# **International Journal of Social Science And Human Research**

ISSN(print): 2644-0679, ISSN(online): 2644-0695

Volume 05 Issue 05 May 2022

DOI: 10.47191/ijsshr/v5-i5-29, Impact factor- 5.871

Page No: 1778-1785

# Poverty is the Most Urgent Social Problem in Albania 2020

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ABSTRACT: Poverty is a worldwide social problem. Other social consequences come from poverty. Its importance is quite great, where the state as the main actor and other actors such as business and NGOs with all their contribution have not managed to eradicate it. This phenomenon. The purpose of this study conducted on May 25, 2020 by Msc.Mateus Habili with a sample of 935 respondents (representative for all of Albania) is to create an overview if poverty is the most urgent issue in Albania that needs to be corrected. The collected data showed that the citizens think that the public opinion is unified in the opinion that poverty is the most urgent social problem in Albania 2020, to this problem should be oriented immediately all the contribution of the state, business, NGOs. Citizens think that the role of the state in correcting this problem has been low, this is an indication for both business and NGOs that their contribution to have more Another impact of the study is that citizens do not trust the assistance provided voluntarily by businesses, this shows that there is a problem in the image of businesses in terms of assistance provided voluntarily. Citizens think that business provides more many advantages of the product and its safety, this shows that citizens still do not have a guarantee on the products they receive.

**KEYWORD**: poverty, social problems, the role of government, solidarity

# LITERATURE REVIEW

# Citizens' sensitivity and perception of social issues

Social sensitivity can be defined as the ability of human beings to be able to regulate that behavior according to the views and expectations of others (Sareono, 2013), people who are unable to understand and adapt to social situations will be considered that have no social sensibilities. Literally, the term empathy is derived from the word sensible which means that it is easy to feel, easy to accept the stimulus, or a condition of a person who is simple to react to a situation. If it is associated with social conditions then it can be called social sensitivity which can be interpreted as a condition of a person who is simple to react to social problems which they see and experience. In theories, social sensitivity and social awareness will occur if the experiences of their individual in the past match the current ones. Darley and Latene (Sareono and Meinarno, 2009) suggested several factors that may affect social sensitivity, including:

- a. Voyeurs- are people who were around, the scene has a very big role in the influence and time of a person to decide between help or not when faced with an emergency situation.
- b.Contribution-Someone will be motivated to provide help to others when he assumes that the victims' misfortunes were beyond the victim's control. Therefore, one would be willing to donate to beggars who are disabled and elderly compared to other beggars who do not work are seeing begging as work
- c. Model-People are more likely to give charitable donations to the box given in the store when they had previously seen others also contribute, for example to daily events, in many places e.g. restaurants or supermarkets that offer charity boxes and there was no money in it, certainly intended to attract attention
- d. Personality and humor- People who have a charitable nature will have a tendency to help easily. People who have high self-monitoring are likely to be a helper because by being a helper, he will be self-rewarding emotionally. Koestner and Franz (2000) found that personality factors also affect a person's level of social sensitivity.

According to Alma (2010) advances in technology may affect the reduction of social sensitivity in students. Davis (2003) divides social sensitivity based on several aspects, namely:

a. Taking perspective-

- It is the tendency of individuals to spontaneously take on the perspective of another person, the ability to take perspective stressed the importance of non-egocentric behavior, that behavior is not oriented towards self-interest but the interests of others.
- b. Fantasy-It is the ability of a person to transform themselves imaginatively into the feelings and actions of imaginary characters contained in books, tv, movies or games. This aspect, according to study Scotland et al (in Davis, 2003) effect emotional overreactions towards others.

c. Emphatic disturbance - orienting a person to the problems that others face include feelings of sympathy and care. Emphatic distress is a reflection of feelings of warmth and sympathy that are close in relation to empathy and concern for others.

# Poverty and its impact on society

Regardless of its causes, poverty has devastating consequences for the people living in it. Numerous studies conducted and / or analyzed by researchers, government agencies, and nonprofits have documented the effects of poverty (and near poverty) on the lives of the poor (Lindsey, 2009; Moore, et al., 2009; Ratcliffe & McKernan, 2010; Sanders, 2011). Many of these studies focus on child poverty, and these studies make it very clear that child poverty has eternal consequences. In general, poor children are more likely to be poor as adults, more likely to drop out of high school, more likely to become an elderly parent, and more likely to have employment problems. Although only 1 percent of children who are never poor end up as poor as adults, 32 percent of poor children become as poor as young adults (Ratcliffe & McKernan, 2010). A recent study used government data to track children born between 1968 and 1975 up to the age of 30 to 37 (Duncan & Magnuson, 2011). The researchers compared individuals who lived in poverty in early childhood with those families who had incomes at least twice the poverty line in early childhood. Compared to the latter group, adults who were poor in early childhood had completed on average two years less schooling, had incomes that were less than half those earned by adults who had richer childhoods, received \$826 more each year, were almost three times more likely to report being in poor health, were twice as likely to be arrested (men only), and were five times more likely to have given birth to a children (female only). Some of the main specific consequences of poverty here and we will return to them in later chapters. The poor are at greater risk for family problems, including divorce and domestic violence. A major reason for many of the problems that families face is stress. Even in families that are not poor, running a family can cause stress, children can cause stress, and paying bills can cause stress. Families that are poor have more stress because of their poverty, and the usual stresses of family life become even stronger in poor families. Different types of family problems thus occur more often in poorer families than in richer families. Assessing this situation, when these problems occur, poor families have fewer resources than richer families to deal with these problems.

### **Biological effects of child poverty**

Child poverty often has eternal consequences. Poor children are more likely to be poor when they become adults, and they are more at risk for antisocial behavior when they are young, and for unemployment, criminal behavior and other problems when they reach adolescence and adulthood. growing evidence, one reason that poverty has these consequences is that it has certain nervous effects on poor children that impair their cognitive abilities and thus their behavior and learning potential. As Greg J. Duncan and Katherine Magnuson (Duncan & Magnuson, 2011, p. 23) note, "Developmental research in neuroscience and developmental psychology suggests that early childhood poverty can be particularly detrimental because of startling development." rapid brain development of young children.leaves them sensitive (and vulnerable) to environmental conditions. Poverty can change the way brain development in young children. The main reason for this effect is stress. Children growing up in poverty experience multiple stressful events: neighborhood crime and drug use, divorce, parental conflict, and other family problems, including parental abuse and neglect, parental financial problems, and unemployment, physical or mental health problems of one or more many family members and so on. High levels of their stress affect their body in certain harmful ways. As two studies note s of poverty, "Not only is the stress caused by poverty being taxed mentally. If experienced early enough in childhood, it can actually be "under the skin" and change the way the body copes with the environment and the way the brain develops. These profound, enduring, and sometimes irreversible physiological changes are the very human price for running a society of high poverty "(Grusky & Wimer, 2011, p. 2).

One way poverty is done "under the skin of children" is as follows (Evans, et al., 2011). High stress levels of poor children produce extremely high levels of stress hormones like cortisol and higher blood pressure levels. Because these high levels impair their nervous development, their memory and language development skills suffer. This result, in turn, affects their behavior and learning potential. For other physiological reasons, high stress levels also affect the immune system, so poor children are more likely to develop various diseases during childhood and have high blood pressure and other health problems when grow, and cause other biological changes that make poor children more likely to end up overweight and have drug and alcohol problems. The implications of research policies on child poverty are clear. As public health researcher Jack P. Shonkoff (Shonkoff, 2011) explains, "Looking at this scientific evidence within a biodevelopmental framework shows the particular importance of addressing the needs of our most disadvantaged children at an early age." Duncan and Magnuson (Duncan & Magnuson, 2011) agree that "greater political attention should be paid to remedial situations involving the deep and persistent poverty that occur in childhood." To reduce the harmful physiological effects of child poverty, Skonkoff advocates efforts to promote strong and lasting relationships among all members of poor families; to improve the quality of the physical environments of the home and neighborhood in which poor children grow up; and to improve the nutrition of poor children. Duncan and Magnuson call for more generous income transfers for poor families with young children, and note that many European democracies offer many types of support for such families. Recent scientific evidence on early childhood poverty underscores the importance of doing everything possible to reduce the harmful effects of poverty during the first years of life.

#### Health, disease and medical care

The poor are also more likely to have many types of health problems, including infant mortality, early mortality and mental illness, they are also more likely to receive inadequate medical care. Poor children are more likely to have inadequate nutrition. These problems, in turn, impair their ability to do well in school and in sustainable employment as adults, helping to ensure that poverty will continue from generation to generation. It is unclear how many of the worst health of poor people stems from lack of money and lack of good health care versus their behavior such as smoking and unhealthy eating. Despite the exact reasons, however, the fact remains that poor health is a major consequence of poverty. According to recent research, this fact implies that poverty is responsible for almost 150,000 deaths per year, a figure roughly equal to the number of deaths from lung cancer (Bakalar, 2011).

#### **Education**

Poor children usually go to dilapidated schools with inadequate facilities where they receive inadequate education. They are much less likely than wealthier children to finish high school or go to college. Their lack of education, on the other hand, limits them and their children to poverty, once again helping to ensure a vicious cycle of ongoing intergenerational poverty. Researchers debate whether poor school performance of poor children stems more from the inadequacy of their schools and schooling versus their poverty. Despite exactly why poor children are more likely to do poorly in school and have low educational attainment, these educational problems are another major consequence of poverty.

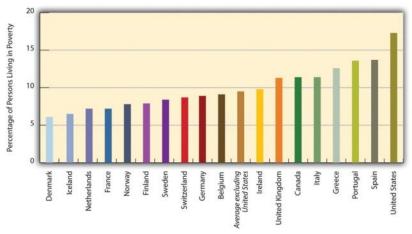
#### Housing

The poor, it is not surprising, are more likely to be homeless than not, but they are also more likely to live in dilapidated dwellings and unable to afford to buy their own homes. Many poor families spend more than half of their rental income, and they tend to live in slums without job opportunities, good schools, and other features of modern life that richer people consider as a matter of course. Lack of adequate housing for the poor remains a major national problem. Even worse is complete homelessness. An estimated 1.6 million people, including more than 300,000 children, are homeless at least part of the year (Lee, et al., 2010).

#### Crime

Poor people (and close to the poor) make up the bulk of street crime (murder, robbery, theft, etc.). They also make up the majority of street crime victims, but they include the deep frustration and stress of living in poverty and the fact that many poor people live in high-crime neighborhoods. In such neighborhoods, children are more likely to grow up under the influence of peers, who are already in the gang or vice versa committing crime, and people of all ages are more likely to become victims of crime. Moreover, because poor and near-poor people are more likely to commit street crime, they also make up the majority of people arrested for street crime, convicted of street crime, and imprisoned for street crimes. Therefore, criminal behavior and criminal victimization are other major consequences of poverty, dirty politics, and poverty in other western democracies.

# Poverty in "Western" countries



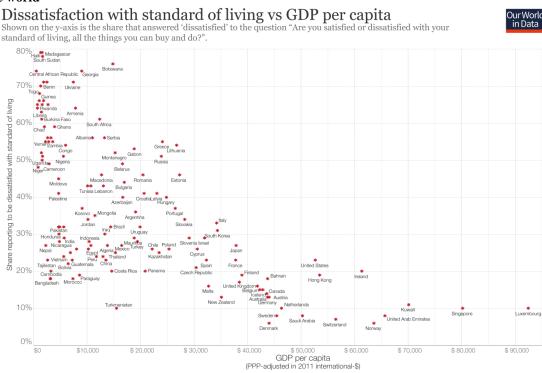
This graph illustrates the poverty rates in Western democracies (i.e., the percentage of persons living with less than half of the median household income) as of the late 2000s

Some differences between the United States and other nations are distinguished (Brady, 2009; Russell, 2011). First, other western nations have higher minimum wages and stronger labor unions than the United States, and these lead to incomes that help push people into poverty. Second, these other nations spend a much larger share of their gross domestic product on social spending (income support and social services, such as child care subsidies and housing permits) than the United States. As sociologist John Iceland (Iceland, 2006) notes, "Such countries often invest heavily in both universal benefits, such as maternity leave, childcare, and medical care, and in promoting work among [poor] families." "The United States, compared to other advanced countries, lacks national health insurance, provides less publicly supported housing, and spends less on job training and job creation." agree: "These

other countries take a more comprehensive government approach to combating poverty, and assume that it is caused by economic and structural factors rather than by misbehavior" (Block et, al., 2006).

The UK experience provides a striking contrast between the effectiveness of the expansive approach used in other rich democracies and the inadequacy of the American approach. In 1994, about 30 per cent of British children lived in poverty by 2009, a figure that had dropped by more than half to 12 per cent. Meanwhile, the child poverty rate in the US in 2009 was almost 21 per cent. Britain used three strategies to reduce its child poverty rate and help poor children and their families in other ways. First, it encouraged more poor parents to work through a series of new measures, including a higher national minimum wage than its US counterpart and various tax savings for low-income workers. Because of these measures, the percentage of single parents who worked increased from 45 per cent in 1997 to 57 per cent in 2008. Second, Britain increased child welfare benefits regardless of whether one parent worked. Third, she increased paid maternity leave from four months to nine months, implemented two weeks of paid paternity leave, established universal preschool (both of which help children's cognitive skills, and makes it easier for parents to cope with work), increased childcare assistance, and made it possible for parents of young children to adjust working hours to their parental responsibilities (Waldfogel, 2010). As the British child poverty rate dropped dramatically because of these strategies, the US child poverty rate stagnated. In short, the United States has far more poverty than other democracies in part because it spends far less than they do. to help the poor. The United States certainly has the fortune to follow their example, but it has chosen not to do so and a high poverty rate is the result unfortunately. As Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman (2006, p. A25) summarizes this lesson, "Government can indeed be a force for good. Decades of propaganda have conditioned many Americans to assume that government is increasingly incompetent ... But [ "British experience] has shown that a government that seriously strives to reduce poverty can achieve much."

#### Poverty in the world



# The role of business in solving global problems

Corporations have found that their actions have been misunderstood by the public .In the 1990s, Nike became the poster for negative morals where it exploited children, failed image in the clothing industry and fell victim to the power of the consumer changing purchasing behavior. Exhibition at Nike shoe factories in Indonesia and sparked nationwide protests, 1990, culminating in a widespread Nike US boycott by university sports teams.In 1998, after a period of declining sales, then CEO Phil Knight stated, "The Nike product has become synonymous with slave labor, overtime and arbitrary abuse. I truly believe that the American consumer does not want to buy products made under abusive conditions." Nike then went on to establish the The Right to Work, to Conduct Extensive Third-Party Factory Audits, and was the first apparel manufacturer to track down and publish a full list of factories it contracts with. These efforts have restored the Nike image public and the company continues be one of the most successful sportswear manufacturers in the world. Changing consumer attitudes towards health have greatly influenced the food industry, resulting in ë growth of organic products and fair trade. High profile companies like Kellogg and Kentucky Fried Chicken were

Data source: GDP per capita data from the World Bank; survey data on the satisfaction with living standards from the Gallup World Poll The visualization is available at OurWorldinData.org where you find more visualizations and research on global development.

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forced to ban the use of transfers and ban the marketing of sugar products to children from public pressure and the threat of legal consequences. In response, Kellogg's defined criteria for those foods that can be marketed based on nutritional content agreed to ban the use of popular cartoon characters in the packaging of their product and to partner with other major food corporations, including McDonalds and Kraft. Foods Inc., to promote healthier foods and more exercise for children. The horrific images of the 2010 BP Deepwater skyline spill pumped 200 million gallons of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico, sparking widespread public outrage and concern about the growth of this energy sector. Following an announcement that the U.S. was launching a criminal investigation into the company's practices, BP shares immediately fell 13%. BP launched a counter-campaign, apologizing to Americans, canceling company dividends to shareholders that year and redirecting those profits to spill victims. Investigations have since blamed mismanagement, mismanagement and poorly made fraudulent updates as the cause of the disaster. In 2012, BP was banned from bidding on U.S. federal contracts because of its "lack of business integrity," a 16-month suspension. In 2014, a U.S. federal judge ruled that BP had been "very negligent" and that he consistently "took steps to reduce costs despite security risks," a decision that could result in fines of up to \$ 18 billion. Research conducted by the Huffington Post in 2013 demonstrated that, despite spending millions on public relations following the crisis, 43% of Americans still had an unfavorable view of the company.

"Corporations have found their operations increasingly forced by society and

environmental expectations, for ethical behavior. "The role of business in solving global problems. The BP Deep Horizon oil spill sparked protests and campaigns aimed at holding this company accountable for the economic and environmental costs of the accident.

These and many other examples show that corporate social or environmental negligence can have a drastic impact on the consumer purchasing behavior and harm the profitability and stability of a company. For this reason, CSR programs have become widespread in the private sector with enterprises looking for ways to limit potential risks to their reputation and reduce negative social or environmental impacts.

The long-term reward for a proactive-minded company is the ability to rethink business strategy in order to shape the future - capitalizing on opportunities to design winning solutions that benefit communities and the ultimate corporate lines in the long run. Strong values and ethical behavior are not simply a matter of altruism, but are differentiating in an increasingly crowded global market.

### Problematikat sociale në Shqipëri 2020

# Air pollution

Air pollution is one of the main environmental problems in major Albanian cities, especially in Tirana. Pollution has come as a result of the increase of cars and the reduction of urban greenery. The concentration of PM10 and NO2 particles in Tirana, exceeds the national standards and those of the World Health Organization.

### Deforestation

Deforestation and fires are the main causes of deforestation and deforestation in Albania. Deforestation and deforestation continue unabated, driven by corruption and with the participation of the police, the prosecution and the judiciary. The burning of forests in the mountains continues unabated as a result of the great demand for meat, forcing shepherds to constantly burn the forests.

#### Climate change

Climate change has significantly affected Albania. Rising sea levels have led to the disappearance of several meters of land on the coast per year. Also, fires have become more numerous in number due to high temperatures in summer. The average amount of rainfall has been decreasing, but has been followed by an increase in floods, rainfall in a short time and in large quantities. Agriculture is expected to be catastrophically affected as a result of several months of drought that will affect Albania in the coming years.

# Poverty

If the income of a person living only in Albania is under 120 euros per month or about 16 thousand ALL per month, then this person is automatically poor according to INSTAT national definitions of the phenomenon of poverty recently assessed in a special survey . While a family with four people is considered poor if they have an income of 34 thousand ALL per month or about 270 euros. According to the latest INSTAT data, 23 percent of the country's population or 671 thousand Albanians live below the poverty line. *Migration* 

The 2015 report of the Peë Research Organization reports that in 2015 alone, there were 67,000 Albanian asylum seekers, ranking Albania fifth in Europe. According to this organization, it is reported that the number goes even higher, taking into account persons who are not declared (Peë Research Center, 2015). In 2017, according to reports by EU member states, the largest group of foreign citizens who entered Europe was led by Morocco and then by Albania, with 58.9 thousand or 7.1%.

### 'Brain drain'

Public spending, the lowest in the region for scientific research In a first regional study within the project "Creating synergy in the Western Balkans to strengthen education, research and science", Albania is identified with the problem of brain drain in the field of

education and science. The study cites that, 'this reservoir' of the ever-increasing Albanian "brain" can and should be mobilized for the benefit of the socio-economic development of the country, especially if there are specific conditions

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The study is only on some elements such as: the type of study we have, this study is a descriptive study, the study method is inductive, the applied method is the survey and the instrument is the questionnaire, the questionnaire is the same of 26 questions, where each question is a variable.

As for the sample in this study, the population from all over Albania. Sample type is random chance of recurrence. The number of countries in Albania according to Instat on January 1, 2020 is 2,845,955 citizens, with error margin parameters of 3% and 95% reliability interval according to formulas sample size calculator sample samples 920 elements. The questionnaire is online, due to the state of Covid-19, where each respondent has an answer, his return time has been 10 days starting from 25 May 2020 until 3 June. The activity of data analysis and processing is correlation. As a link processing tool is a Pearson coefficient.

Mendimi që kanë qytetarët se cfarë mendon opinioni për problematikat sociale në Shqipëri 2020



Figura 1 Citizens' opinion on what the public thinks about social issues in Albania 2020



Figura 2 How much has the state influenced the correction of social problems



Figura 3 How do citizens think about the advantages of business



Figura 4 How much trust do citizens have in the help that business provides for social issues

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

After processing and analyzing the data, it turned out that the citizens think that the public opinion thinks that the most urgent social problem in Albania is poverty, this fact should orient businesses if they invest in social responsibility should be oriented towards this problem. According to the opinion of the citizens, the Albanian government has not contributed to the correction of social problems. Respondents do not trust the help that business provides for social issues, this is a disadvantage for business, but it is also an opportunity because the business marketing strategy should be oriented to reduce this perception. Respondents think that business gives priority to the product, fact that shows that the focus of business is on profit maximization not on the social problems of the country.

### Limitations of the study

The study did not take into account all social issues. Not all elements that directly or indirectly affect the social problems of poverty have been studied.

### **Future research**

Analysis and identification of elements that affect the reduction of the perception that poverty is the most urgent issue. Focusing on the measures that the business should take.

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