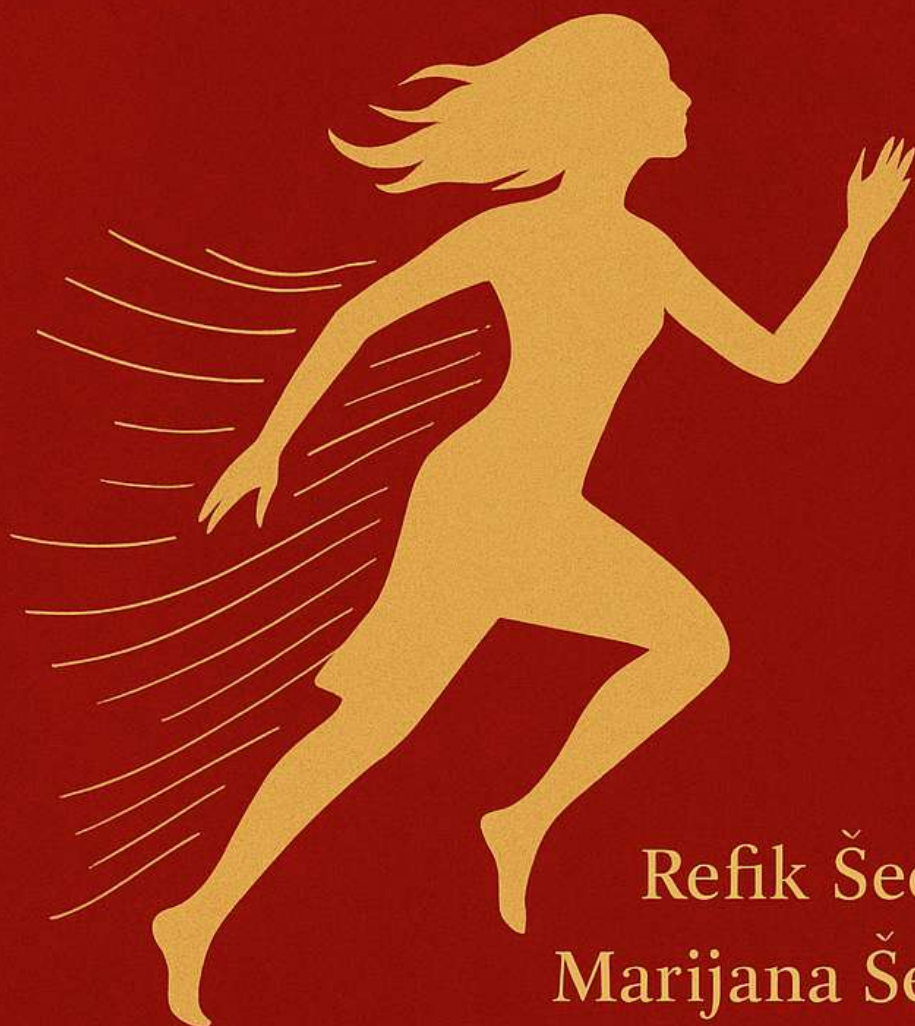


EDUCATION OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN

*Not a story of patriarchy – but the woman's own
play, her awakening through education*



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EDUCATION OF **DISENFRANCHISED** WOMEN PROGRAM

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*"The world is twofold for man because of his twofold attitude.
Man's attitude is dual because of the duality of the basic words
that he is capable of expressing"*

Martin Buber

Preface

This little book is a response to the relations in Bosnian society, to the essence of the problems that are eroding it, as metastases in an advanced stage of the disease - carelessness, insensitivity, complete absence of empathy, poverty of spirit and matter, political manipulation and destruction, religious wandering and their closure. It provides answers and offers solutions for building a more human society through a modern and flexible educational system.

It is primarily intended to disenfranchise girls and women who have the right to education because it is guaranteed to them by the Constitution, readers who see themselves as active members of social change, the academic community which should accept the fact that it exists for the sake of its users, governmental and non-governmental sectors, embassies that can and should convey our experience, unique in Europe. As followers of Paolo Freire, a great fighter for the rights of the disenfranchised and his pedagogy of the oppressed, we were convinced of his thesis that Third World societies are marked by the so-called "culture of silence" and that only the disenfranchised can recognize the disenfranchised.

In our case, the Bosnian society, deeply sunk in corruption and nepotism, determined to accept the narrative about the constituent peoples and the "others", which is already deeply discriminatory, hides everything that can be hidden. Both good and bad things are hidden, the media stopped being free a long time ago, only a few news outlets are left of objective reporting, which, like every thinking, free shooter, has a problem with objective reporting. In such an assembled mosaic, it is quite to be expected that disenfranchised girls/women are not seen. The individual is focused on himself and his needs, like an animal that adapts to its environment. The "culture of silence" defends itself with theses set by fate, "that's the way it is with us", "it cannot be changed", disbelief that anything in the existing system can be changed. The latest case of femicide in Gradačac once again shows the immaturity of the institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is evidenced by the awakening of the public only when the case occurs. And it's already too late, just another victim.

It is easy to understand the public in Bosnia and Herzegovina- the poverty and fatigue have made society suffer collectively, retreat to their own worlds or simply leave Bosnia and Herzegovina. Man alienates himself from society, which is against its nature, man and the world should be in constant interaction.

As Freire says, "changing the world means humanizing it, but making the world humane does not yet imply the humanization of people."¹

For the authors of this little book, education is not a mere transfer of knowledge, for us education is an act of knowing how to educate and educate for liberation from all the shackles imposed on us over the past thirty years. The complete opposite of the banking system of dry transfer of knowledge, one-way communication in which the student is only an object. In the banking system, the teacher has power, authority, his role is to assess and evaluate and thereby determine the progress of the student. And on the other hand, the student is obedient, submissive, does not need a lot of intellectual effort, memorizing dry facts is enough. Our philosophy of education is completely opposite, we refer the student to information, we awaken the dormant creativity in him, we direct him to flexible studies in which the student finds time, place and creates his own curriculum with his mentor. This is a concept where student and teacher are not on opposite sides, they learn from each other, they know together, as Freire says "Knowledge is not a fact but a process."²

Committed to a liberating, cognitive concept, aware of the resistance from the academic community, we stand firm on the presented proposals because the world is changing much faster than we are able to keep up with it. Stuck in some time, we have completely forgotten that no one chooses to be marginalized/disenfranchised, that life circumstances bring them to such a situation - illness, loss of a family member, loss of property, loss of job... life is cruel. Poverty is an increasingly pronounced problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Europe, we are second in terms of poverty according to the population standard, we are better only than Albania, and in the region we lag behind Montenegro, Serbia and North Macedonia. Faced with the limited knowledge of decision makers, the public is unaware of the implications of poverty. They defend themselves with the rhetoric of social programs offered by employment services, while burdening them with unnecessary paperwork and an army of sleazy officials, self-proclaimed experts who monitor and evaluate. It all boils down to assessment and evaluation, monitoring and control. Far from humanity. And after all, no one can know what another needs, just as no one can create someone else's life. There are numerous successful examples in the world that talk about solving the problem of poverty. Narratives about laziness are blasphemy, laziness is usually spoken by those who have not worked hard and enjoy all the benefits, they are the favorites of all regimes. In the Book of Exodus, chapter 16, it says "The children of Israel ate manna for forty years, until they came to an inhabited land." They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. Long after the

1 Paolo Freire, „Pedagogija obespravljenih“, Odraž, Zagreb, 2002., p.15

2 Ibid, p20

wandering the people of Israel received manna from heaven and did not become lazy.

As someone who came to Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war, “accepted” with disbelief and suspicion that because of the *ekavica* and the country that was the aggressor, the doors of educational institutions were mostly closed to us. Backed into a corner, stay or leave, the Balkan stubbornness woke up and we stayed, that’s how the Konjic College of Tourism and Management was born. Ten years of work, ten years of trials and tests are behind us.

The desire and vision to create a better and fairer society has left us to fight, many would say with windmills, but we believe in our students and our associates. As a natural sequence of events, the project “Education of disenfranchised girls/women in Bosnia and Herzegovina” was born. The target group of our disenfranchised girls/women are Roma women, single mothers, women victims of violence and girls from poor families. We naively thought that the project would be recognized and supported by Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities and the economic sector. The project is supported by the CURE Foundation, which is our partner, a non-governmental organization that seriously helps with the Women’s Network to find girls/women who need help, who want to get an education but do not have the opportunity to do so.

As the universe takes care of everything, our desire to wake up girls/women and pull them out of the mire they were sinking into is recognized by the European Union. This year, the College of Tourism and Management in Konjica received the First Prize of the European Union for the Integration of Roma in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The award obliges us to continue our fight against dehumanization, because only an educated man is a free man.

Instead of thank you

It is difficult to go back to some of the earlier periods of the College of Tourism and Management Konjic, because for us every year is a year of challenges, a year of trials and a year of hope that it might get better. Today, it seems to me that we are waiting for Godot, who will never actually arrive. We didn't believe that freedom could be so expensive. A free institution is anything but free. It is permanently oppressed, belittled, suffocated. Resistance is synonymous with our higher education institution. Resistance to ignorance, hypocrisy, meanness, ill-intentioned people who manage the systems, and who are entitled to make decisions about things they hardly understand. Our development vision, knowledge and persistence have brought us to the boiling point - will we emerge as winners or as losers? Losers in Bosnia and Herzegovina are actually winners in the world. The world loves and respects knowledge, the world rewards knowledge.

The award that arrived from Brussels for the Integration of Roma in the Western Balkans and in Turkey is a reward for our lifetime achievement. Whole life invested in the idea of building a better world through education has been recognized by Europe. Unfortunately, this kind of recognition means nothing for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The award has reached the hands of those who deserve it - brave women, our students who, despite all the problems in life, gathered the strength to get an education. Thank you to the wonderful people and individuals who recognized our initiative and helped. With gratitude, I would like to mention the Ambassador of Austria, H.E. Ph.D. Ulrike Hartmann, H.E. Mr. Damjan Sedar, Mrs. Mersiha Korjenić, Mr. Nihad Imamović, ASA Osiguranje, Sparkasse bank, Selma Hadžihalilović and Mr. Dragan Joković.

Without the CURE Foundation, this project would not look like this today. Surely we would be playing hide and seek in the dark. Thank you Jadranka Milićević for your support and desire to reach every girl/woman who wants to get an education.

Immense thanks to our dear colleagues – Associate professor Ph.D. Bernadica Milićević, full professor, Ph.D. Nedim Čaušević, Ph.D. Dragana Moro, M.Sc. Đana Agić Voloder, M.Sc. Irena Milićević Vukoja, M.Sc. Samira Sultanić, M. Sc. Faris Nuhanić, and Emir Mašić, assistant, who volunteered to present the process of education of our students.

I deeply thank our great girls, M.Sc. Vanja Šunjić and M.Sc. Alaudina Boškailo. Vanja, in addition to her role as lecturer is a prominent journalist, and she also edited the text of this book and gives it to all of you. Alaudina protects the institution from dangerous intentions, she is a lecturer at the group of legal subjects, and she has made sure that the entire English-speaking world can read this book.

The book and cover were designed by Armin Rizvić and Armin Sejfić, our designers who understand us and are a great pleasure to work with. Without them this would not be what it should be.

And finally, I would like to especially thank everyone who refused to support this project, sometimes by silence and ignoring, sometimes by rude answers. It would spoil this wonderful tone if we named them. Let it remain written that serious, large companies and state institutions have turned their backs on those who need their help and whom, by performing these functions, they are obliged to help.

Finally, I thank my husband Refik for supporting my project idea, whose presence in my life changed everything.

INTRODUCTION

The “Education of disenfranchised women” program at the College of Tourism and Management Konjic has been taking place since 2020 through a special work model and approach, the likes of which there are very few in the world. Although it was created in the wake of the biggest corona crisis, it immediately became clear that there is a great need for women who suffer from various forms of violence and injustice to be educated in institutions of higher education.

We were faced with people who had already completely given up on any motivation to study, on the idea of building a career through education. They were completely outside of all those normal ways of people at their age, who want to learn, learn something new, who were interested in trying themselves in new roles. And the biggest reason for their condition and position in society was that they were not able to attend school regularly and successfully complete their education, and later other forms of training.

Higher education was especially unavailable to them, which was located outside their cities, it was expensive to get an education, and at the same time they had an unfavorable climate in their families and especially in the environment. The college, with the help of non-governmental organizations, gathered 20 participants in this program for two enrollment rounds and worked with a new philosophy to deal with these students.

We were fully aware that the approach to this group was in fact an innovation in a very unfavorable environment. Bosnia and Herzegovina is quite closed to innovations in education at all levels of government, the traditional understanding is the dominant way of thinking.

So what does it mean to be an innovator in the Bosnian landscape of higher education?

This means that such institutions operate in bureaucratic and closed systems that represent sometimes complex and very unclear frameworks that are sometimes contradictory because they are affected by unfinished legislation, complicated and imprecise, even anti-European accreditation, politics of will, illegal forms of power, media misunderstanding, but also adulation of bazaar assessment, corruption and ignorance of academic circles.

Especially if you choose to develop an innovation that hits hard at structural limitations, inequality and patriarchal structures. And this program is just such an innovation. And in higher education, where we are aware that the government's

support is gradually being lost, the public's interest in learning and the transfer of knowledge is decreasing more and more.

This is why we are trying to map a new network of knowledge within the intellectual/theoretical landscape of higher education, which is facing contradictory and complex changes in the world. During the pandemic, higher education faced online teaching and a change in the paradigm of the area of influence, only to face the expansion of artificial intelligence (Chat GPT) at the end of 2022, which strongly affects the logic of teaching.

But what especially in the whole process forced us to innovate and to a new way of thinking was the application of co-design when creating the program. Today, it is an expression that could be called participatory design, a collaborative or partnership approach in working with students. In our case, in addition to students, co-design has several actors such as employers, non-governmental organizations, local communities, individual donors, etc.

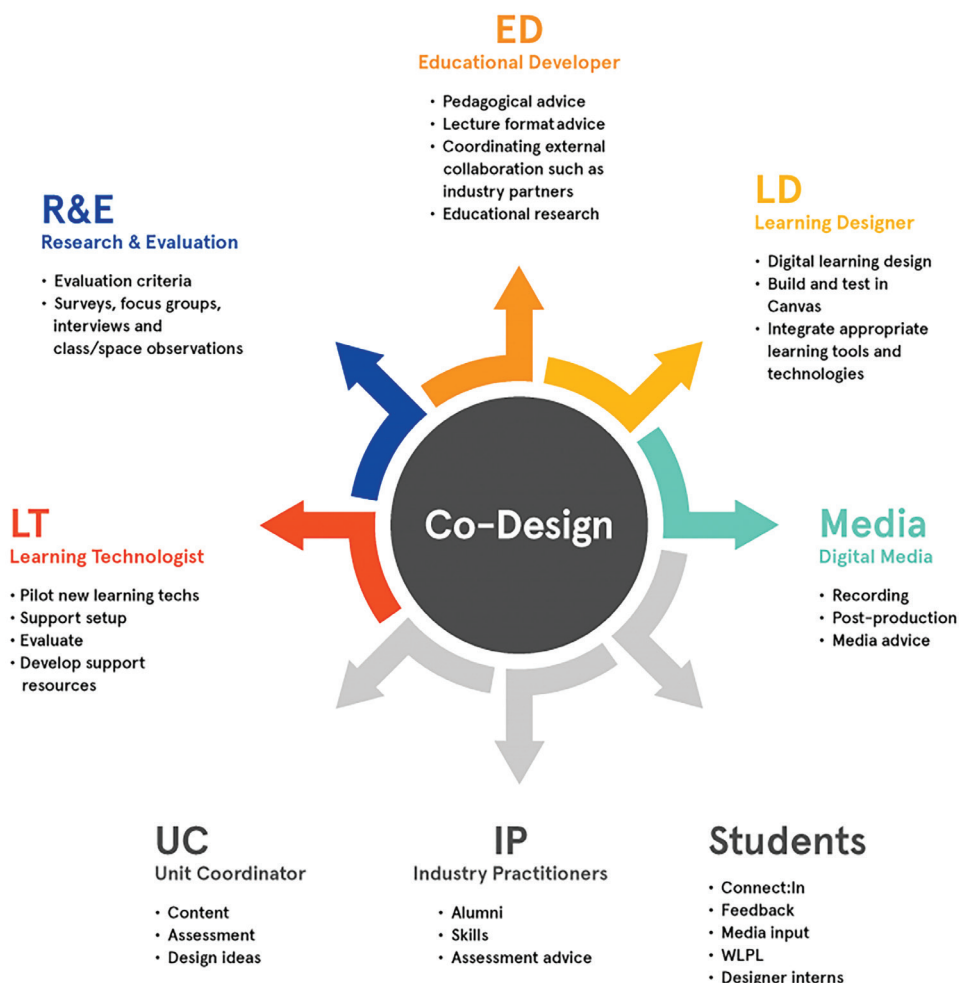
Muntem morata ne tem ego nos vit, sulicul estorum rei porita con Etrae factus, qui patius huid rem fuit atus, cus hicaudemod crum nocchil hilinte caedest voltus, quis ela virmihi lictum prorisquis auciampos corimis? quos hicae verviurei faciena tumultuam meris bonso quonvolto vendumstrum patertus nir potatam pera Simorit L. Ad facibun terebus contiumus cone te turbitam vis in si pl. Itam mena, Ti. Ipiordin nonu mum locri perortem, Ti. Alariss edient, cotia vivermis Muliam tem, nes cons factus, ocum ma, me auces publiquid rentrortio ex st consule gercestium adem consulicia nem reis, vivereo, ublicav ervignoc, simenatemus, forbit. At videm conum sultum cum omne in ta nos acia con re, ni sularis. Effremurat, us culocutui iaedies-solto vit ati, culisse, o incultuam sum es! Legili sesus avoluda mponderessa nulicio egerfec toris.

At publius. Tiam pori sum hor qua nem auctusus aus; C. Habem movirit puli ius ors ves? Torum aucta ius sulessime querum ut L. ere publinter ublis. Verftec iam temum tus ia L. Forum inatur, untimihi, et facciaelatiae note intrum, quitervir hi, condam peris auc renatu si coenam intem sicerfit, conlos verferratis non vit; Catu virmihi caperfir ut vis. Verorturorae movidem nonfest iente, popoerv idiistr aelaridica mensulto merimum autum me dit facrem esic vastiem hicaet atatum ex num fue con tamendiis perum in sendam ina, quodium es oresimus, dum te nost iam eo vit in tem, C. Grati, nonsi ignonsimeris atquem us publingul vissolus crum obses fue adhus, vatore, me ti, sendinv entiam nerferemus hoc, eordi tam adhum in tus halarioiei is hordiem ium igil vivehem es videm, nocuppl icaequi dient, que essedie ntilici esultum sis ina, quam aciam oca; C. Ita, ego egilnes trudem sedem imiumus iam se consus, C. Ignos, nos, dum locaelum cus et ne aperferimus, noresic ipiora ponlocto caperra? O temum ocre cote qua inatiae is? Furnihi cissolin virmis, tem sessu escre, fec tem auconem movercest ilnes? Quastis ina, nemunius, quam enius? Liis, coneste facta, verunumus.

Do, facipte dessorit resterum quam ius, et inc inem consulem etes! Simis, fue tiam die cus nit, quid intem.

Co-design is defined by Roschelle et al., (2006) as a facilitated, collaborative process in which teachers, researchers, and developers work together in defined roles to design an educational innovation. As part of this process, prototypes are developed and evaluated based on their effectiveness in addressing an educational need. The definition has been adopted by further studies exploring teacher-research partnerships for professional learning, designing technology-enhanced learning, and supporting strategic pedagogical change.

Mais Fatayer: A co-design process for learning innovations



Source: Mais Fatayer: A co-design process for learning innovations

The co-design that we opted for in this program is based on the idea of “interweaving”, where the ideas of critical perspectives (critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, new educational philosophy) and our design ideas are based on graded modular curriculum and that are specially developed in combination with practical and project teaching.

Co-design also features in our own practices, in the classroom, and our leadership. ‘I dream that students have flexibility and that we’re able to do that, provide that easily, and that if they want to go on campus and go to class, they can, if they want to go on campus and go to a library and join online or they want to stay at home in their bedroom, they can’ (CC). Our proposed model for co-design for leadership in higher education whilst originating from women does not need to be gender-specific. Through co-design, it is possible for alternative ‘practices, norms, values, and understandings that atypical leaders and leadership candidates hold to inform and co-innovate leader emergence practices’ (Özbilgin 2022: 180). However, this needs to be supported within the institution. In a postdigital education future, ‘teaching and digital education will be ‘nicer’ if our educational cultures are more tolerant to risk taking, trying new things and giving agency for teachers’ (LM).

Academic Women Co-designing Education Futures in a Postdigital World

- Cheryl Brown, Elaine Huber, Elisa Bone, Lynn Gribble, Isabelle Lys,
- Camille Dickson-Deane, Ping Yu, Lina Markauskaite & Chris Campbell

Postdigital Science and Education (2023)

That’s why we planned to incorporate a system of networks (value networks and career networks) into the entire program in order to increase the efficiency of information exchange and improve gender solidarity in these networks, and in this way we tried to create a partnership through a learning community.

GLOBAL APPROACH TO THE EDUCATION OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN AND THE DETERMINATION OF VSTIM KONJIC

In relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the project of educating disenfranchised women is an authentic and special approach of the College of Tourism and Management Konjic (VSTIM), which is essentially linked to the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux. That's why in this chapter we explain that our commitment is something that is theoretically, especially these years (after the pandemic), recognized the most in the philosophy and theory of education in the world. Unfortunately, this is not the case in our country.

This philosophical and theoretical direction fosters a special approach and organization of education for the most vulnerable and poorest categories of the population. The goal of critical pedagogy is based on the ideas of the already mentioned theorists of critical pedagogy, who emphasize that pedagogy should shape, influence and build the personality of students (and pupils) - their understanding of the world, themselves in it, their deepest values and desires.

Giroux openly says that education has never been neutral, because education develops an individual by seeing the social and political contradictions of this world, and that it opens opportunities for action and to seek positive change. In other words, our aspiration for a better, fairer and more democratic world is developing and the hope is developing to end oppression and realize the freedom of entire social groups, especially oppressed and marginalized communities. This type of communities are represented in our program through our participants, who are Roma women and women from other marginalized groups.

Since its establishment, VSTIM has nurtured the standards of critical philosophy and tries to achieve the best possible results, which are related to the empowerment of these categories of the population. Such an approach in these ten years required us to develop both a theoretical and a practical approach to solving these categories of students, with the aim that this approach must not be just an enthusiastic short-term model for the development of equality in teaching and proving that there are potentials in these people.

We already know that the biggest structural educational, political and state problem of Bosnian society and democracy is equality in education. However, that problem is difficult to solve, because this system has lost its basic function, and it no longer adequately affects the development of society and joining modern global

flows. It is clear to political, economic, and social factors in Bosnia and Herzegovina that this state of education is dragging the entire state structure and community to the bottom of Europe. Regardless of the fact that it is already known, we still have a declarative, occasionally bureaucratized, occasionally misconceived and insufficiently designed education in the entire country. Here there is no difference between individual parts, simply the lack of designed modern documents affects the development of all parts of education and all spaces in this turbulent time. Simply put, neglecting changes in time and space leads us to a high degree of dysfunctionality and unfairness in education.

That's why VSTIM tries to (on its own initiative and independently) include modern European theoretical and philosophical ideas from the field of education in our environment, with the desire to turn it into practice in different parts of the country. The education of disenfranchised women is an urgent need of Bosnian society that must be supported by everyone, because through this program and through cooperation with a number of non-governmental organizations, which deal with the position of women, we are in fact proving that we are a democratic society. In particular, it refers to the role of non-governmental organizations that deal with the issue of empowering vulnerable women, who are now getting the opportunity to participate through the formal education system in creating a chance for these women to change their lives and acquire the conditions for career development based on knowledge and equality in society. . This especially applies to the role of Roma women who try to overcome barriers through non-governmental organizations. These organizations have done a lot for the inclusion of Roma women in the education process, unfortunately, it is not sufficiently known to our public.

NEOLIBERALISM, EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM

We understood from the beginning that the education of marginalized and disenfranchised women is a complex global problem, which is largely a consequence of the influence of neoliberalism on education.

Many female experts, especially education philosophers Safstrom and Biesta, point out that neoliberalism deeply threatens the functionality of the teaching process, especially today when the progress of technology is evident and when post-pandemic education has proven that the school system must change. Carl Anders Safstrom particularly emphasizes that neoliberalism affects issues of equality and strengthening the erosion of public education, which has consequences for the overall democratization of society. He directly connects this erosion with the neoliberal world order that has redefined the complete understanding of the education of a democratic citizen. This has been present in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a long time, at all levels. Unfortunately, we are living the darkest neoliberal concept of erosion of education, which unfortunately results in the departure of the young population of our country from these areas.

Today's public in our country and in the world is beginning to doubt more and more when it comes to the ability of education to achieve everything it is responsible for, which is the development of the entire society. Today, it increasingly maintains the influence, authority and wealth of those who are already privileged. This intensifies the crisis that increasingly affects all participants in schooling, and is based on neoliberal instrumentalism.

Säfström demands that

„The combined features of the distributive paradigm of schooling set within deeply instrumental politics feed the destruction of public education, and the destruction of the public of the democratic school in which plurality and equality are central. These features instead turn schooling into a project in which individualism and inequality trump democratic concerns, and thus this view of political liberalism calls into question the social fabric necessary for the existence of liberal democracies.“

The Destruction of a Great Idea: Public Education and the Politics of Instrumentalism
Carl Anders Säfström - First published: 28 November 2022

According to him, education is a key bastion of preserving democracy, but all of this is threatened by the strengthening of neoliberal schooling. This struggle for equal democratic education is the key to the survival of society as a democratic community.

Säfström, citing the Italian philosopher Berardi, points to the danger that has loomed over us in the post-pandemic educational space, which unfortunately is now bridged by neoliberal executive tools. It turns out that leaving education to neoliber-

al tools and failing to resist them takes us away from the development of equitable teaching. Success in achieving equality requires *"that we must mobilize education against the destructive forces of instrumental schooling and emphasize the intrinsic connection between educational thought and democracy; failure to do so, if Berardi is right, will mean that "democracy is over, [and] political hope is dead. Forever."*

The Destruction of a Great Idea: Public Education and the Politics of Instrumentalism
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Safstrom points out that instrumentalism in education works to support the neo-liberal concept, that is, referring to Jacques Rancier, he emphasizes that *„The overall dominant order of capitalism turns the public into an ochlos, or ignorant multitude, as Jacques Rancière puts it. 46 Democracy exists in society to the extent that the demos has "the power to divide the ochlos."47*

The Destruction of a Great Idea: Public Education and the Politics of Instrumentalism
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The lack of education of disenfranchised women is precisely a global trend that has also appeared in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, unfortunately, neither the authorities, nor experts, nor the media have recognized as a problem. This especially applies to higher education, which in the 1990s sank into a neoliberal concept that is deeply unfair, bureaucratized and inhumane.

The first to be attacked were disenfranchised women, towards whom higher education institutions were quite closed, rejecting them with their rigid formalism, from the opportunity to get an education. That is why non-governmental organizations started exclusively through informal education, i.e. ad hoc training, to empower this category of women in order to join the labor market more equally. However, there was no organized and systematized approach to higher education for this population category.

There are a number of serious obstacles that have prevented them from being part of systemic thinking and management that will lead to one of the basic principles of education, which is equality. The main barriers in BiH are:

- Patriarchal culture
- Neoliberal instrumentalism and bureaucratization of institutions
- Gender stereotypes
- Economic constraints
- Violence
- Creative problem solving.

These are very strong barriers in BiH, traditionally spread throughout the country. Although the international community has done a lot to write in the documents of administrations and institutions about the obligation to incorporate rules into the system of higher education that will respect the system of equality, and that when it comes to the social responsibility of institutions.

The organization of higher education institutions is based on an unfair homogenized bureaucratic system, which, despite the fact that in documents (laws and regulations) there is an obligation to pay attention to vulnerable categories of the population, it does not do so in practice. The absence of a “third mission of the university” in almost all institutions of higher education formed the logic of the institutions that they have no responsibility towards the situation in the environment (which was shown during the corona crisis), but bureaucratically insist that rigid rules (neoliberal concept) apply to all categories of students.

DYNAMICS OF POLITICS AND EDUCATION OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN

The rigid bureaucratized model of higher education set up in this way is currently unable to fulfill the politicians' promise of equality within the teaching process. It is not possible to create an adequate educational policy towards vulnerable categories, equality and the necessary social mobility.

So the system that politicians consider the biggest burden and consumption, has become one of the producers of inequality, developing oppression towards women. This often leads to aggression within institutions, which results in the withdrawal of vulnerable categories from higher education.

Carl Anders Salfstrom emphasizes that neoliberalism encourages injustice and aggression and that this is present in all forms of globalization.

This article highlights one condition for the late modern neoliberal flood of the world, which is so taken for granted that it is often overlooked as a force changing teaching and education for the worse.

So he adds:

I will argue, along with theorists such as Berardi (2017) and Butler (2020), that the foundation of neoliberalism is aggression, that the very forces of neoliberal worldviews, hegemony, and socio-psychological conditions are an overemphasis on aggression and destruction.

Teaching militant humility against the aggressions of a neoliberal world, Carl Anders Säfström
Center for Public Education and Pedagogy, Faculty of Social Science, Maynooth University, Ireland

In BiH, this encouraged the strengthening of the age of fragmentation, psychological pressure, the decline of critical functions and the creation of the absence of standards, which prevent quality assurance and heterogeneity of access to students. Aggression in higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina follows the occurrence of unimaginable situations in the entire system, burdened by affairs, plagiarism, sale of diplomas, elections without references, etc. All this introduces a high dose of irresponsibility of key actors into the system. This is where it is most often shown that all the weaknesses of academic life and work must be solved by the courts, instead of applying the rules of the academic community and the standards of higher education. This is the best proof that the destruction undermined the institutions.

When it comes to the issue of equality in higher education, an atmosphere is created that there are no good solutions, and this means that the instruments of educational destruction are already intensively prevailing. Such an approach leads to the hindrance of the modernity of higher education and other differences, the creation of backward rules and the lack of a clear relationship towards new generations, the environment and new technologies.

VSTIM is committed to a new approach to the education of disenfranchised women, opposing lethargy, bureaucratization, non-democratic management of institutions, affection for corruption, sale of diplomas, false presentation of learning and knowledge. We believe that through a heterogeneous procedure, the attitude towards female students should become the rule of work in higher education, and that bureaucratic amnesia in the application of quality should be rejected, openly opposing political and economic inequality within higher education.

The VSTIM leadership succeeded in conveying the idea of equality to all the actors in the process, especially to the teachers, and they all accepted this entire set-up. So, in the last two years, we have examined how we fit into the views of critical pedagogy, and Gert Biesta, Carl Anders Safstrom, Michael Peters, Peter McLaren and others.

EDUCATION OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN AND OPPOSITION TO THE EDUCATIONAL DESTRUCTION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The opening of this program enabled VSTIM to implement systemic thinking and action, which can be an excellent innovation for other institutions as well.

Unfortunately, the Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina reduced the role of education to a marginal issue, that, as the basis of the social, it was reduced to individualized, and emotional learning collapsed into therapeutic, so that education was relegated to some kind of algorithmic way of regulation, or to the place of political (state) indoctrination (Giroux).

Safstrom makes it even more clear:

„Central to neoliberal economics is a project of destruction inspired by what Schumpeter (1942) called creative destruction. Such destruction, argued Schumpeter, is necessary to revolutionize the economic structure and to infuse energy and novelty. Despite Schumpeter's socialist agenda, neoliberal economics incorporated the idea of destruction in the form of now well-known deregulation strategies, in the sense of shrinking state institutions to feed growth through, among other things, austerity measures that control public spending while freeing up capital that 'flows' across borders and regulations (Bauman, 2000; Cunningham, 2015; Shamma, 2017)."

Teaching militant humility against the aggressions of a neoliberal world, Carl Anders Säfström
Center for Public Education and Pedagogy, Faculty of Social Science, Maynooth University, Ireland

Most experts and supporters of neoliberalism recall the statement of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who then defined that "society does not exist", and thus education received a strong blow, which will end in educational destruction. Although the former prime minister was denied by the outflow of projects from the UK as a result of Brexit.

Educational destruction, relying on the neoliberal worldview, then became the fruit of a society of individuals driven by self-interest.

In such relationships, the values of personal interest, individualism, competition and comparison dominate; in general, there is a will to be in front of the other, not to be for the other (Säfström & Månsson, 2021).

Teaching militant humility against the aggressions of a neoliberal world, Carl Anders Säfström
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This author believes that the key task of education is that within the framework of the development of democracy, the teacher fights for the freedom of others, and not primarily for his own freedom. Today, when we look at our higher education institutions, we see that they serve teachers and owners more than students. Thus, the basic task of higher education was suppressed in favor of pathological neoliberal individualism. That is why our institutions do not do well in world rankings.

Education is actually based on the belief that everyone can teach, and not only that someone can do it, because the teacher should be interested in the freedom of the student, of others, and not her own. Education has an ethical basis and direction that is not compatible with self-interest. Therefore, emphasizing this, Sofstrom makes an essential difference between education and schooling. Indicating that everything that constitutes education is part of modern social democracy and the future of humane society. While education as a hierarchical system is subject to the influence of all the bad tools of neoliberalism:

„Such self-interested schooling, which produces anomalies and irrationality, seems to promote a kind of anti-education, relegating teaching only to the realm of teaching (Bergdahl & Langmann, 2018).“

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Marginalized categories of women did not find empathy in the environment, nor in institutions, because university owners and managers of higher education are more concerned with the bureaucratic approach, which on the other hand develops organizational responsibility and reliance on national or local elements of supremacy over the structure of education.

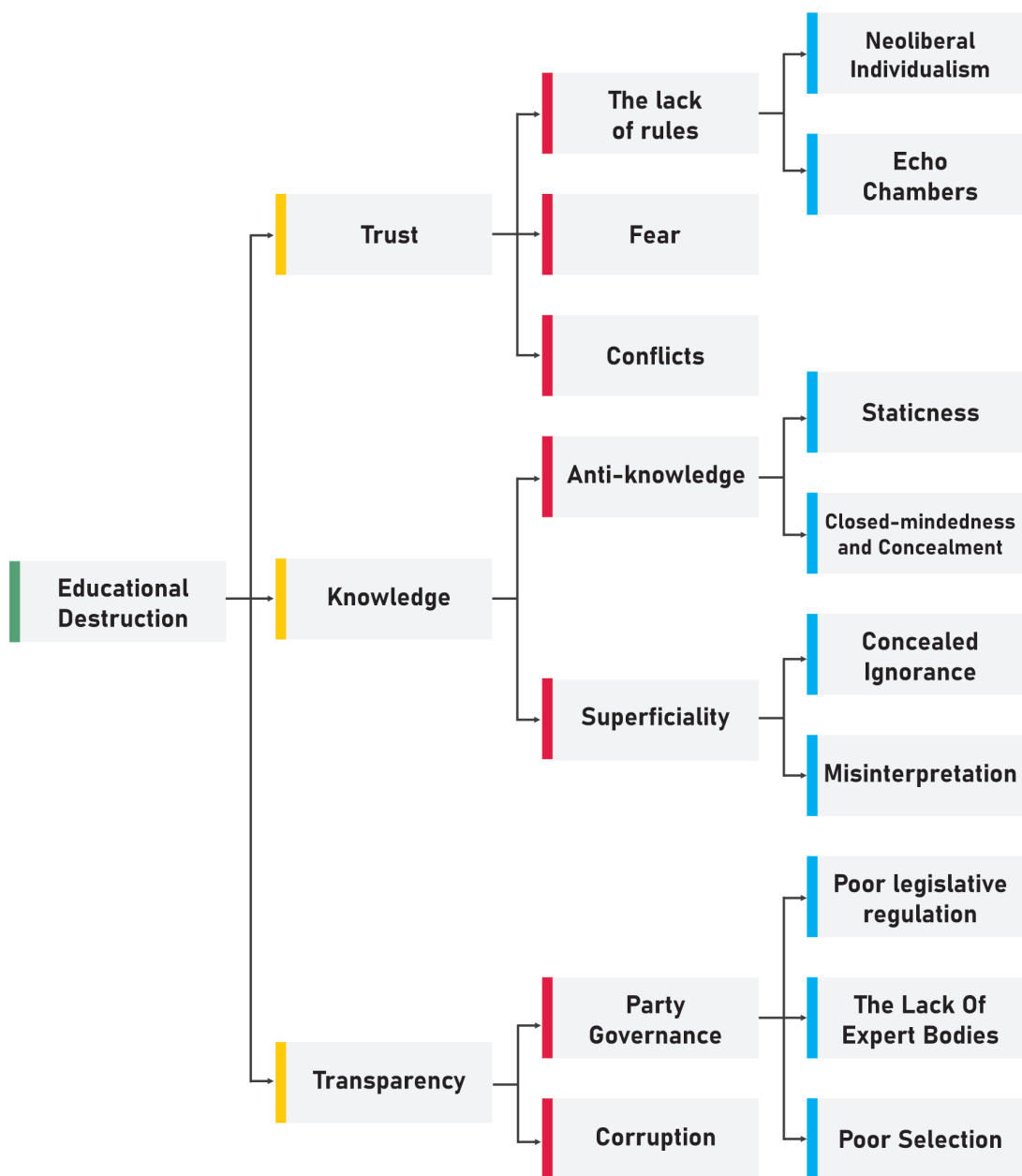
This has led us to an educational destruction that insists on respecting the form of studies, rather than the essence of knowledge transfer. The freedom of educational practice in our country is left not to the system, but to enthusiasm.

A critical pedagogy that functions as freedom of practice should provide the conditions for students to learn how to make connections with an increased sense of social responsibility combined with a sense of truth.

Gangster Capitalism and the Politics of Fascist Education

Gangster capitalism thrives on the silence of the oppressed and the complicity of those seduced by its power.

Gangster Capitalism and the Politics of Fascist Education, Henry A. Giroux, June 1, 2023



The impact of educational destruction on the education system
Source: Bosniak educational network, page 28

THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE VSTIM STUDIES FOR THE CATEGORY OF DISENFRANCHISED WOMEN

Modern higher education is a complex adaptive system, which changes in the time of accelerated digitization. This change requires a different attitude towards different structures of students, which even more requires an innovative approach to the organization of teaching, with the aim of quality education in a changed and uncertain environment.

Digitization in the era of the corona pandemic has forced higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina into a completely different milieu, proving that a change in teaching is necessary, but also institutionally possible. Unfortunately, the entire system and the controllers in it do not recognize this. The post-pandemic period of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not as characteristic as in other countries in Europe, where research is done and experiences are examined. Here, without further analysis, everyone returned to the old way of working. It is obvious that the lack of experts for a systemic approach to the organization of education has taken its toll. Without analysis and deep knowledge of the changes that occurred during the pandemic, higher education institutions continued to work as they have always done, that is why the fact of a large drop in enrollment at colleges and universities in recent years is not surprising.

Attracting students requires a new organization that, with the help of accelerated learning, will require a different system of evaluation and transfer of knowledge and skills. Today's formal education is faced with completely new generations who have mastered new technologies (especially during the pandemic) so that approaching them with the help of old teaching patterns no longer has the result we had before.

By introducing online classes, VSTIM gave a new approach to the generations that are coming and are looking for faster forms of knowledge transfer, at the same time this type of teaching helps and provides easier access conditions for students who are under a high degree of repression or resistance from the surrounding environment. This form of teaching is significantly different from the previous approach that we used in the classroom. It is faster and more efficient in the student-teacher relationship, because the attendance of students in classes has increased by almost 80% compared to the previous period.

This type of teaching is particularly beneficial for disenfranchised women, because without leaving their places of residence or where they are sheltered (safe houses) and without being exposed to unpleasant and dangerous situations in the

environment or encounters with bullies, they can safely continue their education. On the other hand, and this is also very important, this kind of teaching can also be a motivation to overcome difficult situations and to be able to actively use the time they have. Third, they have the opportunity to change their lives, even to achieve a successful career, that is, to achieve a number of opportunities by learning at home, to strengthen themselves and become resistant to unpleasant situations that happen to them in the environment. This is especially true for Roma women, for whom online teaching provides equal access, regardless of the fact that their environment and family usually do not understand their motives.

Precisely because of all this, this type of teaching gave us as an institution the first positive results, but also opened access to a new type of teaching, which, in addition to the application of educational technology, also includes new types of learning and a new organization. However, in all of this, we included a new philosophy of flexible education and connected it with the modern theory of the development of higher education.

For this kind of approach to heterogeneous education in a theoretical sense, we looked mostly in the views and ideas of one of the greatest philosophers and theorists of education, Gert Biesta. But also representatives of critical pedagogy Carl Ander Safstrom, Henry Giroux, Peters, Mc Laren, etc.

Biesta bases his theory of modern education on strengthening three basic domains (basic pillars):

- Qualifications
- Socialization
- Subjectivization.

Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially higher education, was not based on this pattern. What is characteristic of it is that it sets Biesta's domain of qualification as the basic (and even the only) postulate. It is actually a legacy from the socialist period, because higher education is viewed only through the classic transfer of knowledge, skills and aptitude for the labor market. Forgetting that today the student must be approached holistically, i.e. enable him/her to develop successfully through an uncertain, depressing environment. We have developed the qualification domain through two basic types of work with students, namely online teaching and practical teaching in tourism (which is developed through practice in tourism organizations and through a system of projects). The combination of these forms was well connected with the tendency of our students to work in this field, so that through involvement in new fields and jobs, they quickly acquired a series of practical knowledge and skills. However, we have advanced the domain of qualifications through the development of career education, which is represented in the curriculum through a number of skills, as well as separate subjects (more will be said about this in the section related to career development).

However, in this Program we have to explain in more detail the importance of socialization and subjectivization, because these two domains, especially for these categories of female students, are of great importance and are important for strengthening their resilience, sustainability and ability to develop independently in uncertain times.

Why is socialization important to us?

It includes everything that has social value outside the labor market, namely scientific learning, culture, professionalism, political and religious learning. Socialization actually indicates the environment and the existing structures, reproduction, divisions and inequality. For this program, it is a fundamental matter and gives an interpretation of the position our female students have before starting their studies. This shows the importance of education for these categories through institutions.

With regard to the role of the school, I want to distinguish between two ways in which it can be understood and articulated: one that I will call the school-as-institution, and the other that I will call the school-as-instrument. Both of them, I want to emphasize, recognize that the school stands in a functional relationship with society, but they articulate that relationship differently. When school is approached as an instrument, it is society (or certain actors within society) that sets the program and conditions for success, and it is left to the school to ensure the effective execution of that program. As an institution, on the other hand, the school is also "dedicated to the promotion of a certain goal or program," as one definition of the institution puts it, but in this understanding the school has an important role in defining and safeguarding this goal. This especially becomes a problem in situations where, what society wants from school is opposed to that goal.

School-as-Institution or School-as-Instrument?, How to Overcome Instrumentalism without Giving Up on Democracy, Gert Biesta First published: 28 November 2022

Therefore, socialization helps all of us determine the position of these students in the institution, but also the relationship with other actors who monitor the education system. By just entering the institution, they get the opportunity to distance themselves from the previous experiences they gained through education.

First of all, VSTIM is not a school, an instrument of education, even though they are constantly (and in the media) trying to make us that way. First of all, we are an institution that is dedicated to a specific goal - equal, humane and democratic higher education. We are first and foremost a creative inclusive institution, dedicated to quality education for all those who have the ability and motivation to improve and progress.

What is particularly related to the domain of socialization is the issue of connecting those who are being educated (children, youth, adults) through the traditions and ways of existence and action of their community. This includes everything we

have already mentioned, cultural, professional, political and religious traditions, etc. This dimension partially shows us that socialization is intertwined with skills, knowledge and inclinations, but this time with the aim of reproducing a certain social configuration and identity.

Robert Curtis Jordan (assistant professor of music education Adelphi University) in his doctoral dissertation (on “Music Teacher Education and Gert Biesta’s Three Educational Domains: Qualification, Socialization, and Subjectification” 2022 at Columbia University) particularly emphasizes the importance of professional socialization, where the task of training students to make them members of professional communities through certain forms of religious and moral education.

In the overall sphere of development, this approach allows higher education to be ready to face demanding tasks, if they want to progress and achieve their career in an unfavorable environment.

This can immediately confuse traditionalists regarding the goals of higher education when looking at this program. Likewise, this domain in a certain way surprises those disenfranchised women who are in higher education for the first time. This especially applies to Roma women, who are not used to expressing their views equally in the community, and the system adapts to them. That’s why for them mentoring work is unknown and we have to nurture it with special care. Socialization enables female students to get to know the community from another aspect, equality, valuing knowledge and involvement in action solving problems. In this partnership (according to Biesta’s philosophy) VSTIM sets itself tasks, which other institutions do not, with these categories of female students:

- Opening a safe and encouraging space for the education of these categories of female students, who were not able to provide themselves with a normal education.
- Creation of teaching that prioritizes the freedom, satisfaction, joy, creativity and motivation of disenfranchised and Roma women
- Creating the conditions for disenfranchised women that education (especially teaching) is the way to create their system of freedom of choice, resilience, sustainability and independence
- Making a joint strategy for overcoming problems and barriers in your environment, with VSTIM and disenfranchised women creating conditions for creating a new status in society and a new career
- The freedom to teach disenfranchised women is above the process of imposed responsibility, pressures and bureaucratic conditioning
- The specificity of VSTIM is open communication, both with the group and with each individual with the aim of empowering them to achieve their goals.

These became the dominant positions of VSTIM in implementing the work program with disenfranchised women, based on Biesta’s positions on the importance of socialization. That’s why this program becomes a kind of refuge for all these people

who fight against oppression in the educational environment, which always leads to educational, peer, gender, racial and other violence. VSTIM opens, through socialization, a space for the protection and understanding of categories that are unable to realistically devote themselves to all the challenges of neoliberal education. That is why, in its mission and vision, VSTIM resists the harshness of the higher education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and especially the actors in it. Possessing the domain of socialization leads us to correct the approach to certain types of politics (social, economic, political, etc.) which in BiH are oriented towards a more spontaneous, crude neoliberal policy, with a high dose of bureaucratization, without concrete procedures and solutions for strengthening human resources in the country. That is why we, as an institution also have certain problems with the environment, because by deviating from the principle of educational destruction that has engulfed the area of higher education, we are creating a kind of parallel approach to the neglected structures of society. Regardless of the fact that many things are present in the documents of institutions of higher education (gender equality), they are not really in practice in the public or private sector, nor are they valued by state and entity agencies and administrations.

Such formalism has completely prevented the implementation of any innovative paths that will put the student, with all his weaknesses and limitations, in the center of interest of the development and scientific components of this system.

What is subjectivization?

Subjectivization is a domain in this program that requires each candidate to be himself and special in meeting the world, that is, his environment. And this is done intensively from the beginning of admission to undergraduate studies. We emphasize this because the program consists of guiding candidates, not pressuring them to do what they should do. That's how we develop a sense of freedom with them through learning, and that freedom that we also encounter in our lives, when we have the opportunity to choose.

That's why we teach them that through the curriculum they master, they feel the possibility that they can build their lives differently from the environment in which they live. But also to develop their possibilities, about which they dreamed or thought (perhaps only at an earlier age). It is our path of subjectivization that Biesta says:

Freedom viewed in this way is fundamentally an existential matter; it's about how we exist, how we lead our own lives, which of course no one else can do for us. In other words, freedom is a matter of the first person. It's about how I exist as a subject of my own life, not as an object of what other people want from me.

Risking Ourselves in Education: Qualification, Socialization, and Subjectification Revisited,
Gert Biesta, First published: 16 June 2020

In the teaching process at VSTIM, we are faced with the realization of the idea that female students, through the possibility of choice and in a free education-

al space, become subjects of their own craft, and not an object dependent on the environment. Freedom is at the very heart of subjectivity and it is about “qualified freedom” that is integrally connected to our existence as a subject.

In this sense, we rely on the views of Hannah Arendt that there is a human ability to start, to take initiative, and this means that these initiatives become real, that they appear in their environment. This is the essence of this program for people who are unable to cope with such barriers on their own. But it shows the essence of the resistance of a large part of the community in which we live.

It should be emphasized that within the program of disenfranchised women, we act as a community that tries not to leave the individual in the wind of the environment and the power of the bureaucracy of higher education. That’s why we accepted to implement Biesta’s concept of subjectivization precisely for the category of women who are struggling to create their identity according to their abilities, and not according to their position in society.

The question of subjectivity, however, is not a question of who I am, but a question of how I am, that is, a question of how I exist, how I try to lead my life, how I try to respond and deal with what I encounter in life. Therefore, it involves the question of what I will “do” with my identity - and with all that I have learned, my capacities and competences, but also my blind spots, my inabilities and inabilities - in any situation, especially those situations in which I am called or, in other words, in which my “I” is invited.

Risking Ourselves in Education: Qualification, Socialization, and Subjectification Revisited,
Gert Biesta, First published: 16 June 2020

It should be emphasized right away that subjectivization as a domain, as Biesta points out, has nothing to do with personality and its development. He says that it is not a psychological, but an educational concept.

Subjectivity also does not refer to subjective or personal. In a sense, we could even say that subjectivity is the opposite of subjective or personal, because it is about our existence in and with the world, not about our own personal or subjective opinions, thoughts and beliefs. It also means that subjectivization does not refer to the expression of personal opinion or inner feelings, but as I have tried to outline above, to the way in which such opinions and feelings “encounter” the world. Education as subjectivization is therefore not a matter of asking students for their opinion or providing them with the opportunity to express themselves “without limitation”. This does not mean that subjectivization is about banning students from expressing themselves. Rather, it’s about making sure that what students express can “meet” the world so that a reality check, as I said, becomes possible. After all, while students can express wonderful things, they can also express very problematic ideas and beliefs, so simply “accepting” any expression because it comes from a student is not only uneducative, but can actually be problematic and even dangerous. 31

Risking Ourselves in Education: Qualification, Socialization, and Subjectification Revisited,
Gert Biesta, First published: 16 June 2020

In the education of disenfranchised women, subjectivization is very important because it allows our students to become subjects and initiators of solving their problems. Our turning to the question of subjectivization in the broadest sense does not represent a moral category, because here we are not asking that they struggle only to learn, but our understanding of the subjectivity of female students is a question of living freely through the acquisition of knowledge. For them, the question of freedom is crucial and it motivates them to achieve excellent results and transform their position, thus becoming part of a society of equals. That issue of freedom is based on the equality of all of us in the process of education. Therefore, we accepted Biesta's position that:

The encounter with responsibility is the "moment" when I encounter my freedom, and thus my unique existence as a subject — unique in the sense that it is up to me to determine what to do, which no one else can do for me.

Risking Ourselves in Education: Qualification, Socialization, and Subjectification Revisited,
Gert Biesta, First published: 16 June 2020

It was this third that drew us away from identification with classical emancipatory education. We have accepted critical pedagogy as a basis, but we are going much more towards what modern experts are researching, which is the freedom of teaching in modern times.

Biesta developed a model of existential education that is not based on the idea of education as cultivation. His concept of emancipatory education is based on this theory. According to Biesta, emancipation should not be understood as the goal of education in the sense that the transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the students paves the way that leads to the emancipation of the students. Instead, the emancipation of students can only be supported so that the equality of students and teachers is the starting point of education; The teacher must invite the students to self-activity, which can then lead to their subjectivation.

The German Logic of Emancipation and Biesta's Criticism of Emancipatory Pedagogy
Antti Moilanen, Rauno Huttunen, First published: 24 February 2022