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The impact of literature on the development of soft skills

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ABSTRACT

The development of soft skills is a growing necessity in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. Schools play an important role in nurturing these abilities as key competencies such as group work, critical thinking, creativity, self-confidence, decision-making and goal-setting are often first introduced and fostered in educational settings. This study examines the potential of literature for promoting and developing soft skills among students. Utilizing a mixed method approach, it employed both qualitative and quantitative methods including surveys and interviews with 72 teachers of literature at Pre-university Education, Albania. The primary objective was to assess the possibilities that literature offers for fostering soft skills and to identify the most effective secondary methods for achieving this goal. The findings demonstrate that literature provides a wealth of opportunities for students to develop key competencies and soft skills beyond subject-specific expertise. They underscore the importance of employing innovative teaching approaches and strategies to maximize the subject's impact on students' overall development and readiness for the challenges of the future. The practical implication of this research highlights the fact that it introduces teachers to ways and opportunities for developing soft skills in literature, making it possible to facilitate the achievement of one of the main goals of the curriculum: the development of key competencies and the significant potential of literature as a subject for promoting soft skills in an increasingly digital world. The use of different techniques such as working in groups, working with projects, drafting questions are considered more efficient for the development of soft skills through literature.

Contribution/Originality: The pre-university education system in Albania is developing a competency-based curriculum emphasizing the development of students' key competencies. However, research on the achievement of these competencies is limited. This study is the first to investigate this area offering valuable insights into its practical implementation based on field research.

1. INTRODUCTION

Soft skills are the heart of education, shaping what individuals know but how people connect and grow as individuals. Education becomes richer when people emphasize the human side of learning, enabling students to thrive in diverse environments, understand others and become well-rounded individuals.

Academic institutions prioritize providing students with knowledge and technical skills for future careers but businesses find that new hires are often unprepared for success in the workplace. The main problem lies in the graduates' lack of essential "soft" skills re critical for high performance. Soft skills are more difficult to quantify and encompass interpersonal and self-management abilities like collaboration, teamwork, and time management, unlike

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hard skills such as proficiency in math and science which are measurable and specific. These skills allow individuals to adapt and thrive in professional environments.

Haxhihyseni and Tirana (2024) highlight the critical role of soft skills in students' academic, professional, and personal success. The study emphasizes the need to integrate soft skills development into education alongside traditional curricula. Teachers, legislators, and other stakeholders can work together to create learning environments that support students' holistic development and give them the skills they need to succeed in a society that is always changing by acknowledging the importance of developing soft skills.

Numerous studies have highlighted the importance employers place on soft skills, underscoring the need for educators and parents to collaborate in fostering students' social and personal development alongside their academic growth. Soft skills refer to personal attributes, qualities, and behaviors, including communication, problem-solving, self-motivation, decision-making, and time management. A study by Hodges and Burchell (2003) found that eight out of the top ten skills valued by business employers were soft skills such as the ability to learn, teamwork, interpersonal communication, and problem-solving. Similarly, research involving over 8,000 managers across 52 professions in the U.S. identified soft skills as a major competency in nearly every field even in technical settings (Robles, 2012). This research underscores the critical role that soft skills play in career success across diverse industries.

Learning literature in schools gives many opportunities for the promotion and development of soft skills, because literature is for everyone, no matter what your future major or career may be.

Diving into literature challenges your creative thinking and sparks innovation and change. It teaches us to use written language as a practical tool in our daily lives, helping to enlighten, educate and inspire everyone who engages with it. When individuals encounter different pieces of literature, they cultivate important qualities like identification, imagination, and empathy. In a world that often feels overwhelming and chaotic, these skills are more important than ever.

Exploring the content and meanings sent by literary works to the reader assists students in understanding cultural diversity and gaining insight into many worldviews. Reading materials are supplied in textbooks at Albanian schools in pre-university education (K-12) to familiarize students with various literary genres and concepts. The Albanian language is part of the " languages and communication" area. This discipline prepares them to communicate effectively, pursue personal interests and satisfy the needs of society and the labor market. According to the Ministry of Education Sports and Youth Institute for the Development of Education (2018) reading texts from both Albanian and world literature helps students develop their emotional world, enrich their perceptions and imagination about the world and teaches them to appreciate and value both their national language and culture as well as those of other countries.

Furthermore, Haxhihyseni (2013) investigates the integration of literature across the curriculum as a powerful strategy for improving children's intellectual and emotional development. Haxhihyseni (2013) argues that literature promotes critical thinking, creativity, and personal development by immersing students in varied ideas and experiences. This is consistent with " using literature through the curriculum as a way to increase children's potential," as it emphasizes how literature acts as a transdisciplinary tool, increasing children's learning beyond the traditional bounds of subject areas. Teachers may help students acquire academic and life skills by infusing literature into all aspects of the curriculum.

For 10 years, pre-university education (PuE) in the Albanian school has been implementing the curriculum based on competencies that aim to educate students with knowledge and basic competencies in the subject of Albanian language and literature.

In the competency "reading various literary and non-literary texts," the emphasis is placed on reading strategies that aim to help the student become an independent and critical reader. Additionally, the program suggests a ratio of 70% literary texts and 30% non-literary texts with the goal of giving students the opportunity to

work with different types of texts and to facilitate their transition to high school where they acquire much more in-depth knowledge of texts.

The pre-university education curriculum also aims to achieve key competencies outlined in curriculum guides in addition to the competencies of the Albanian language and literature. In accordance with the goals of pre-university education, these competencies as mentioned by the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Youth and the Institute for the development of education (ibid) include the competence of communication and expression (enabling students to communicate effectively), the competence of thinking (encouraging students to think creatively), the competence of learning to learn (helping students learn how to learn), the competence for life, entrepreneurship, and the environment (promoting productive contributions), personal competence (fostering a healthy lifestyle), civic competence (dedication to the common good), and digital competence (using technology to drive innovation). Teachers must engage students in diverse classroom activities such as research projects, ethical discussions, comparative analysis and environmentally conscious initiatives centered on selected texts to achieve these curriculum goals.

These activities not only support academic objectives but also help develop and implement key competencies, making it possible to achieve soft skills. This is also reflected in the study conducted by Haxhihyseni, Leka, De Carvalho, and Shields (2024) which emphasizes that teachers must ensure equal educational opportunities for all students, realizing constructive, contextual, interactive and self-regulated teaching and learning in teaching or life situations and contexts. Students' achievements and progress in mastering key competencies meet the expectations set in the core curriculum. The school must provide safe, appropriate and inviting learning environments for all students to master the basic competencies. Moreover, communication and expression competence, thinking competence, the competence of learning how to learn, personal competence, civic competence, competencies for life, entrepreneurship, and the environment and digital competencies are pillars not only within the education system but also a point of reference for an individual who serves tomorrow's society.

The purpose of this study is to highlight the impact that literature as a subject has on the development of soft skills relying on the real experiences of Albanian teachers.

1.1. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to achieve the objectives of this study:

1. To what extent are teachers aware of the significance of soft skills in the holistic development of students?
2. Do teachers intentionally design classroom activities to support the attainment of key competencies?
3. What teaching methods are employed to foster the development of soft skills and to what extent is the implementation of these competencies achieved within the classroom setting?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In any tutoring situation, the teacher's purpose is to help students admit the full sensuous, intellectual and emotional impact of the work (Davis, 1992; Ghosn, 2002). The classroom terrain should be conducive so that scholars can bring forth their own interpretations of a given work grounded in their understanding and the teacher should avoid putting the recrimination in the minds of youthful compendiums. Hence, the aesthetic sense of the compendiums will be developed. The teacher should encourage students to read singly and while furnishing students the reading material, their position of understanding should be kept in mind (Basiga, 2009).

Studying literature must go beyond reading and essay writing, emphasizing collaborative learning, group presentations and work with off-campus organizations. Students develop critical thinking and analytical skills that are transferable across careers in business, the arts, sciences, and trades. A literature degree cultivates essential skills such as problem-solving and communication which are highly valued by employers. Moreover, literature fosters a broader understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives, enhancing empathy and emotional growth.

Engaging with literary texts sharpens sensory awareness, deepens cultural understanding, and promotes critical thinking making it a meaningful academic pursuit. The relationship between literature and creative writing further enhances literary skills highlighting the influence of literature on human experience and behavior. Literature serves as a cross-cultural tool for understanding differing worldviews and values, helping students navigate and interpret complex societal dynamics.

Children's literature relates to the concept of genre in literature. Genre is a type of literature that has certain characteristics. Genre refers to the division of types of literary work based on the style, form, and content of the story (Mitchell & Egudo, 2003): Realism is the possibility that the story has occurred or not even though it has not occurred. Formula fiction refers to detective, mysterious, romantic stories and series novels. Then, a fantasy story is an illogical story. Moreover, a traditional story refers to a legend in a society without a real author. In addition, poetry is closely related to the term "lyric" and points to an origin in the sphere of music (Klarer, 2004). Poetry for children consists of narrative poetry and personal poetry. Personal poetry is specific poetry for children. Finally, non-fiction is a real story that is written using literary words such as biography, autobiography etc. Children's literature with the various genres can be used to develop students' soft skills. This idea emerges from the concept of bibliotherapy which has existed since 1916. Through the concept of bibliotherapy, literature can be used for social and emotional development across all ages (Reagan & Page, 2008).

Strong presentation, communication, and English skills are vital in this instance; all of those skills are transferrable. In EF's experience in 50+ years of corporate training, transferrable skills can and should be taught together with English to make each learning experience relevant and meaningful. This belief informs our language training programs for major corporations worldwide (Losey, 2022).

In addition, Roseni (2024) states that effective communication is a crucial soft skill that promotes teamwork and increases organizational performance especially when it comes to leadership and collaboration between administrators and instructors. It highlights the importance of these abilities in fostering cultures that prioritize cooperation and comprehension, tying effective leadership communication to the interpersonal growth that reading literature promotes and in reaching more general educational goals and fostering academic success. Similarly, Kurani and Roseni (2024) argue that metaphorical syntagms can enhance communication skills essential for teamwork and effective leadership and have pedagogical value in the classroom.

Garcia-Chitiva and Correa (2023) highlight that skills like idea generation, leadership, and analytical orientation are prioritized in graduate studies while empathy, ethical thinking, and critical thinking are less emphasized. They suggest that focusing too much on the more visible skills may lead to an imbalance, limiting the development of other important soft skills such as ethical thinking.

It is crucial to consider how soft skills are taught to students as there are countless ways to incorporate them into learning including embedded and parallel approaches. However, this will not work in every situation and learning needs to be tailored. Soft skills can be developed through different methods that actively engage students in their learning. Table 1 illustrates teaching methods commonly adopted to develop soft skills.

Table 1. Teaching methods and corresponding cluster.

Cluster methods					
One-to-one	**Guided**	**Simulative**	**Collaborative**	**Explorative**	**Metacognitive**
Mentoring	Discussion	Role-play	Cooperative learning	Enquiry-based learning	Questioning
Coaching	Debate	Simulation	TBL (Team-based learning)	Problem-based learning	Debriefing
Tutoring	Case study	Game-based learning and serious games	Brainstorming	Project-based learning	Self-assessment

Source: Adapted from Ciappei and Cinque (2014).

Alwi, Thahar, Atmazaki, and Asri (2018) propose Reflection and Rationale Based Teaching (RBT), a pedagogical framework aimed at enhancing students' soft skills.   RBT integrates soft skills into curricula through carefully selected literary texts grounded in six core principles—teacher-student relationships, positive behavior modeling, moral development, and logical, systematic, and holistic thinking.   This approach promotes critical thinking, personal growth, and a deeper engagement with literature by encouraging students to analyze and reflect on these texts' values.

According to Vijayalakshmi (2018) literature serves the following two primary functions: to provide pleasure and to educate, reflecting the concepts of " art for art's sake" and societal benefit. The aim of language education is to offer learners continuous engagement through both written and spoken forms. This paper emphasizes using literature as an effective method for teaching contemporary soft skills. Teaching soft skills through literature presents a dynamic approach to language learning, broadening the scope of skills development through text analysis. Table 2 presents a comprehensive range of key soft skills that are essential for personal and professional development. These skills encompass various domains including positive thinking, decision- making, leadership, public speaking, effective communication and self-motivation.

Table 2. Key soft skills.

Positive thinking	Decision – making	Leadership	Public speaking	Effective communication	Self-motivation
Stress management	Self-confidence	Change management	Emotional management	Interpersonal skills	Teamwork and collaboration
Time management	Goal setting	Positive living	Good writing skills	Conflict management	

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methodologies approach integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to reach its goals. The qualitative component consists of in-depth interviews with 12 teachers from various stages of pre-university education that provide valuable insights into their viewpoints, challenges, and techniques for teaching soft skills. It investigates teachers' perspectives on the value of soft skills, the resources and training required for effective instruction and how these abilities are incorporated into teaching practices. The quantitative component adds to this by conducting a teachers' survey to assess their awareness of soft skills, dedication to incorporating these skills into lesson plans and strategies for developing them in students. These methodologies provide a thorough knowledge of the amount of soft skill integration in education and the underlying variables driving it.

3.1. Research Instrument

This study uses the following two primary research instruments: qualitative interviews and a researcher-designed quantitative survey. The qualitative interviews conducted with teachers, explore their perspectives, teaching methods, and challenges related to incorporating soft skills into the pre-university curriculum. These discussions focus on the integration of soft skills in daily instruction, the value teachers place on these skills, and the resources and professional development required for effective implementation. Complementing this, the quantitative survey collects empirical data to evaluate the extent to which teachers prioritize soft skills in lesson planning. Curriculum designers and policymakers can benefit greatly from this mixed-methods approach which offers a thorough grasp of the qualitative drivers and quantitative application of soft skills in pre-university education to improve students' readiness for success in school and the workplace.

3.2. Participants

The sample of our study is made up of 72 teachers from the pre-university education sector, 24 respondents from primary education, 26 respondents from lower secondary education and 22 respondents from upper secondary education in different cities of Albania, during April - May 2024.

3.2.1. Teachers' Distribution by Education Sector and Gender

Interviews were conducted with 72 teachers from the pre-university education sector to gather insights into their perceptions and practices regarding the teaching of soft skills: Figure 1 shows that 24 or 17% of respondents were from primary education, 26 or 33% of respondents were from lower secondary education and 22 or 50% of respondents were from upper secondary education.
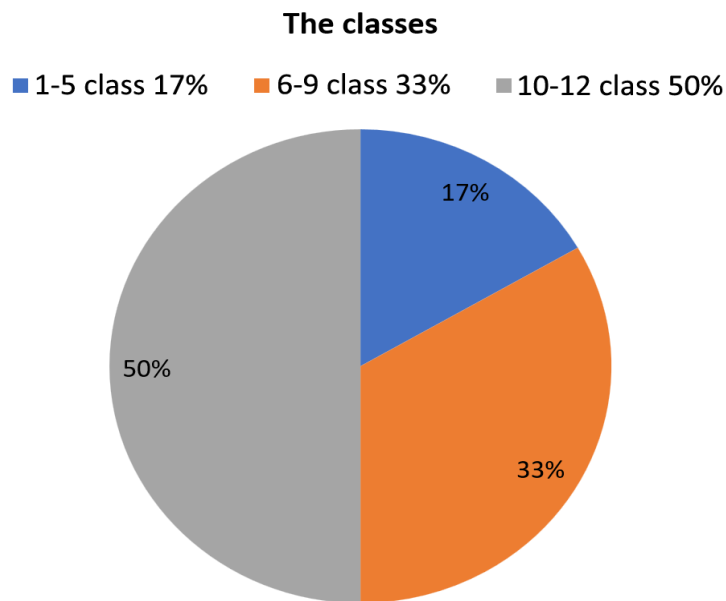
The classes

■ 1-5 class 17%   ■ 6-9 class 33%   ■ 10-12 class 50%

Figure 1. Teachers of the pre-university sector.

The distribution in regard to gender in Figure 2 shows that most of the respondents with 95.8% are represented by females and the rest with 4.9 % by males.
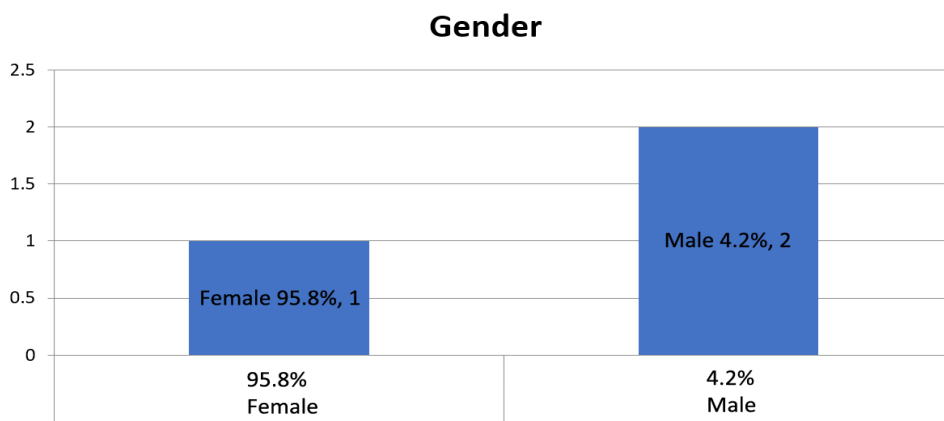
Gender

Figure 2. Distribution by gender.

A content analysis was conducted on the literature texts utilized in pre-university education in addition to interviews. The objective was to examine the fact that how they perceive and realize soft skills in the teaching process.

3.3. Validity and Reliability Tests

The research instrument comprises three sections designed to explore various aspects of teachers' practices and resources related to soft skills development.

Section I focuses on teachers' planning processes and the strategies they employ to design learning outcomes and activities that support the development of soft skills. In the context of Albanian schools, textbooks serve as the primary resource for lesson planning. These textbooks are approved by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth and are fully aligned (100% compatibility) with the national curriculum approved by the ministry.

Section II examines the role of textbooks in fostering soft skills during literature instruction. This section investigates how effectively these materials facilitate the integration of soft skills development within classroom activities considering the significant reliance of teachers on textbooks as a core instructional resource.

Section III addresses the specific classroom practices implement to actively promote and develop soft skills among students. This section aims to capture direct teaching interventions and methods used in real-time learning environments.

A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument. The survey's internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha which confirmed the reliability of the questionnaire. The scale is considered reliable as it consistently produces valid results. Validity was assessed by comparing the research findings with existing theoretical frameworks and related data, ensuring that the instrument accurately measures the intended concepts.

Key statistical outcomes of the instrument validation include the following:

Reliability coefficient (r = .80) indicates good reliability of the scale.

Validity coefficient (r = .34) suggests a moderate level of validity, sufficient to be practically useful for the study.

The following results affirm the robustness of the survey for investigating the research objectives:

4. RESULTS

The first part of the questionnaire highlights how teachers plan the realization of basic competencies or soft skills in the classroom and how important they are considered for the formation of students. For the first question, "Do you plan learning outcomes in your teaching for the key competencies that you must achieve in a lesson?" Figure 3 illustrates that 54.2% of teachers answer yes while 25% of teachers answer that they never or rarely plan to achieve these competencies in a lesson. This shows that teachers are focused on the achievement of subject competencies while neglecting the achievement of key competencies.
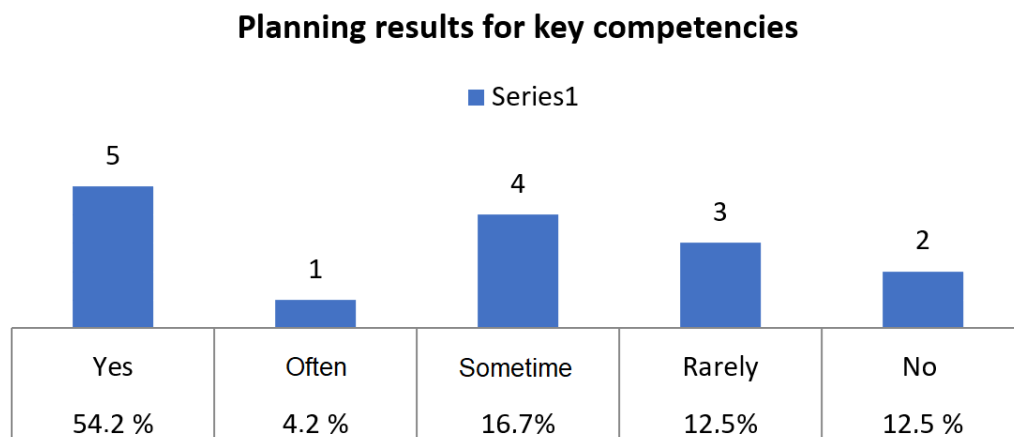
Planning results for key competencies

Yes	Often	Sometime	Rarely	No
54.2 %	4.2 %	16.7%	12.5%	12.5 %

Figure 3. Outcome planning for key competencies.

For the second question, whether they see these competencies as important for the development of students' soft skills, it results in almost the same division: 50% of teachers think that these are important in the development of students.

Textbooks opportunity

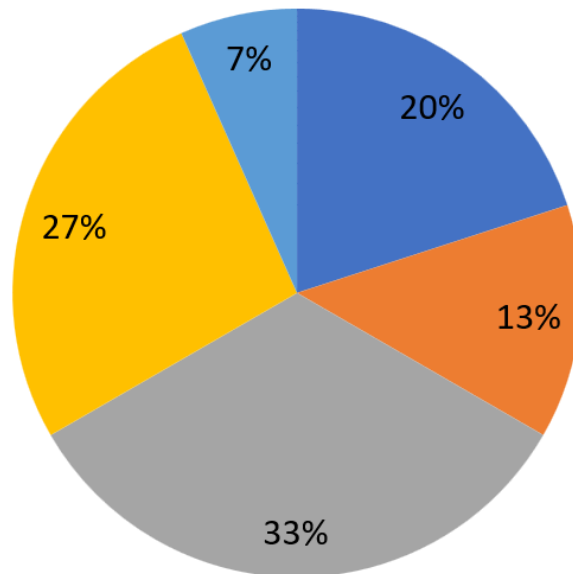**■ 20% yes   ■ 13% not much   ■ 33% fair   ■ 27% somehow   ■7% no**

Figure 4. Opportunities provided by the textbook for the development of soft skills.

Textbooks have changed with the change of the pre-university education curriculum in Albania. In this context, textbooks must respond to the curriculum requirements by providing both activities and tasks for the achievement of subject and key competencies. How much was this fulfilled according to the teachers? The data obtained from the teachers for the third question which was precisely related to this issue illustrates in Figure 4 that the textbooks do not give much space and opportunity for activities related to the development of topics regarding key competencies. Most of the questions that teachers think are about the development of key competencies are: "Why? and What about you?"

As Albania has embraced a competency-based curriculum for the past decade emphasizing the holistic development of students academically, socially, and personally. There remains a prevalent mindset among teachers that prioritizes the formation of subject-specific competencies, often placing greater emphasis on knowledge acquisition and information dissemination. This mentality of the teachers is reinforced by the pedagogical devices of the texts (questions and tasks at the end of the literary part). For the question of how textbooks help teachers in developing soft skills, only 20% think that textbooks provide space and opportunities for the promotion of soft skills.

In the fourth question, the teachers give their answers about the soft skills that they work on mostly during their teaching. Figure 5 illustrates that the teachers' focus is more on critical thinking, communication and cooperation. While skills such as public speaking, decision-making, flexibility and data are very low.
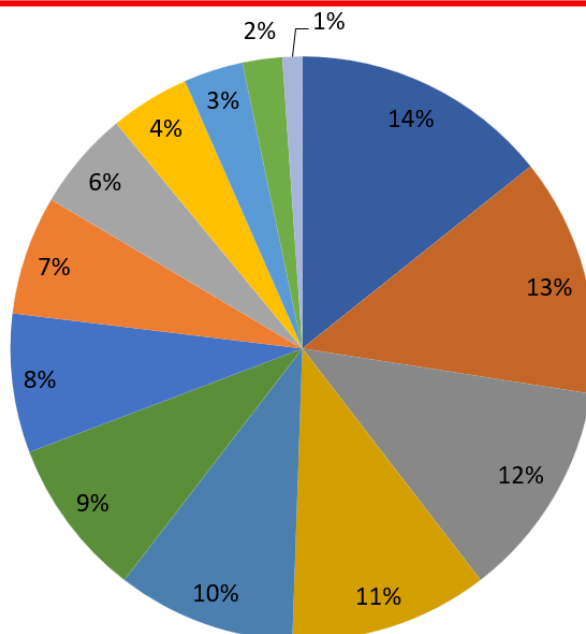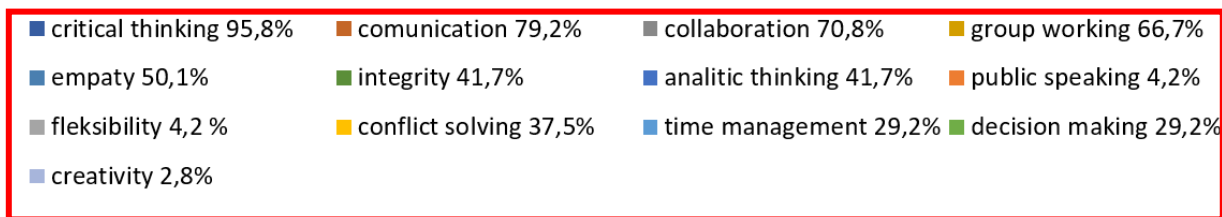
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Soft skills

■ critical thinking 95,8%   ■ comunication 79,2%   ■ collaboration 70,8%   ■ group working 66,7%
■ empaty 50,1%   ■ integrity 41,7%   ■ analitic thinking 41,7%   ■ public speaking 4,2%
■ fleksibility 4,2 %   ■ conflict solving 37,5%   ■ time management 29,2%   ■ decision making 29,2%
■ creativity 2,8%

Figure 5. Soft skills teachers work on.

Some of the key insights are outlined based on the interviews conducted with the teachers: Teachers were asked to provide examples of concrete activities that they implement in their classrooms in order to develop soft skills among students. Table 3 presents teachers' responses to foster the development of soft skills among students.

Table 3. Teachers' responses

(P4): For communication and critical thinking, it is recommended that students argue their opinion and not prejudge the opinions of their friends, but stop and analyze what is said.
(P 10): In different situations where a student is "bullied", I take the child who creates this situation and ask him/her: Would you feel well if you were in the situation that your friend is in? Are you happy when your friend is angry or insulted...? Put yourself in your friend's shoes. Would you like this?
(P 12): Assigning tasks with different topics and encouraging competition between groups. The use of the topic of "debate" for social issues in relation to the treated works has also been used as a way to develop communication, argumentation, group work, critical thinking, and time management.
(P8): For the part of Hamlet, how would you act if faced with a dilemma?

It comes out that 36 teachers or 50% of them responded positively to the impact that soft skills are important for students when they move on in life, this shows that the orientation the teachers give to the teaching staff is in the direction of the competencies of the subject, not focusing on the development of key competencies instead of soft skills.

To highlight how literature is used to promote soft skills, the lesson "Clerk of the Palace of Dreams" by Kadare (1981) was taken for analysis from the textbook Gjuha 12 (Dea & Poroçani, 2022). This is the model suggested by one of the literature teachers when being interviewed.

This part of the novel contributes to the student's knowledge in many ways while simultaneously encouraging the development of the students' soft skills. First, the events of this novel take place in the Ottoman Empire, asking students to engage in historical knowledge to understand this period which in Albania has had a significant meaning, since Albania has been under the Ottoman Empire for about 500 years. The symbolism of this novel is closely related to the later history of Albania, the period of the communist dictatorship (until the 90s of the last century), making it possible in this way to understand this period which had a tremendous impact on the life of Albanians, encouraging students to understand, analyze and hold positions both for important historical periods and to define roles and responsibilities in society.

Engaging students in dialogues about the characters of the literary work allows them to take positions and learn about the importance of the role that power has on the individual and the importance of the positions and decisions they make in life.

This topic serves as an opportunity for the development of critical thinking and communication, making it a valuable tool for developing intellectual and social-emotional growth in students in addition to the subject goals.
This topic is explored across four lessons where students not only work towards mastering key subject competencies—like understanding stylistics, literary devices, authorial style, themes, and character analysis but also develop essential soft skills such as effective communication, critical thinking, and teamwork.

This teaching topic incorporates historical, political and social issues related to Albania's past and its realization was carried out by dividing the class into working groups where each group will be responsible for a task given by the teacher. Collaboration, research, critical thinking, creative thinking, presentation, integrity, public speaking, decision-making is some of the soft skills that are realized by this work organization.

Table 4 presents the way the class can be divided into six working groups for the five different tasks.

Table 4. Working groups tasks.

Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5
The title of the novel: Suppression and Surveillance of Free Thought	The characters and the relationship between them: Surveillance of other people's lives. Put yourself in the role of one of the characters. Thoughts and dilemmas.	If it existed, how would the dream palace function today? Power individual ratio.	The Qyprillij family. The relationship with the empire. Better "piggy" satisfied or Socrates' suffering?	The epic, But why didn't they forgive that epic to the sultan-king and get rid of Qyprillij the evils?

For 3 lessons, students will work in groups and this work includes not only reading the part given in the text but also researching historical periods, social and philosophical issues. In the last class, students will present the work and evaluate their work of each group.

The sample given above clearly shows that the work for the realization of the subject's competencies and key competences can be achieved by teachers with well-thought-out planning, using teaching methods that include research, collaboration, presentation and reasoning.

About 50% of the teachers expressed that working with projects (project-based learning) as well as e-learning gives them the opportunity to achieve the subject's competencies and key competencies at the same time, but they have few spaces and opportunities for these implementations.

5. DISCUSSION

Since this is the first study in this sector in Albania, there is not much discussion on this topic. It is evident from the interviews and conversations that the teachers recognize the value of soft skills and that their subject offers ample opportunities for them. However, because of a lack of knowledge and training on how to actually

develop these skills as well as their adherence to conventional methods and perseverance, it has not been worked on a lot.

Across disciplines, there are well-defined methods for integrating soft skills into the curriculum. Working examples, behavior modeling, and practice-based skill reinforcement are the primary strategies (GLISI, 2023). These methods guarantee that students acquire transferable skills essential for success in the classroom and the workplace in line with more general educational objectives.

According to a study by Panfilova and Larchenko (2021) the majority of graduates and professionals who are currently employed regularly lack cross-cutting communication skills. The current personnel training system is ill-equipped to foster cross-cutting competencies as experts at all recent intellectual forums have confirmed. Specialist training in the advanced training and extra education systems also lags behind the demands of the modern world. Only the business training and commercial course systems make use of many of the contemporary interactive trends.

The development of cross-cutting skills is primarily dependent on the interactive competency of teaching staff, the advanced training system's orientation, and additional education in light of contemporary training trends that emphasize the development of cross-cutting competencies and the instruction of novel forms of educational activities, including coaching, mentoring, facilitation, moderation, tutoring, and more. However, the practice of educating adults demonstrates that for specialists to be competitive and in demand, they must be motivated, dedicated, and actively involved. You must learn new things every day, examine your errors and miscalculations, improve yourself, and enhance the communicative experience of activities to master the 21st-century cross-cutting abilities that satisfy the demands of the educational innovation trend.

Tang, Lee, and Chan (2015) state that any required talents are combined with the conviction that soft skills are an inherent element of their character that cannot be improved. Teacher candidates must be made aware of the demands and requirements of their workplace and the school by the faculty of education. The education system is primarily to blame for the deficiency since it does not encourage students to develop these abilities although it is acknowledged that teacher candidates should have these soft skills by the time they graduate.

 Teacher candidates must be conscious of their shortcomings so they can recognize their soft skill limitations and weaknesses and take advantage of the chance to learn as many soft skills as they can while still in college to prepare for the challenging workplace. More significantly, it is necessary to help teacher candidates understand the value of developing their soft skills so they can compete in an unbounded world. Future studies should concentrate on the proper evaluation method to enable the successful implementation of soft skill development, since R1 in this paper notes that there are currently no clear rules on how to assess the degree of soft skills among teacher candidates.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to highlight the opportunities that literature provides for the development of soft skills, the first of these in the Albanian context. The data obtained from the teachers who teach the subject of literature, in grades 1-12, it appears that teachers regardless of the class where they teach have the greatest focus on embedding information, knowledge, and work on software development. In the textbooks, questions and learning activities are more about embedding knowledge. Only 50% of teachers claim that they work with this goal in mind, and they achieve this through planning the learning process, selecting teaching methods such as group work, research, presentation, essays, working so that the requirements are such that they create spaces that rely on literary works to collaborate, analyze, present findings and unfold their ideas while literature provides endless opportunities for the development of soft skills. The model given for the development of the lesson: The clerk of the palace of dreams shows that every teacher by planning carefully and deliberately can manage to promote and develop soft skills during the teaching process, thus achieving the goals of the curriculum for the realization of key

competencies in addition to those of the subject. Collaborative learning, research and discussion are some efficient ways to achieve this goal in the literature.

6.1. Recommendations

First, it is recommended that teachers plan to teach not only in terms of the subject's competencies, that is, knowledge but also in function of key competencies and soft skills, fulfilling not only the goals of the curriculum but also making it possible for students to be more motivated and use the knowledge gained in life.

Second, it is recommended that the authors of the textbooks write textbooks in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of the teachers since the text is taken as the basic tool for the lesson by them.

Third, it is recommended that universities prepare future teachers to integrate soft skills development into their curriculum. Soft skills empower them to create inclusive, nurturing, and engaging classroom environments where students feel supported and motivated to learn.

Fourth, it is highly recommended that the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youths organize more training programs for teachers focused on soft skills as this field remains underexplored. While many teachers are experts in their academic disciplines, the development of soft skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence often receives less attention.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study are significant for Albanian pre-university instructors since they address a critical topic: the development of soft skills. The national curriculum has been competency-based for the past ten years, giving core competencies that aid in the development of skills including cooperation, communication, collaboration, and critical or creative thinking—equal weight with subject competencies. Every course should include instruction on these abilities.

The focus of this study is on literature since it is the primary subject for which standardized tests are administered in the state of Matura which has the highest specific weight throughout the entire pre-university curriculum and is included in all exams that are given after the fifth and ninth grades. In this regard, teachers and test developers would benefit from taking this study into account to accomplish the curriculum's objectives.

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