





Considering the level of adaptability and adaptation of university teachers to the surprising conditions of the need to develop digital competences related to online work, during the COVID-19 pandemic it was shown that both in periods of relative calm and experiencing stress, individual adaptive abilities have protective action. Teachers who are more adaptable also have a stronger sense of well-being [11]. Teachers who function in a way described above are more effective and are able to build stronger relationships with their pupils and students to improve learning outcomes [12].

Currently Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are integrated into all sectors and areas of our lives and are becoming ubiquitous [12]. At the same time, their integration affects the implementation of activities in individual areas and the functioning of the society. Communication methods, ways of working, ways of spending free time are changing, and much more. According to B. Cornu [13], from more than ten years we can speak of a "digital society". It is a technological society in which information and communication are fundamental concepts.

It can be said that ICT is transforming the world into digital, respectively, creating a new virtual space. The concept of digitization, i.e. digital transformation, is increasingly used and common. This is even more so after the COVID-19 pandemic, measures of which limited people's physical encounters and further shifted activities into a virtual environment. The field of education is no exception. The outbreak mentioned above has accelerated the adoption of online education by higher education institutions around the world [14]. In the era of digitization, the mentioned above type of learning with the use of information and communication technologies is perceived as one of the possible solutions to the problem of ensuring health for both lecturers and students on the one hand (physical distance) and the implementation of programs at all levels of education.

Although after the pandemic many teachers adopted online and blended teaching and learning strategies their acceptability was very marginal as they continued to see face-to-face communication as their most preferred teaching method [15]. Nevertheless, the literature suggests that the success of an online learning system depends on the willingness of teachers to use the system, the availability of teaching facilities, and their level of preparation. Most of these factors are additionally determined by the competence they have. Currently, it is obvious that the success of professionally oriented educational activities depends on the level of shaping digital competences of pupils and students as well as their skills and readiness to apply them in information technologies and in practical activities.

Digital competences are thus becoming a prerequisite for the effective management of the digital transformation of education, the effective management of study programs and their application in professional practice. Their definitions were critically analyzed by Tóth and colleagues [16], who concluded that, that they include a set of three main elements:

- Skills — which are defined as the ability to carry out processes and use the acquired knowledge to achieve the desired results;
- Knowledge — which consists of concepts, facts and numbers, ideas and theories that are already established and support the understanding of a specific area or topic;
- Attitudes — which mean an inclination and attitude to act or react to ideas, people or situations and to adapt to new requirements.

Continuing to define digital competences the European Commission have been distinguished five areas of digital competencies, which are: the ability to use information and data, communication and cooperation, creating digital content, security and problem solving [9]. In the following study, we took into account the aspect of communication, which is one of the indicators of academic teachers' self-assessment.

#### **4. Self-Assessment of Teachers Communication with Students Theoretical Background**

In general communication is the dynamic process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between individuals or groups. This exchange occurs through a variety of forms and methods, making communication a fundamental aspect of human interaction and social life. Communication is the process of exchanging information and ideas through various methods, including verbal communication (both spoken and written words) and non-verbal communication (such as body language and gestures) and through the institution of mass communication. Effective communication is a crucial life skill that enables individuals to connect with others, build strong relationships, and navigate social and professional situations successfully. It plays a vital role in fostering understanding, collaboration, and overall success in personal life, education, and career paths. Moreover, effective communication, especially in education has an impact on: a) improving instructions and relationships, b) enriching educational experience c) enhancing organizational life d) addressing contemporary issues e) favoring

recognition and inclusion [17]. Older teachers often possess extensive communication experience honed over years of teaching, enabling them to effectively convey complex ideas and manage classroom dynamics, which is essential for student engagement and positive learning outcomes. Conversely, younger teachers tend to be more adept at integrating digital communication tools and modern pedagogical approaches, introducing innovative and relevant ways to engage contemporary students within the curriculum. Generational perspectives also play a role, with older educators sometimes favoring traditional communication methods while younger teachers often prioritize collaborative and technology-driven approaches, influencing the communication culture within educational institutions. Consequently, ongoing professional development is crucial for teachers of all ages, with younger teachers potentially seeking training in interpersonal communication and older teachers benefiting from workshops on new technologies and engagement methods. Finally, teacher age can impact student relationships, as older teachers may project a sense of respect and authority through their communication style, while younger teachers might foster a more informal and open communication style due to closer generational proximity with their students [6]. Knowing the theoretical assumptions of the study conducted, which analyses the effect of age on self-assessment of academic teachers' performance, self-assessment of digital competence and self-assessment of communication competence with students it is necessary to indicate whether the aforementioned phenomena actually occur within a mutual reality and have a real impact on the self-assessment of university teachers in the era of the aforementioned digital society [13].

## 5. Materials and Methods

In this study, descriptive quantitative cross-sectional research was used. As a part of the ongoing study 224 academic teachers in Poland have been surveyed in diverse age groups (up to 30 years, 31–40, 41–50, 51–60, over 61 years).

Respondents represented a 1,12 % of the whole population of university teachers in Poland [18], based on the number of teachers existing in 2021. In the research proceedings, the survey technique was used and a specially prepared and validated (during the pilot study) a questionnaire consisting of 35 questions was used as the research tool.

The tool was created using Google Form. It consisted of 35 questions, of which seven were open-ended questions, seven questions were single-choice closed questions and eight questions were multiple-choice. Five questions were based on a five-point Likert scale, with the scale including "Very good" "Good", "Difficult to say", "Bad", "Very bad". One

question was based on a four-point rank scale of 1-Very important, Important, Not important, Not important at all. A further six questions were based on a three-point rank scale, two of which were: "Before the pandemic" "After the pandemic" "I have no opinion". In contrast, a further three rank questions were based on a rank scale described as "Increase relationships", "Decreases relationships", "No change in relationships". One question was based on a range scale of respondents' age.

The data gathered were analyzed using Statistica version 14.0.1. Frequency, percentage, median and rank measures were used to present the results. The study used statistics: the Kruskal-Wallis test, the post-hoc test, and the Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction to test whether statistically significant differences exist between the dependent variable and the three independent variables.

The purpose of the study was to identify the existence of discrepancies among university teachers ages 60 plus in the area of the one independent variable which were:

- Age (of university teachers) in relation to the three dependent variables which are:
  - Self-assessment of the work of university teachers;
  - Self-assessment of digital competence;
  - Self-assessment of communication with the students.

The above indicators are linked to the following research problems:

- i. Is there a relationship between the age of university teachers and their self-assessment of their work?
- ii. Is there a relationship between the age of university teachers and the self-assessment of their digital competence?
- iii. Is there a relationship between age and the self-assessment of the effectiveness of communication with students among university teachers?

The indicators and research problems presented above are the basis for formulating the following null and alternative hypothesis:

- a) relation between self-assessment of the work of university students and their age:

$H_{(0,1)}$ : There is no relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their work.

*H<sub>(1.1)</sub>*: There is relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their work.

b) relation between the age of university teachers 60 plus and the self-assessment of their digital competence.

*H<sub>(0.2)</sub>*: There is no relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their digital competence.

*H<sub>(1.2)</sub>*: There is relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their digital competence.

c) relation between the age of university teachers 60 plus and the self-assessment of their effectiveness of their communication with students.

*H<sub>(0.3)</sub>*: There is no relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their communication with students.

*H<sub>(1.3)</sub>*: There is relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their communication with students.

Indicating the existence of a correlation between age and the three variables indicated above will help answer the three research questions posed above in conjunction with the theories presented earlier regarding the subject of this publication.

## 6. Results

The survey conducted more men (51.8%) than women (45.1%) participated slightly in the survey. The predominant age range was 41–50 years (43.4%). The smallest number of participants was

under 30 years of age (7.6%). Overall, 81% of the respondents had a degree, with PhDs being the most numerous group (48.2%). Professors was the least numerous (8.95%). Which also shows the complexity of the issue of having digital competence and points out some limitations in connection with its acquisition. In view of the above three most popular digital platforms was used by the respondents: Moodle (39.2%), Microsoft Teams (31.6%) and Learning Management System (LMS), which was used by 9.82% of the respondents. The next were Clicmeeting (6.2%), Big Blue Button (4.8%), Zoom (2.3%), Olat (2.3%), Google Classroom (1.7%), Webex (0.8%), Platon (0.4%), Circuit Verse (0.4%) and Google Meets (0.45). The complexity of the phenomenon of the multiplicity of digital platforms and the presentation of the three most popular digital ones and the familiarity of their use indicate the likelihood of difficulties in the use of these tools by respondents.

While the problem will be dealt directly in this publication, but instead the issue of age as an independent variable in relation to the three dependent variables which is age ( $V_0$ ), and this one in relation to the individual dependent variables, i.e. the self-assessment of academic teachers' work ( $V_1$ ), the self-assessment of academic teachers in relation to their digital competencies ( $V_2$ ), the self-assessment of academic teachers to their competence of communication with students ( $V_3$ ). The calculations in Table 1, presents teachers who are under 60 years old. The data presented refer to the time when the surveyed teachers took up work online after pandemic, relative to the time when worked in-person work. From there, a Likert-scale was presented showing a decrease, no change or increase in academic teachers' self-assessment for each variable in the form of median.

Table 1. Analysis of median values in relation to the values of the three dependent variables for university teachers under 60 years of age

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS  | < 60 (n=224)             |      |
|---|--------------------------|------|
|   | LEVEL OF SELF-ASSESSMENT | M    |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                       | Decrease                 | 3.71 |
|   | No Change                | 2.79 |
|   | Increase                 | 3.08 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS F THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS             | Decrease                 | 3.14 |
|   | No Change                | 3.9  |
|   | Increase                 | 2.8  |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS' COMPETENCE | Decrease                 | 3.31 |
|   | No Change                | 3.15 |
|   | Increase                 | 3.92 |

Note:  $df = 2, p = 0.05$ .

Table 2 presents the calculation of the median for three individual dependent variables, i.e. the self-assessment of academic teachers' work, the self-assessment of academic teachers in relation to their digital competencies and the self-assessment of

academic teachers to their competence of communication with students. In the calculation below are presented teachers who are over 60 years old.

Table 2. Analysis of median values in relation to the values of the three dependent variables for university teachers over 60 years of age

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS   | > 60 (n=21)              |      |
|--|--------------------------|------|
|  | LEVEL OF SELF-ASSESSMENT | M    |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                      | Decrease                 | 0.39 |
|  | No Change                | 0.26 |
|  | Increase                 | 0.31 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS F THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS            | Decrease                 | 0.33 |
|  | No Change                | 0.35 |
|  | Increase                 | 0.26 |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS COMPETENCE | Decrease                 | 0.34 |
|  | No Change                | 0.35 |
|  | Increase                 | 0.4  |

Note:  $df = 2, p = 0.05$ .

The next step in the analysis was to determine the rank values for the three dependent variables for

university teachers under the age of 60. Results present Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of rank value for medians of the three dependent values

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS   | < 60 (n=224) |   |
|--|--------------|---|
|  | M            | R |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                      | 2.79         | 1 |
|  | 3.08         | 2 |
|  | 3.71         | 3 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS           | 2.8          | 1 |
|  | 3.14         | 2 |
|  | 3.9          | 3 |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS COMPETENCE | 3.15         | 1 |
|  | 3.31         | 2 |
|  | 3.92         | 3 |

Note:  $df = 2, p = 0.05$ .

The rank values were then determined for teachers over 60 years old, for the three individuals dependent variables (see Table 4). The median values obtained for each dependent variable, as well as the calculated degrees of freedom and the  $p$ -value held, allow calculation of the critical value of the  $\chi^2$  test. Then, based on the distribution tables of the calculated critical value for each dependent variable, the value of the H test for each dependent variable was calculated and for university teachers

under and over 60 years old. The results of these calculations are shown in Tables 5 and 6. The calculations below present the median value and H value for Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction, for university teachers over 60 years old. However, the  $p$ -value of the significance level was  $p = 0.41$  the critical value for the test  $q = 0.094$ . In all cases, the critical value of  $q$  exceeds the value of the H statistic for each of the individual variables, i.e. university teachers self-assessment of their work ( $V_1$ ),

Table 4. Analysis of rank value for medians of the three dependent values for teachers over 60 years old

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS   | > 60 (n=21) |   |
|--|-------------|---|
|  | M           | R |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                      | 2.6         | 1 |
|  | 3.1         | 2 |
|  | 3.9         | 3 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS           | 2.6         | 1 |
|  | 3.3         | 2 |
|  | 3.5         | 3 |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS COMPETENCE | 3.4         | 1 |
|  | 3.5         | 2 |
|  | 4.0         | 3 |

Note:  $df = 2, p = 0.05$ .

Table 5. Analysis of median value with H value for Bonferroni-Dunn test for university teachers with age under 60 years old

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS  | <60 (n=224) |      |
|---|-------------|------|
|   | M           | H    |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                       | 2.79        | 1.77 |
|   | 3.08        | 1.77 |
|   | 3.9         | 1.77 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS            | 2.8         | 1.77 |
|   | 3.14        | 1.77 |
|   | 3.9         | 1.77 |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS' COMPETENCE | 3.15        | 1.77 |
|   | 3.31        | 1.77 |
|   | 3.92        | 1.77 |

Note:  $df = 2, q = 0.094, s^2 = 0.18, p = 0.05$ .

self-assessment of the university teachers of their digital skills ( $V_2$ ), self-assessment of university teachers of their communication with students' competence ( $V_3$ ). This indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the studied groups of university teachers. Therefore, this gives grounds for rejecting the null hypothesis for each of the individual dependent variables and acceptance of their alternative hypothesis. Hence, it should be concluded that, there is relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their work  $H_{(1.1)}$ . And also, there is relationship between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their digital competence  $H_{(1.2)}$ . Same is between the age of university teachers 60 plus and their self-assessment of their communication with students. Here also is a relationship between these variables. Consequently, all three null hypothesis were rejected and three alternative hypothesis were adopted. Ultimately, this indicates that there is statistical difference between the groups of university teachers because of their age  $H_{(1.1)} V_0 \neq V_1; H_{(1.2)} V_0 \neq V_2; H_{(1.3)} V_0 \neq V_3$ .

The result of Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction indicated that the corrected value was less than the significance level ( $p = 0.05$ ), so the null hypothesis should be rejected for each of the comparisons made. Also, the Figure 1 presents that the groups are big enough to be statistically significant. This result indicates that the magnitude of the difference between the ranks is large, what gives a rise to rejects the hull hypothesis in all three groups, where Group 1 is the is the self-assessment of academic teachers' work ( $V_1$ ), Group 2 is the self-assessment of academic teachers in relation to their digital competencies ( $V_2$ ), and the Group 3 is the self-assessment of academic teachers to their competence of communication with students ( $V_3$ ).

Both analyses conducted Kruskal-Wallis test and along with Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction that there were statistically significant differences between groups of university teachers in terms of their age and their self-assessment of their work, their age and self-assessment of their digital competencies, their age and self-assessment of their competencies in terms of communication with students.

Table 6. Tabel 6. Analysis of median value with H value for Bonferroni-Dunn test for university teachers with age over 60 years old

| AGE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS  | >60 (n=21) |       |
|---|------------|-------|
|   | M          | H     |
| UNIVERSITY TEACHERS SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR WORK                                       | 2.6        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.1        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.9        | 0.016 |
| SELF -ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR DIGITAL AND COMPUTER SKILLS            | 2.6        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.3        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.5        | 0.016 |
| SELF-ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF THEIR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS' COMPETENCE | 3.4        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.5        | 0.016 |
|   | 3.0        | 0.016 |

Note:  $df = 2$ ,  $q = 0.094$ ,  $s^2 = 0.18$ ,  $p = 0.05$ .



Figure 1. Results of the analysis of the survey in the form of a box plot of Dunn's test for university teachers' years

## 7. Discussion

Several studies examine the impact of online work on academic teachers and their self-assessment of work, self-assessment of digital competence and self-assessment of communication with students. On the impact of remote work treats study of [19] which examining the impact of this type of work on academic teachers. The study found that older teachers (above working age) reported lower mental well-being than younger teachers, who were more receptive to online work. Comparing two stages of the study revealed that while some teachers aimed to improve their digital skills and adapt to remote teaching, overall well-being and productivity significantly declined for many during the pandemic. The time of this outbreak has a huge impact on adopting the digital skills by academic teachers [20] and same with the especially in elderly people, i.e. those who are or are close to post-working age [21]. This situation influenced the evaluation of the productivity of academic teachers as employees. Especially on the academic teacher 60 plus. From one point of view as the results of the study by León-Pérez et al. [22] indicate that in the development of learning outcomes and the design of teaching and study plans in higher education, it is important to promote the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) across various

subjects to enhance the digital competencies of academic teachers. But as Bilbao-Aiastui et al. [20] pointed out differences in the acquisition of digital competence by academic teachers existed only in competency as reflective practice, especially those 60 years old and older. Interestingly, as study said, professors of permanent employment had higher digital competencies (DC) compared to temporary employed professors. This fact may indicate that the method of employment also affects the quality of work performed and the duties undertaken. It can also be assumed that the awareness of a longer employment prospect allows for the distribution of individual duties over a reasonable amount of time, resulting in less stress.

Nevertheless, mentioned above research [20] confirmed the reliability of the Aurora questionnaire in measuring digital competence of university professors (DCUP) and stressed its importance as the only questionnaire based on the DigCompEdu framework tailored to university professors in Europe. It also stressed the need to develop a comprehensive questionnaire that covers all DigCompEdu model competencies, which would standardize terms, criteria and concepts and facilitate joint training at the European and international levels.

Another study from China found that self-efficacy and facilitating conditions significantly predict teachers' digital competence. Supportive environments, which positively correlate with enhanced confidence and skills in digital contexts, are also crucial. Moreover, as the researchers point out, self-efficacy acts as a mediator in the relationship between facilitating conditions and teachers' digital competence, indicating that supportive conditions enhance digital competence partly by boosting teachers' self-efficacy [23]. Therefore, as these researchers point out, the development of digital competence among teachers is not only possible but also necessary. However, it is equally important to have external support, which



significantly enhances their belief in their effectiveness, particularly in acquiring digital competence.

In a much broader scope, the complexity of this phenomenon is presented by the study M.J. Peters from Universitat Oberta de Catalunya [24]. It describes the development of teachers' digital competence (TDC) in higher education as a key finding based on a systematic review of existing research. The emergence of TDC as a concept has become increasingly important due to the growing integration of digital technologies in higher education. This shift has necessitated a rethinking of teacher readiness and competence in the digital context, including aspects of student communication. The authors recommend adopting an integrated, cross-cutting, and holistic perspective on TDC development to better understand its complexity. They also suggest that stakeholders should support upskilling TDC, which involves creating an institutional culture that fosters the development of these competencies and integrating training and evaluation processes. Furthermore, the researchers advocate for a shift away from simplistic research designs, such as self-assessment and evaluation studies. They propose a focus on more rigorous methodologies to improve the quality of systematic reviews. Research conducted suggests that effective TDC development requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including policymakers, teachers, and researchers. Such a collaborative approach would genuinely support the academic community in developing their digital competencies, communicating with students effectively, and adhering to high research standards.

## 8. Limitations of the Study

The study's findings are limited by the sample size and the research tools used. Additionally, not all components of digital competence were considered, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, cyber security, creating digital content, or creating data. Therefore, future research should explore diverse sampling methods, bigger sample and a broader range of global higher education institutions. As well as longitudinal studies could explore the long-term impact the age on the self-assessment of work, self-assessment of digital skills and self-assessment of communication with students by the academic teachers having 60 years and over as well with problem-solving aspect and critical thinking. The study included a subjective dimension, but for a more comprehensive understanding, it should be made more objective by also considering the external aspects of the topic.

## 9. Conclusions

The results of Kruskal-Wallis test used in the study along with the Bonferroni-Dunn test indicated statistically significant differences between the age groups concerning their self-assessment of work, digital competence and communication skill. The null hypothesis was rejected, confirming that age significantly affects self-assessment in all three areas. In addition, it is important to point out three positive answers to the research questions posed. That is, a relationship between the age of university teachers and their self-assessment of their work. There is also a relationship between the age of university teachers and their self-assessment of their digital competence. Additionally, there is a relationship between age and the self-assessment of the effectiveness of communication with students among university teachers. Whereas these results highlight the challenges faced by older academic teachers in adapting to "digital society" [13] and its environments which is linked with effective communication where students their values and attitudes are an inherent element of contemporary culture. Whereas the Burmer theory put an emphasis on exploring, experiment and reflect with the cultural context, the influence of software, internet and digital data has a significant impact on the shapes of culture and the content transmitted through it also in communication channels. Therefore, being a participant in this culture of active use and understanding, especially in the aspect of education. In addition, the Bandura theory highlights the importance of self-efficacy, the need for ongoing professional development, and the impact of aging on the competencies of academic teachers, especially that one 60 years old and older. This emphasis the aging theory, presented by T. Huk, which make achieving mentioned above goals much more difficult to achieve from biological, psychical and environmental point of view. Therefore, digital technologies and competencies are important part of the higher education curriculum. One of the possible solutions to the issue of raising the digital competence of academic teachers 60 plus or in addition to systemic solutions is also the issue of tuning the place, work environment and relations between employees. A proposed solution would be, for example, mentoring activities [25], mutual exchange of experience between younger and older academic teachers. Additionally, it is crucial to view teachers 60 years old and older as valuable human capital, given their extensive experience, particularly in soft skills, which younger colleagues had fewer opportunities to acquire them during their careers. These soft skills are highly sought after by employers worldwide [26]. Therefore, in addition to

the aforementioned asperities, one important conclusion that would emerge from the study is the possibility and creation of conditions [27] for mutual support that should be provided by teachers of older and younger generations. All the more so now that, in the era of the digital economy, mutual assistance between teachers, especially in higher education, is very important. This is significant from the perspective of both their self-assessment of work and the broader economic viewpoint, which remains a crucial factor in social life, both historically and currently. These issues should therefore be the subject of analysis and research, not only by individual researchers but also by for-profit and non-profit institutions, as well as individual governments.

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