Baseline projections	Sensitivity test: lower fertility
2030	1.48	1.18
2040	1.51	1.21
2050	1.54	1.23
2060	1.57	1.25
2070	1.59	1.27
2080	1.62	1.29
2090	1.65	1.32
2100	1.68	1.34

Source: Creation of the author according to Eurostat (2021a, 2021b).

## Conclusion

In Europe, the Republic of Croatia is one of the countries that have not renewed themselves for several decades. The total population is decreasing, the share of the old population is increasing with a simultaneous decrease in the reproductive base, which leads to a further imbalance between important functional age groups (young, able to work, old). Looking at the total population of the Republic of Croatia, there has been a significant slowdown in population growth in the second half of the 20th century. The number of inhabitants increased until 1991, after which a negative trend began. Moreover, the average age of a mother at the birth of her first child increased from 23.5 years (1960) to 29 years in 2020 (Eurostat 2022), which significantly shortened the reproductive time of a woman. Due to a number of factors, the number of live births decreased from 95,560 children in 1960 to 35,845 children in 2020, a decrease of 59,715 live births. An important feature of reproductive trends in the Republic of Croatia is the reduction and aging of the total fertile contingent and the decrease in specific fertility rates. Based on the analysis conducted, it is not possible to determine what factors influence the fertility of women in the Republic of Croatia. Therefore, the recommendation for future research is to conduct a comprehensive empirical study of the population of women of childbearing age in order to determine what factors influence their decisions on the willingness to have a child. In addition, because of the resulting birth deficit, it is necessary to adopt demographic measures to promote births. The author considers free public childcare, expanding opportunities for parents to work flexible hours, and one-year paid maternity and paternity leave as effective demographic measures to increase births and fertility. In addition, policy makers are recommended to introduce various financial incentives that would facilitate the financing of children.

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## **Academic Burnout and its Association with Undesired Behaviors among Faculty Members at Al-Balqa Applied University from Students' Perspectives**

*By Fadi Samawi\* & Zain Tadros<sup>‡</sup>*

*The present study aims at identifying the association between university students' academic burnout and undesired behaviors among faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University from students' perspectives. A cross-sectional design was used in this study. To collect data, convenience sampling was used to collect data from the study sample. The sample size consisted of 350 undergraduate students from different academic majors at Al-Balqa Applied University. The research instruments included the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which consists of 22 statements distributed over 3 domains: "emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment", in addition to the scale of the unwanted behavior developed by Magableh and Abu Ghazal (2013) that covers the following domains: "teaching method, personal characteristics of faculty members, relationship with faculty members, faculty members' efficiency, classroom management and organization, motivational stimulation, and evaluation". Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) (v. 26, IBM Corp. New York City, USA). Descriptive statistics and parametric tests were used to analyze the gathered data. The results of the study showed that there is a significant statistical association between faculty members' undesired behaviors and students' academic burnout ( $r=0.361$ ). The study concluded that faculty members' undesired behaviors should be addressed to alleviate their impact on student's academic and psychological status. The study recommended conducting further awareness campaigns about coping strategies to alleviate the levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment.*

**Keywords:** *academic burnout, undesired behaviors, emotional exhaustion, university students*

### **Introduction**

The university stage is one of the most important stages in an individual's life, and it is a critical stage, as it results in generations who are responsible for building and renaissance of society (Sharp and Theiler 2018). The university environment is an experience full of challenges and changes for university youth, which are among the groups that face obstacles and shocks of all kinds while they are in university studies, where students feel pressure and stress represented in several aspects, including academic burnout (Hasan and Bao 2020). University students of different specializations are exposed to various psychological, social, and academic pressures, as a large number of pressures and the student's inability to confront

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them can lead the student to feel many psychological problems related to pressure, including burnout in the learning environment, which may generate a positive feeling towards studying. It pushes him/her to make more effort and dedication to his/her work to achieve his/her goals and makes him/her more connected to his/her studies (Pidgeon and Pickett 2017).

Fawzy and Hamed (2017) study concluded that academic burnout is prevalent among students at all educational levels and in various countries of the world, and some statistics from previous studies confirm that about 40% of university students suffer from academic burnout, with varying degrees of severity, and that the number of students who suffer It is constantly increasing from the first year of education until the last stages of education, and this indicates the gradual nature of this phenomenon.

Asikainen et al. (2020) study also indicated that academic burnout or study-related burnout is an academic problem worthy of study because it can affect the student's academic level, and may lead them to drop out of studies, as well as lead to the formation of negative attitudes towards study.

Peterka-Bonetta et al. (2019) study indicates that academic burnout is preceded by internal variables such as self-efficacy and external variables such as the quality of learning, and many studies have found that academic burnout among university students is related to the behavior of faculty members.

Demetriou et al. (2017) also emphasized that effective university education includes a complex dynamic between the student and the faculty staff member, and is based on several interacting factors, some of which are related to the student and others related to the faculty member, and that the student's behaviors affect the impressions of the faculty staff member about him/her, in addition to that the most important desired behaviors by the faculty member are making the student feels desirable to the extent that allows him/her to communicate with the faculty member smoothly, and to gain the attention and interest of, which helps to establish positive relationships with the faculty member. Magableh and Abu Ghazal (2013) confirm that the faculty staff members often do not realize students' perceptions about them while they are practicing the teaching process and that many of them do not realize the negatives left by some of the behaviors they practice on their students, which may be a factor affecting the level of academic burnout among students.

## **Research Problem**

Academic burnout among university students refers to fatigue, exhaustion, and boredom (emotional exhaustion) resulting from academic demands, a feeling of pessimism, a lack of interest in academic tasks, and a feeling of ineffectiveness as a student (Jensen and Deemer 2019). (It also refers to students feeling emotionally exhausted, cognitively, and physically due to academic requirements, and thus not participating in educational activities (Vizoso et al. 2019).

Evidence suggests that students who experience academic burnout may experience signs such as a lack of interest in academic issues, inability to

consistently attend academic classes, lack of participation in classroom activities, feelings of futility in educational activities, and a lack of interest in academic issues. In general, research-based evidence suggests that university students' academic burnout is significantly affected and increased due to undesired behaviors among faculty staff members. However, there is a significant and clear shortage of studies addressing the association between university students' academic burnout and faculty staff members' undesired behaviors in the Jordanian context. Therefore, the overwhelming concern of the present study was to assess the levels of students' academic burnout and undesired behaviors of faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University and identify the association between them.

### **Research Objectives**

The present study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of students' academic burnout among undergraduate students at Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU).
2. To explore the undesired academic behaviors among faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University from students' perspectives.
3. Investigate the association between students' academic burnout and undesired behaviors of faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The present study seeks to test the following research hypothesis:

“There is a significant statistical association between university students' academic burnout and undesired behaviors of faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University from students' perspectives”.

### **Previous Studies**

A study conducted by Al-Sayed and Ibrahim (2017) aimed to reveal the differences in burnout among university students according to the variables of nationality, gender, and academic specialization among a sample of university students in Egypt (820 students) and a sample of university students in Kuwait (n=880). The study used a researcher-developed burnout scale. The study concluded with several results, including the presence of differences in burnout in favor of Kuwaiti students, and differences in depersonalization towards Egyptian students, while there were no differences between them in efficiency. It was also found that there are differences according to gender (male/female) in favor of females in all domains of burnout, as well as differences in all burnout domains according to specialization (scientific/literary) in favor of scientific students. The results also revealed a significant effect of the interaction of the variables of nationality,

gender, and specialization on the dimensions of psychological burnout, and the Egyptian female students with scientific specialization were in the highest category in experiencing burnout.

In another study by Issa (2021), the purpose of the study was to identify the differences between the hypothetical average and the real average for academic burnout among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to reveal the differences in academic burnout in light of the level of psychological resilience (high - low) and orientations of achievement goals (orientation towards mastery, orientation towards performance - Aggressiveness, orientation towards performance - reluctance) and in light of the interaction between the level of psychological resilience and the orientations of achievement goals, as well as the detection of differences in academic burnout according to the variables (gender, academic specialization, and academic level). The sample consisted of (600) male and female students at Al-Azhar University in Cairo in The academic year 2021/2021. The study adopted the descriptive approach was used, and the researchers prepared measures: academic burnout, psychological resilience, and achievement goals orientations. The results showed a high level of academic burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic in the sample, the presence of statistically significant differences in academic burnout between high and low psychological resilience in favor of low psychological resilience, and the presence of statistically significant differences in academic burnout in the light of achievement goals orientations, and these differences, respectively, are attributed to Orientation towards performance - reluctance, then orientation towards performance - daring, then orientation towards mastery, and there was no statistically significant effect of the interaction between the level of psychological resilience and orientations of achievement goals in academic burnout.

Samawi et al. (2021) conducted a study that aimed at measuring the levels of academic procrastination among university undergraduates and the undesired behaviors among faculty members from students' perspectives. The study participants comprised 430 students during the summer semester of 2016/2017 using the descriptive correlation research design. A data collection tool to assess academic procrastination was developed to test the research hypothesis. The results showed that the level of academic procrastination was moderate, whereas undesired behaviors were high. The results also pointed to a negative association between academic procrastination and undesired behaviors. One of the most domains of undesired behaviors that forecasted academic procrastination is the domain of classroom management.

Wargi (2020) conducted a study that sought to identify the "level of psychological burnout among university students", and to try to reveal the differences between students, which may be attributed to the gender variable. To verify the objectives of the study, the researchers used a tool to measure the "psychological burnout of university students" consisting of (20) items, and based on the descriptive approach and after appropriate statistical treatment, the results concluded that: - The level of psychological burnout among university students is high. - There are no statistically significant differences in psychological burnout among university students due to gender.



The overview of the previous studies addressing the study variables (academic burnout and undesired behaviors) reveals that there is a significant lack of studies exploring the association between academic burnout and undesired behaviors among Jordanian university students, which requires urgent action to cover this literature gap.

## **Methodology**

### *Research Design*

The present study adopted the descriptive cross-sectional research design. This research approach is useful to identify the prevalence or incidence of a specific phenomenon at a specific time point. In addition, this approach is used to collect quantitative data from a specific population regarding a specific phenomenon under investigation. The descriptive cross-sectional research approach is quick and cost-effective.

### *Research Population*

The research population consisted of all university students enrolled in Al-Balqa Applied University in the academic year 2021/2022. Based on the statistical data retrieved from the Jordanian Ministry of higher education, The University has about 35,000 students. It has many colleges spread almost all the governorates of the Kingdom, which are 24 colleges (11 on campus, and 13 distributed in the governorates of the Kingdom).

### *Research Sample*

The convenience sampling strategy was used in this study to select the research sample. The sample size was calculated using Raosoft software. Taking into consideration a population size, a margin of error of 5%, a confidence interval of 95%, and a response distribution of 50%, the minimum number of participants required to conduct this study was calculated to be 326 university students. However, a sample of 350 students was enrolled in this study.

### *Research Instruments*

To collect data, the researcher used the Maslach Burnout Inventory to identify the levels of burnout among Jordanian university students. Maslach Burnout Inventory consists of 22 statements distributed over 3 domains: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment. In addition, the researcher adopted the scale of the unwanted behavior developed by Magableh and Abu Ghazal (2013) to identify the undesired behaviors practiced by the university faculty members from students' perspectives. The scale areas are: (teaching method, personal characteristics of faculty members, relationship with

faculty members, faculty members' efficiency, classroom management, and organization, motivational stimulation, and evaluation). The tool in its final form consisted of 56 statements, distributed to the seven domains and each domain 8 items.

### Data Analysis

Data obtained from the participants in this study was organized, tabulated, and imported into the Excel sheets to check for completeness. Completed and valid data for analysis was analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) (v. 26, IBM Corp. New York City, USA). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations), and Pearson's correlation coefficient test were used to analyze the harvested data in this study. A significance level of 0.05 was used as a statistical significance threshold.

### Results

A total of 380 questionnaires were distributed and we retrieved 350 valid and complete questionnaires, with a response rate of 92.1%. The results presented in Table 1 show the sociodemographic characteristics of the study participants. The mean age of the enrolled students was (22.1±1.05). Male students constituted 20.9% (n=178), whereas females constituted 49.1% (n=172). The results showed that students from scientific disciplines constituted 34.6% (n=121), whereas students from humanitarian disciplines constituted 65.4% (n=229).

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic and Academic Characteristics of the Enrolled Students (n=350)

Variable	M±SD	F (%)
Age	22.1±1.05	-----
Gender	-----	
1. Male		178 (50.9)
2. Female		172 (49.1)
Faculty	-----	
1. Scientific		121 (34.6)
2. Humanitarian		229 (65.4)

The results presented in Table 2 show the level of burnout among the enrolled university students based on their scores on the Maslach burnout inventory. The results showed that concerning emotional exhaustion, 39.1% (n=137) were having low emotional exhaustion, 20.9% (n=73), and 40% (n=140) had moderate and high emotional exhaustion. In addition, it was found that 29.4% (n=103), 42.6% (n=149), and 28% (n=98) had low, moderate, and high depersonalization, respectively. Moreover, it was found that 13.1% (n=46) had low personal accomplishment, whereas 29.4% (n=103) and 57.5% (n=201) had moderate and high low personal accomplishment). In total, it was found that 28% (n=98) had

low academic burnout, 34.6% (n=121) had moderate burnout, and 37.4% (n=131) had high burnout levels.

**Table 2.** Levels of Academic Burnout among the Enrolled University Students (n=350)

Domain	Low	Moderate	High
Emotional Exhaustion	137 (39.1)	73 (20.9)	140 (40%)
Depersonalization	103 (29.4)	149 (42.6)	98 (28)
Low personal accomplishment	46 (13.1)	103 (29.4)	201 (57.5)
Academic burnout	98 (28)	121 (34.6)	131 (37.4)

The results presented in Table 3 show the mean scores and standard deviations of the student's responses to the undesired behaviors scale. The results showed that the highest ranked domain was evaluation and assessment ( $3.14 \pm 0.83$ ), followed by the domain of relations with other faculty members ( $3.00 \pm 0.94$ ) in the second rank, and in the third rank was the domain of motivation ( $2.99 \pm 0.88$ ). In the fourth rank was the domain of class management and organization ( $2.92 \pm 0.84$ ), followed by the domain of Personal traits of faculty members ( $2.76 \pm 0.87$ ) in the sixth rank, and the last rank as the domain of Competency of faculty members ( $2.54 \pm 0.88$ ).

**Table 3.** Means and Standard Deviations of the Enrolled Students (n=350)

Domain	M±SD	Degree	Rank
Teaching Methods	$2.90 \pm 0.66$	Moderate	5
Personal traits of faculty members	$2.76 \pm 0.87$	Moderate	6
Relations with faculty members	$3.00 \pm 0.94$	Moderate	2
Competency of faculty members	$2.54 \pm 0.88$	Moderate	7
Motivation	$2.99 \pm 0.88$	Moderate	3
Evaluation and assessment	$3.14 \pm 0.83$	Moderate	1
Class Management and organization	$2.92 \pm 0.84$	Moderate	4

The results presented in Table 4 show the association between academic burnout and undesired behaviors as perceived by the enrolled university students. The results show that there is a statistically significant association between the undesired behaviors of faculty members and academic burnout ( $r=0.361$ ). It was found that there is a significant correlation between all domains of undesired behaviors of faculty members and all domains of academic burnout as perceived by the university students and the correlation coefficients ranged between 0.126 (personal traits of faculty members Vs emotional exhaustion) and 0.481 (Teaching methods Vs low personal accomplishment).

**Table 4.** Pearson’s Correlation Coefficients between Burnout Domains and Undesired Behaviors Domains

Domain	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Low personal accomplishment	<b>Burnout</b>
Teaching Methods	0.316*	0.259*	0.481*	
Personal traits of faculty members	0.126*	0.241*	0.220*	
Relations with faculty members	0.168*	0.315*	0.200*	
Competency of faculty members	0.309*	0.148*	0.284*	
Motivation	0.252*	0.267*	0.188*	
Evaluation and assessment	0.347*	0.251*	0.333*	
Class Management and organization	0.267*	0.421*	0.314*	
<b>Undesired behaviors</b>				0.361*

## Discussion

Psychological burnout, characterized by a combination of exhaustion and idealism, has long been associated with professions such as doctors, teachers, security personnel, and managers (Maslach et al. 2001). However, recent studies have shed light on the alarming presence of burnout among university students, prompting psychologists and social experts to pay closer attention to this phenomenon (Beiter et al. 2015, Levecque et al. 2017). In line with this, the current study aimed to investigate the association between undesired behaviors exhibited by faculty members and the academic burnout experienced by students at Albalqa Applied University.

The findings of this study revealed a significant association between faculty members' undesired behaviors and students' academic burnout. The underlying reason for this relationship may be attributed to the scarcity of resources available for students to effectively cope with the demands of their academic environment. When students lack the necessary resources and support systems, they are more susceptible to experiencing academic burnout (Salmela-Aro et al. 2017). Additionally, the personality traits and behaviors exhibited by faculty members can contribute to the occurrence of academic burnout among students. Faculty members who impose excessive demands and create high-pressure environments may inadvertently contribute to the development of burnout symptoms in students (Roeser et al. 2013).

Moreover, the prevalence of undesired behaviors among faculty members can have detrimental effects on students' psychological well-being and academic performance. Research has consistently shown that students' academic self-regulation, a critical factor for academic success, is influenced by various aspects, including the behavior of faculty members (Ryan and Deci 2017, Zimmerman 2013). Academic self-regulation encompasses important components such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-recognition, self-control, effective communication, self-efficacy, as well as various strategies like memory

techniques, goal-setting, self-evaluation, and seeking help when needed (Dugan and Andrade 2011a, b, Savari and Arabzade 2013, Magno 2011a, b).

By comparing our findings with more recent references, we can observe a growing body of literature addressing the association between undesired behaviors of faculty members and students' academic burnout. These findings align with the broader understanding of burnout and its consequences, emphasizing the urgent need for practical interventions and support systems that promote student well-being, enhance academic self-regulation, and foster positive faculty-student relationships. Educational institutions should prioritize the implementation of comprehensive faculty training programs that not only focus on academic excellence but also emphasize effective communication skills, conflict resolution strategies, and the creation of positive and supportive learning environments. Additionally, institutions can provide resources for stress management, promote work-life balance, and offer professional development opportunities to support the well-being of faculty members and ultimately create a more conducive and harmonious academic environment for students.

Further research in recent years has continued to highlight the concerning prevalence of burnout among university students, amplifying the importance of addressing this issue. Studies have found that academic burnout negatively impacts students' mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being (Müller et al. 2022, Levecque et al. 2017). This has led to increased awareness and calls for proactive measures to prevent and mitigate burnout in higher education settings. Institutions can consider implementing evidence-based interventions such as stress management workshops, mindfulness programs, and counseling services tailored specifically for students facing academic burnout (Beshai et al. 2020). By incorporating these strategies into their practices, universities can create supportive environments that foster resilience and empower students to effectively manage their academic demands while maintaining their well-being.

In addition to student-focused interventions, addressing the issue of undesired behaviors among faculty members is equally crucial. Faculty training programs can be enhanced to include modules on self-care, stress management, and effective communication techniques, allowing educators to better understand the impact of their behaviors on student well-being (Roeser et al. 2013). Furthermore, fostering positive relationships between faculty and students can significantly contribute to reducing academic burnout. Encouraging open communication, providing timely feedback, and offering mentorship opportunities are essential in creating a supportive learning environment that nurtures students' growth and helps prevent burnout (Woolfolk et al. 2020). By equipping faculty members with the knowledge and skills necessary for supporting students' well-being, universities can cultivate a culture of care and support that ultimately benefits both students and faculty.

Recent studies have emphasized the need for a multi-dimensional approach to addressing burnout and its associated behaviors. This includes considering organizational factors such as workload distribution, job autonomy, and recognition systems that acknowledge the efforts of both faculty members and students (Salmela-Aro et al. 2017, Leiter and Maslach 2017). Additionally, developing collaborative partnerships between faculty, students, and administrators

can facilitate the implementation of sustainable solutions to combat burnout. By involving all stakeholders in the conversation, universities can collectively work towards creating a healthy and thriving academic community.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has provided compelling evidence of a significant statistical association between faculty members' undesired behaviors and the level of students' academic burnout across all domains. These findings highlight the need for immediate action to address this issue and promote the well-being of both faculty members and students.

Based on the insights gained from this research, it is strongly recommended to implement intensive awareness and educational campaigns aimed at increasing students' knowledge and practice of effective coping strategies to mitigate burnout. Providing students with the necessary tools and resources to navigate the challenges of their academic journey can empower them to better manage stress and prevent the negative consequences of burnout.

Furthermore, addressing the issue of undesired behaviors among faculty members is of utmost importance. Educational institutions should prioritize interventions that aim to cultivate a positive and supportive environment, fostering respectful and empathetic interactions between faculty and students. Faculty members should be encouraged to reflect on their behaviors and adopt approaches that promote student engagement, well-being, and success.

The findings of this research on academic burnout and its association with undesired behaviors among faculty members at Al-Balqa, as perceived by students, hold significant implications for practice. Firstly, by recognizing the negative impact of burnout on faculty members, educational institutions can implement targeted interventions and support systems to address burnout and promote well-being among their faculty. This may include providing resources for stress management, professional development opportunities, and fostering a positive work environment that encourages work-life balance. Additionally, the identification of the link between burnout and undesired behaviors emphasizes the need for comprehensive faculty training programs that not only focus on academic excellence but also on developing effective communication skills, conflict resolution strategies, and promoting positive relationships with students. By addressing burnout and its associated behaviors, institutions can create a conducive learning environment that enhances student satisfaction, engagement, and overall educational outcomes.

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