

6th EDITION
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MENTAL HEALTH
CHALLENGES, AND THE FUTURE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

OCTOBER 10-11, 2024

PRISTINA

KOSOVO

ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS OF KOSOVO

The 6th Edition of the International Congress on Mental Health

October 10-11, 2024

*'Mental Health, Challenges, and the
Future'*



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The 6th Edition of the International Congress
on Mental Health

“Mental Health, Challenges, and the Future”

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Pristina, October 10-11, 2024



The 6th Edition of the International Congress on Mental Health

“Mental Health, Challenges, and the Future”

October 10-11, 2024



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Table of content

All the topics presented in this book are arranged alphabetically by the authors' last names. This method of organization has been chosen to facilitate navigation and help readers quickly find the information they need.

The impact of autism discourse in media on acceptance, approach, and treatment forms of autism / <i>Samanta ADEMAJ</i>	8
Inclusion of children with special needs in the educational process. / <i>Brulinda ABDYLI</i>	10
Transgenerational trauma and the relationship with family communication patterns. / <i>Arjeta AHMEDI SEFERI</i>	12
Landau-kleffner (acquired infantile aphasia). / <i>Mariola BANI</i>	16
Emi therapy & neurotherapy approach, a useful technique in trauma treatment./ <i>Edvaldo BEGOTARAJ, Elton KAZANXHI, Drilona ABAZAJ, Blerina LALAJ</i>	17
The effects of implementing various therapeutic programs on cognitive, social, and language development in children with autism. / <i>Zemrijet BELA VESELI</i>	18
Differences between meditation techniques, psychoeducation, and problem-solving conversations in the process of emotional relief during psychotherapy sessions in adults. / <i>Tetjana BILLOKUROVA, Miradije. STATOVCI</i>	20
Reflections of technology in supporting individuals affected by autism spectrum disorder (ASD). <i>Bardha GËRDOVCI</i>	23
The relationship between parenting styles, achievement motive and professional orientation in ninth grade students. / <i>Milihat FEJZULI</i>	25
Speech therapy in children with a cochlear implant./ <i>Igresa DUKA</i>	28
Development of teachers' intervention strategies in preventing substance abuse among adolescents / <i>Jonida HAXHIU</i>	30
The connection between body image and self-esteem in adolescents. / <i>Rrezarta HASMEGAJ</i>	32

Reflections on the psychological challenges faced by albanian language teachers in the diaspora: an analysis of stress factors and coping strategies. / *Blerita HOXHA*..... 34

The phenomenology of trauma in patients diagnosed with schizophrenia – inert psychiatric suffering. / *Daniela HYSENI* 35

Digital innovations in mental health improvement; challenges and opportunities. / *Adelina KAKIJA, Bujanë TOPALLI* 37

The level of perceived stress among teachers in using constructivist methods in the teaching process. / *Blerinë ÇIBUKÇIU, Albulenë SHAQIRI*..... 379

Gestalt language processing in children with autism spectrum disorder. / *Migena KIKA, A. BEDENI, L. KONOMI, M. GUSHO, K. KUKA, E. BASHALLI, G. KIKA*..... 41

Eating disorders in children with autism and nutritional reflections on this disorder. / *Migena KIKA, Greis KIKA* 43

The role of mental health in the workplace. / *Zana LIPOVECI KASTRATI*..... 45

The role of psychological and social factors in shaping family relationships: overview on albanian society. / *Ilva LAMAJ*..... 47

Milestones in the development of parent-child consultations (0-5 years old)./ *Xhezide LUMI*..... 49

Neuropsychological assessment in children: insights from a case study. / *Giovanni MASCIARELLI*..... 50

Psychosocial inclusion and complementarity between current challenges and perspectives of mental health. / *Musa MUSAI, Qufli OSMANI*..... 51

The connection between emotional intelligence, professional burnout, and work efficiency among high school teachers. / *Dorentina MURTURI*..... 53

The impact of art-therapy on the reduction of perceived stress and its benefits on the mental health of persons with disabilities. / *Erolina MORINA* 55

The influence of the dimensions of parenting styles on self-assessment of the individual. / *Elisja REXHO*..... 57

The correlation between social media addiction, self-esteem and body image, among young males aged 18-25. / <i>Jehona RUHANI</i>	59
The importance of psychotherapy in opioid agonist substitution therapy for heroin addicts: holistic partnership models in the treatment of these patients in Switzerland. / <i>Valbona MIFTARI</i>	61
Transformational leadership and openness: fostering innovation through personality. / <i>Anita SADIKAJ</i>	62
Mental health challenges in the digital age. / <i>Klarida RRAPAJ</i>	64
Self-harm in psychiatry. / <i>Arlind ZEQIRI</i>	65
Age differences in the level of growth, personal development, and self-acceptance among university students. / <i>Fatime ZIBERI, Kaltrina PAJAZITI REXHEPI</i>	67
Anxiety levels among students aged 20-40 before and after academic performance. / <i>Lira ZHARA</i>	70

THE IMPACT OF AUTISM DISCOURSE IN MEDIA ON ACCEPTANCE, APPROACH, AND TREATMENT FORMS OF AUTISM

MSc. Samanta ADEMAJ. Clinical Psychologist - Albania

Abstract

Introduction: Life today is largely influenced by media, as many of its aspects and phenomena are implemented through technology. As such, both the physical and mental health of individuals are affected by information disseminated through technological and media channels.

From clinical work and the analysis of interviews on autism-related topics, I have observed the significant impact that autism discourse in media has on the acceptance, approach, and treatment forms of autism today. This led me to undertake this study to provide a more concrete perspective on this issue.

The purpose: The aim of this study was to evaluate the connection between autism discourse in media and the acceptance, approaches, and treatment forms of autism.

Methodology: The study involved 102 participants who agreed to complete a questionnaire. Additionally, the study included a detailed analysis of autism discourse in media, focusing on two interviews with children with autism and several interviews with a parent of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The results: The study results indicated that media discourse forms have a significant impact on the acceptance of autism by

others, on how individuals perceive autism, and on the approaches they develop toward this disorder. It was also noted that media has a strong influence by intervening in the modification of therapeutic techniques used for autism treatment.

Conclusions: This study concluded that success stories about autism treatment are a valuable “instrument” worth promoting in media.

Keywords: *autism, discourse, media.*

INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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Abstract

Purpose: The inclusiveness of children with different abilities in the educational system can be considered as the most favorable tool with a positive impact on their socio-emotional development. The school as the comprehensive primary institution is the most suitable environment to further develop the process of socialization in children.

An inclusive and effective school has the goal and obligation to educate and support children with special needs and further promote their development process. The purpose of inclusiveness is not to erase or ignore the differences between individuals. Inclusiveness aims to create for all students the opportunity to belong to a school community and to be educated within a framework in which the differences between individuals are known but above all accepted. .

In Albania, attention has recently been increased regarding the integration of these children in the public education system, but there are still many problems with the integration of programs, adaptation of the curriculum and specialization of the psycho-pedagogical staff.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the importance of inclusiveness of children with special needs in the public education system and to analyze the challenges of integration.

Methodology: This study is based on qualitative methodological approach and documentation analysis.

The results of the study showed that the difficulties in inclusive education consist of teachers' attitudes and rigid teaching methods, inappropriate curricula, lack of didactic equipment, supportive teachers, and non-involvement of parents in the process.

Conclusions: A good coordination of the efforts of all actors involved in the process is needed to implement all the aspects foreseen in the policy regarding inclusive education.

Key terms: *inclusive policies, special needs, awareness, integration.*

TRANSGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

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Abstract

Introduction: Transgenerational trauma refers to the transmission of distressing experiences and their consequences from one generation to another. This transmission can be done through many factors such as genetic, social, and psychological mechanisms. Intergenerational trauma represents a new field of research in psychology and psychiatry. Trauma is not confined to an individual but extends invisibly across generations and manifests itself gradually and implicitly in descendants' lives. The emotional legacy transmitted by parents to the next generation, as a result of the difficulties experienced by them and their ancestors, in addition to affecting the emotional health of future generations, also affects their reactions to life's challenges. Intergenerational trauma is deeply rooted and transmitted between generations, it is characteristic that it is not manifested in those who directly experienced the initial trauma, but is updated in their descendants. A mechanism that affects the transmission of trauma is the way of communication in the family by choosing the model of open communication about the experienced traumatic events or by choosing silence as a model of communication within the family.

The purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the interaction between intergenerational trauma and family communication patterns. The study aims to identify how traumatic experiences experienced by one generation affect the dynamics of communication within the family and the transmission of these experiences to the next generation.

Methodology: Literature review, including evidence-based databases related to the study of variables such as intergenerational trauma and family communication. Understanding the various theories describing intergenerational trauma must involve exploring the complex connections between historical events, cultural norms, and psychological processes. These important factors can influence the identities, behaviors, and relationships that individuals build over time. Intergenerational trauma is the inheritance and transmission of emotional, physical, mental, spiritual, and social distress from one generation to another within a family or community. If not properly recognized and addressed, this trauma has the potential to accumulate and persist across multiple generations, affecting individuals within those family or community contexts.

Results

- Understanding the Mechanisms of Trauma Transmission
- The Role of Open Communication and Silence
- Impact on Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being
- Creation of intervention plans, the possibility of intervention, and interruption of the cycle of trauma

It will be possible to identify the mechanisms by which the cycle of trauma repeats itself across generations based on the latest studies in this field, in order to intervene and break the transgenerational cycle. It is the generation that carries the scar without the scars, preserving a memory without direct experience, which means that the second generation is influenced by the experiences of their parents trying to understand and build a relationship.

The impact of traumatic parental experiences on family communication patterns and dynamics provides important insight into the complex ways in which trauma can shape family relationships. A deeper analysis of the interplay between intergenerational trauma and family communication sheds light on the long-term effects of traumatic experiences on parenting dynamics, affective attachment, and emotional intimacy in family relationships.

Conclusion: These findings suggest that intergenerational communication may vary depending on the specific context and experiences of parents. A study by Major (1996, cited in Abu, A. Hija, 2018) also found significantly less discussion of the Holocaust in survivor families, which correlated with perceptions of decreased family harmony, increased maternal introversion, and increased pessimism to the fathers. According to a study by Wiseman et al. (2006) in families with Holocaust survivors, parents lack open discussion of traumatic experiences. These families/Holocaust survivors exhibit different patterns of intergenerational communication compared to those families/parents with experience of internment in camps or

involvement in active resistance during World War II (Kav-Venaki, Nadler, & Gershoni, 1983). Different communication patterns are also encountered in the families of former partisans, where their children had more direct communication about experiences and questions related to knowing their parents' life stories, compared to the children of former prisoners in the camps.

Keywords: *transgenerational trauma, family communication, parents, children*

LANDAU-KLEFFNER (ACQUIRED INFANTILE APHASIA)

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Abstract

Introduction: Landau-Kleffner syndrome, acquired epileptic aphasia or aphasia with convulsive disorders (1) is a rare syndrome characterized by an immediate or gradual development of aphasia and an abnormal EEG. It affects parts of the brain which respectively control receptive language and expressive (2), in the area of Broca and Wernicke.

Purpose: Differentiation with: speech disorders, Autism spectrum disorder, auditory/verbal processing disorder, Mental retardation, or Emotional/behavioral problems. .

Method: Presentation of a clinical case; a 5-year-old child with speech problems.

Conclusion: Changes in the EEG mainly during sleep, without clinical symptoms accompanied by epileptic seizures during the day, as well as difficulty in receptive and expressive language fulfill the criteria for Landau-Kleffner syndrome.

Recommendations: It is important to take an accurate history when a child with aphasia presents. If the child suffers from such a syndrome, it is very important to start treatment with anticonvulsants and speech therapy.

Key words: *Landau-Kleffner; Acquired aphasia, regression of spoken language.*

EMI THERAPY & NEUROTHERAPY APPROACH, A USEFUL TECHNIQUE IN TRAUMA TREATMENT

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MSc. Drilona ABAZAJ. Clinical Psychologist – Albania

Sp. Blerina LALAJ. Psychotherapist - Israel

Abstract

Introduction: Eye Movement Integration (EMI) therapy, a relatively new approach, is gaining recognition for its effectiveness in treating trauma and traumatic events. Numerous studies highlight EMI's efficacy, emphasizing its roots in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).

Aim: This study aims to investigate EMI's practical clinical applications. Developed by Steve Andreas in the 1980s and promoted by Daniel Beaulieu, EMI uses eye movements to facilitate the integration of traumatic memories, differing from EMDR by focusing on integration rather than desensitization.

Methodology: EMI (Eye Movement Integration) includes elements of body psychotherapy, NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming), Gestalt therapy, hypnosis, and energy therapies, offering a comprehensive approach to trauma treatment.

Results: By reprocessing traumatic memories through guided eye movements, EMI promotes emotional and cognitive integration, significantly reducing trauma symptoms.

Conclusions: This study explores EMI's application, particularly its benefits in treating trauma in various populations, including older adults and children.

Keywords: eye movement integration, NLP, desensitization, trauma therapy, therapeutic integration

THE EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMS ON COGNITIVE, SOCIAL, AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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Abstract

Introduction: This research paper focuses on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), commonly known as autism. Autism is a complex disorder that affects multiple areas of development, including three key domains: social interaction, verbal communication (language development), cognitive, social, and behavioral aspects. This neurobiological disorder, whose origin is still unknown, can affect children from birth or may manifest later. Children may either be born with it or develop it over time, thus being distinguished from others by various emotional and social aspects, while physical differences are minimal. This scientific paper explains the practical approach to treatment, the types of therapies, and the individualized approach to specific cases within the autism spectrum.

Research Objective: The primary objective of this research is to determine how different therapeutic programs, such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), developmental therapy, or combined therapeutic programs, impact the treatment of children with autism spectrum disorder.

Methodology: Nine children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) participated in this research, diagnosed at the Mental Health Center in Skopje, with the diagnosis code F84.0. The children were divided into three groups of three, and each group was treated with different therapeutic programs. The first group was treated using ABA therapy programs, the second group using developmental therapy programs, and the third group was treated with a combination of both therapies.

Results: This research confirms the primary hypothesis that the implementation of various therapeutic programs positively influences the cognitive, social, behavioral, and language development of children with autism spectrum disorder.

Conclusions: Early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder using combined therapies, such as ABA and developmental therapy, results in the greatest improvements in both behavioral skills and cognitive, social, emotional, and language development.

Keywords: *autism spectrum disorder, aba (applied behavior analysis), developmental therapy.*

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEDITATION TECHNIQUES, PSYCHOEDUCATION, AND PROBLEM-SOLVING CONVERSATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF EMOTIONAL RELIEF DURING PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSIONS IN ADULTS

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North Macedonia.*

MSc. Miradije STATOVCI. Clinical Psychologist – Kosovo.

Abstract

Introduction: We function best when we feel safe and surrounded by support and kindness. The scientific theory that underlies this paper about meditation shows the impact of meditation as a component of therapy. Recent research shows that mental training aimed at working with self-compassion is associated with functional and structural changes in neural networks related to positive emotions and emotional regulation.

The purpose: This paper aims to clarify the effect of meditation in the process of psychotherapy and its impact on emotional relief, compared to the techniques of psychoeducation and discussion about the problem. The main problem that this paper addresses is: Is there a difference between the intervention technique of meditation, the psychoeducation and discussion about the problem in emotional relief during the process of psychotherapy in adults?

This question addresses an important issue in the field of psychotherapy, analyzing which of these approaches may have a greater impact on the emotional well-being of individuals facing emotional and psychological challenges.

The main purpose of this study is to prove the impact of meditation practice on the emotional relief of clients with various psychological concerns.

Methodology: This study was conducted in Tetovo, North Macedonia, among the clients presented at the "Galaxy" Psychological Service Center. Participants included in this study are intentional, and they are clients over 18 years old. For the variable analysis and the main hypothesis, we used the measuring scale of Subjective Units of Distress (SUD), with a scale from 0-10, applying this before and after using the technique.

The study consists 3 groups of clients with different psychological concerns. Groups are intentionally assigned, according to the scale of Subjective Units of Distress (SUD). In the first group, where SUD scale was 7, we applied the practice of meditation as an intervention before entering the psychotherapeutic process.

In the second group, where SUD scale was 7-6, we applied the technique of psychoeducation before starting psychotherapy. And in the third group, where SUD scale was below 6, we allowed clients to talk freely about their problem before starting with the psychotherapeutic process.

We applied all the techniques for 10-20 minutes at the beginning of the session.

The results: The results of this study will be important in the treatment of clients for practicing psychologists as well as the use of interventional techniques in the psychotherapy processes.

Conclusions: Based on this research, we can conclude that clients who used the meditation technique as an intervention in psychotherapy experienced greater emotional relief than those who used psychoeducation techniques or discussion about the problem. Meditation has shown a markedly positive effect on stress reduction and emotional relaxation.

Also, based on the results of this research, we can conclude that the technique of discussing about the problem, contrary to our initial expectations, has shown a significant increase in the level of subjective distress.

This indicates that for some clients, continued discussion of problems may intensify emotional distress rather than alleviate it.

Key words: *meditation, psychoeducation, psychotherapy, emotional relieve, adults*

REFLECTIONS OF TECHNOLOGY IN SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

MSc. Bardha GËRDOVCI. Media Psychology - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: The intersection of technology and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) presents promising opportunities for enhancing the educational and social experiences of individuals with ASD. People with ASD often find technology appealing due to its predictable, controlled, and non-judgmental nature, making it an effective tool for learning and communication.

The purpose: This paper reviews the current state of research on the use of technology in teaching and supporting individuals with ASD, highlighting the potential benefits and challenges associated with various technological interventions.

Methodology: A systematic literature review of 94 studies reveals that technology-based interventions, such as mobile applications, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence, significantly contribute to the development of key skills, including communication, social interaction, and cognitive abilities. Assistive technologies, such as speech-generating devices and virtual agents, provide personalized support that caters to the unique needs of individuals with ASD, promoting independence and enhancing quality of life.

The results: Additionally, game-based learning has been shown to engage users effectively, making learning enjoyable while addressing specific educational goals.

However, the success of these interventions largely depends on considerations of user experience, usability, and accessibility. It is crucial that these technologies are designed with the needs of the ASD population in mind, ensuring that interfaces are user-friendly and accessible to individuals with varying levels of ability. Moreover, the integration of game elements and adaptive learning technologies helps create immersive and motivating learning environments that can sustain engagement over time.

Conclusions: While technological advancements hold great promise, there are also challenges to address, including ensuring equitable access, managing costs, and tailoring interventions to meet diverse individual needs. Future research should focus on long-term outcomes, scalability, and the effectiveness of these technologies across different age groups and settings. Overall, the ongoing development and evaluation of technology for individuals with ASD point to a future where technology can play a pivotal role in supporting the learning and social integration of those on the autism spectrum.

Key Words: *user experience, accessibility, autism spectrum disorder (asd), game-based learning,*

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES, ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVE AND PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION IN NINTH GRADE STUDENTS.

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Abstract

Introduction: Adolescent development is complex, involving the interaction of biological, cognitive, and social developmental processes. Parenting styles, career orientation, and achievement motivation are some of the most important aspects of a teenager's life. The adequate interweaving of these three spheres provides a strong foundation for the formation of an individual with a stable and affirmed personality

The purpose: The main purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between the perception of parenting styles, achievement motivation, and the professional orientations of teenagers (14–15 years old) in the primary schools of the municipality of Gostivar, including both the city and its surroundings.

Methodology: To meet the research objectives, the following instruments were applied:

- Parenting Style Questionnaire
- Achievement Motivation Questionnaire – measures the level of achievement motivation
- Holland's Vocational Orientation Scale .

This research included 106 ninth-grade students (N=106) from elementary schools in the municipality of Gostivar. The sample mainly consists of ninth-grade students, aged 14-15 years. Of them, 45 are male (N=45), while 61 are female (N=61).

Results: The results indicate that students who perceive an authoritative parenting style are more likely to choose an investigative professional orientation ($r=0.421$; $p<0.01$). A statistically significant correlation was also found between the motive for achievement and investigative professional orientation ($r=0.243$; $p<0.05$). Students with a high level of achievement motivation demonstrate strong research abilities, persistence in achieving goals, and motivation for further development. No significant gender differences were found in the evaluation of achievement motivation, but high achievers tend to prefer activities involving social interaction, emphasizing their communication skills.

Conclusion: The authoritative/democratic parenting style effectively balances expectations with warmth and respect for children's independence, which leads to an increased sense of security and happiness, helping them achieve their goals (Maccoby, 1992). This research supports that authoritative parenting positively correlates with investigative professional orientation ($r=0.421$; $p<0.01$). This suggests that children raised with this parenting style feel freer to act, explore their surroundings, and develop their abilities.

Additionally, the research highlights the importance of

achievement motivation in students' success. The results show a statistically significant relationship between achievement motivation and investigative professional orientation ($r=0.243$; $p<0.05$). Students with higher achievement motivation demonstrate research abilities, persistence in reaching goals, and motivation for personal development. A positive correlation was also found between achievement motivation and social professional orientation ($r=0.233$; $p<0.05$), suggesting that motivated students are more engaged in teamwork and social activities. Gender differences indicate that female students perceive achievement motivation more strongly than males ($t=5.16$; $df=103$; $p<0.01$).

Keywords: *parenting styles, achievement motivation, professional orientation, adolescence*

SPEECH THERAPY IN CHILDREN WITH A COCHLEAR IMPLANT

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Abstract

Introduction: Cochlear implantation is a safe treatment for children with severe to profound hearing loss. Cochlear implants (CIs) restore inner ear functions and increase acoustic awareness in pre- and post-linguistically deaf children. However, not all individuals with hearing loss and deafness benefit equally from the implantation, as various factors can directly influence language performance after implantation..

Objective: The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance of speech-language pathology (SLP) and various types of speech therapies and how they directly affect language performance after implantation. The main goal of SLP is to facilitate the recovery of language and speech skills, which align with the recovery of auditory skills.

Methodology: This study is based on an examination of various literature and studies regarding the efficiency and impact of speech therapy on individuals with cochlear implants (CI).

Results: The results indicate that a multisensory speech rehabilitation approach can improve speech perception performance in deaf children. The findings confirm that a cochlear implant alone is insufficient for a child to develop adequate speech perception skills.).

Conclusion: The primary benefit of a CI is the artificial stimulation of the auditory system, which promotes acoustic feedback and supports the development of spoken language. Language development after cochlear implantation requires therapy that emphasizes listening and oral communication.

Keywords: *acoustic feedback, pre- and post-linguistic, deaf, cochlear implant, implantation.*

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS' INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN PREVENTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

PhD. Jonida HAXHIU. Psychologist - Public Health Tirana - Albania

Abstract

Introduction: Adolescence is considered a high-risk age for the initiation of drug use, particularly due to the influence of peer communities, where it becomes a model for others. On the other hand, the use and abuse of substances are accompanied by a series of negative consequences on physical development and current health. Drug addiction and abuse, especially during adolescence, represent a challenge for public health and mental health experts.

Objective: To address this, several training sessions were organized with high school teachers in various cities. This intervention is considered effective due to the amount of time adolescents spend in school environments, where contact with teachers takes on special importance. Through this training, teachers received information about various psychotropic substances, their effects, and the development of addiction or substance abuse.

Methodology: Each training session was structured in such a way as to combine the latest scientific information with practical tasks, group work, etc. This approach aims not only to provide information but also to ensure its assimilation in a way that is practical and applicable.

Results: According to experts, the prevention of drug use and abuse in adolescence has a significant impact on promoting a healthy lifestyle in teenagers and encouraging achievement-oriented behavior. These training sessions were designed and

organized to help teachers identify situations related to problematic substance use among students, enabling timely and more effective interventions for students struggling with drug addiction or engaging in risky behavior.

Conclusions: Students with such problems can be referred to school services, such as psychologists or social workers, or even to more specialized services for the effective treatment of addiction or substance abuse.

Keywords: *prevention, adolescence, addiction, abuse, substances*

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM IN ADOLESCENTS

MSc. Rrezarta HASMEGAJ. Clinical Psychologist, Development, and Relationships - Albania

Abstract

Entry: Thanks to the rapid development and reconstruction of the organism, interest in personal appearance, mainly in a beautiful body, grows quickly during adolescence. Due to hypertrophied self-importance, adolescents deeply experience all physical defects, whether real or imagined. Disproportion of body parts and clumsiness of movements cause confusion, feelings of worthlessness, self-isolation, and distrust, leading to low self-esteem.

Purpose: This study aims to explore the relationship between body self-image and self-esteem in adolescents.

Methodology: This study is supported in two directions: a theoretical direction (literature review) and a practical direction (questionnaire and focus group).

A random sample of 100 individuals was selected in the city of Shkodra, who completed two questionnaires-one measuring body self-image and the other measuring self-esteem. Additionally, 10 participants took part in a focus group.

Results: Of the 100 students in the study, 55% indicated a positive body self-image, while 45% indicated a negative body self-image. Among those reporting a positive body self-image,

18% exhibited high self-esteem, 64% exhibited normal self-esteem, and 18% exhibited low self-esteem. Conversely, among the 45 students with a negative body self-image, 0% exhibited high self-esteem, 33% exhibited normal self-esteem, and 67% exhibited low self-esteem. Overall, 10% of participants indicated high self-esteem, 50% indicated normal self-esteem, and 40% indicated low self-esteem.

Conclusion: The results showed a positive correlation between body self-image and self-esteem in adolescents, indicating that a positive body self-image contributes to healthy self-esteem, whereas a negative body self-image correlates with negative self-esteem.

Keywords: *body self-image, self-esteem, adolescents.*

REFLECTIONS ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES FACED BY ALBANIAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN THE DIASPORA: AN ANALYSIS OF STRESS FACTORS AND COPING STRATEGIES

MSc. Blerta HOXHA - Italy

Abstract

Introduction and Aim: This paper addresses the stress experienced by Albanian language teachers in the diaspora, examining the challenges they face while teaching outside the borders of Albania and Kosovo. Albanian language teachers in the diaspora encounter a range of stress factors, including cultural assimilation, the lack of continuous institutional support, and the need to adapt teaching methods to a different educational context.

Methodology and Results: Based on an empirical study conducted in several Albanian language learning centers, the key stress factors have been analyzed, and strategies have been proposed to improve working conditions.

Conclusion: The study highlights the need for the development of supportive programs for teachers, as well as the creation of a better infrastructure to reduce stress levels and improve their job performance.

Keywords: *stress, cultural assimilation, mental health, performance.*

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF TRAUMA IN PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA – INERT PSYCHIATRIC SUFFERING

MSc. Daniela HYSENI. Clinical Psychologist - University Hospital Center "Mother Teresa" - Tirana - Albania

Abstract

Introduction: Patients hospitalized in psychiatric hospitals, specifically those with schizophrenia, live in their own world within ours. The population diagnosed with schizophrenia often remains understudied, leaving significant life events unevaluated—events that, if studied, could help these patients improve their quality of life.

Objective: The aim of this study is to provide a phenomenological description of how patients diagnosed with schizophrenia manifest their traumas in daily life.

Methodology: To conduct this study, a qualitative phenomenological methodology was applied. The sample, consisting of 10 patients, was selected from two chronic service wards at "Ali Mihali" Psychiatric Hospital. Data collection was carried out using the triangulation method. Findings were based on the examination of clinical records, administration of the International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ), and two semi-structured interviews conducted with both the patients and the multidisciplinary staff providing services at the psychiatric hospital.

Results: The study results show that patients exhibit emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical reactions through which they express their trauma. Emotional responses manifest through fear, guilt, or denial. Cognitive reactions include symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, dissociation, and flashbacks. Behavioral responses are characterized by impulsivity, self-

harming behaviors, and food-related issues. Physical reactions were expressed through sleep disturbances.

Conclusion: Patients with schizophrenia present a variety of overlapping and complex reactions, which influence one another. A range of symptoms are evident that interact with each other, linked by factors such as traumatic events and schizophrenia. Some schizophrenia symptoms find their expression through different life events, manifesting with influences drawn from the patients' histories and various real or unreal threats.

Keywords: *trauma, schizophrenia, patient*

DIGITAL INNOVATIONS IN MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT; CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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“Luigj Gurakuqi” – Shkodër – Albania

PhD. Bujanë TOPALLI. *Social Worker - University of Shkodra*

“Luigj Gurakuqi” – Shkodër - Albania

Abstract

Introduction: Introduction: In recent decades, technological advancements have significantly transformed the way mental health care is delivered and managed, bringing new opportunities for effective and personalized interventions.

Aim: This study aims to explore the role of digital innovations in improving mental health, analyzing their benefits, challenges, and potential to enhance access and quality of mental health care. In an increasingly digitalized world, the use of technologies for mental health offers new opportunities but also presents challenges that need to be addressed.

Objectives:

1. To identify the key technologies used in mental health (applications, teletherapy, and artificial intelligence).
2. To analyze the main challenges these technologies face, such as privacy, access, and the effectiveness of treatments.
3. To examine the opportunities these technologies offer for improving access and personalization of mental health care.

Methodology: This paper includes a review of the existing literature on digital innovations in the field of mental health. Previous studies on the effectiveness of apps and teletherapy platforms are analyzed, evaluating their benefits and challenges. Additionally, best practices and interventions involving the use of

advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and chatbots for therapy, are reviewed.

Results: The review shows that digital innovations can significantly improve access to mental health care, particularly for individuals facing geographic and economic barriers. However, privacy and data protection challenges are prevalent and require stronger regulations. Moreover, the personalization of therapies through artificial intelligence offers potential for further improvement of treatments, but more in-depth studies are needed to fully assess the effectiveness of these interventions.

Conclusion: Digital innovations have the potential to transform the field of mental health, but their implementation requires a careful approach that takes into account current challenges and barriers. To maximize benefits, it is necessary to improve access to services, data privacy, and the interaction between technology and mental health professionals.

Keywords: *digital innovations, mental health, teletherapy, artificial intelligence, privacy, treatment, personalization*

THE LEVEL OF PERCEIVED STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN USING CONSTRUCTIVIST METHODS IN THE TEACHING PROCESS

PhD.Cand. Blerinë ÇIBUKÇIU. Psychologist – Kosovo

MSc. Albulenë SHAQIRI. Psychologist - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: While constructivist methods encourage a more active and engaged approach from students, they often require significant adaptation from educators, who may feel overwhelmed by the demands of creating learning environments that involve the use of technology, organizing complex activities, and managing more autonomous classrooms.

Aim: The aim of this research study is to examine the level of stress experienced by educators when using constructivist methods in primary school during the teaching and learning process.

Methodology: This paper is based on an empirical study with a mixed-methods approach, both qualitative and quantitative, including semi-structured interviews with 10 primary school teachers and a large-scale survey of 100 primary school teachers. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was translated and adapted to measure their stress levels in relation to the use of constructivist methods. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using the SPSS statistical package, version 27, while qualitative data analysis was performed through thematic analysis.

Results: The results indicate that, although teachers acknowledge the educational value of constructivist methods, they are often associated with moderate levels of stress, particularly for older teachers and those working in rural schools. This is mainly due to challenges in classroom management and preparation of various

activities. Issues such as difficulties in maintaining order, the need to actively monitor student progress, and a lack of resources have been significant sources of stress.

Conclusions: This paper recommends that educational policy should focus on further training and ongoing support for teachers to reduce stress, maintain their well-being, improve the effectiveness of using constructivist methods in the classroom, and enhance school infrastructure.

Keywords: *stress level, teacher, constructivist methods, teaching process*

GESTALT LANGUAGE PROCESSING IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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A. Bedeni, L. Konomi, M. Gusho, K. Kuka, E. Bashalli, Greis Kika. *Kids Health Clinic – Tirana - Albania.*

Abstract

Introduction: Gestalt language processing is the most common form of language development in children with ASD. Evidences report that 75-90% of children with autism develop speech in this way. This type of language development may also be seen in neurotypical children however they pass through Gestalt Language Processing phases quickly while developing in a typical way the expressive language.

Aim: To assess how many verbal children with autism develop expressive language in this type of language processing.

Methods: In total 30 children with ASD were enrolled aged from 4 to 10 years old. All children were verbal. All children were assessed not only for the type of language processing but also for the Gestalt stage they are in if so. Typical language tests can not evaluate children who use the Gestalt Language Processing. Due to this, "language samples" were used for language evaluation based on the Natural Language Acquisition framework.

Results: 28 out of 30 children with ASD process language in the Gestalt Language Processing. All Gestalt Language Processing children were in the first and second stage of Gestalt Language Processing meaning they show late echolalia with single words, scripting, partially mixed Gestalts and breaking bigger blocks of language in smaller chunks by mixing.

Conclusions: A large part of children with ASD process language using Gestalt. In the majority of cases, they belong to first and second stage of Gestalt resulting in difficulties in communication and intangibility of language.

Intervention in these cases should concentrate in language elaboration and the passing in subsequent Gestalt stages through Natural Language Acquisition thus elevating the quality of communication.

Keywords: *autism, therapy, language, gestalt language processing, natural language acquisition*

EATING DISORDERS IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND NUTRITIONAL REFLECTIONS ON THIS DISORDER

Prof. Dr. Migena KIKA. *Neuropediatrician – University of Medicine – Faculty of Medicine; Faculty of Medical Technical Sciences; Catholic University "Mother of Good Counsel" – Tirana – Albania.*

Greis KIKA. *Kids Health Clinic – Tirana - Albania*

Abstract

Introduction: Autism Spectrum Disorders are a group of neurodevelopmental disorders in which the child manifests deficits in communication and social interaction as well as limited interests and repetitive behaviour. Theoretically, there is no difference in nutritional needs in an autistic child compared to ones with neurotypical development. However, children with autism often have eating disorders.

Aim: The aim of the study is to assess eating disorders such as ARFID and Selective Eating Disorder in autistic children versus children with a neurotypical development as well as the effects these eating disorders may have in the nutrition of children with autism.

Methods: 36 children were enrolled in the study divided in 2 groups. 18 (n=18) children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder aged from 4 to 8 years old and 18 (n=18) children are part of the control group without any health problems or comorbidities. Compliance between the two groups has been done in accordance to socioeconomic factors, age and residence. The children's parents completed the Behaviour Pediatrics Feeding Assessment Scale, Eating Behaviour Questionnaire and Sensory Experiences Questionnaire.

Results: 2 children (boys) in the ASD group (11%) met the criteria for ARFID compared to 0 (0%) in the control group. 11

children with autism (7 boys/4 girls) resulted in having problems of Selective Eating Disorder/PE (61%) in compared to 9 children (6 boys/3 girls) in the control group. None from the children in both groups were treated with behavioural therapy or followed by a nutritionist for the nutritional disorders.

Conclusions: ARFID and Selective Eating Disorder/PE are more frequent in children with autism in comparison to neurotypical ones due to the sensorial disorders they present. This results in a part of autistic children not getting the essential food nutrients (less than 20 types of food) and these nutritional disorders may affect growth and development. Part of the multidisciplinary group of treating autistic children should also be a nutritionist for adding in the child's diet the nutrition elements they need.

Key words: *nutrition, autism, arfid, children, selective eating disorder/pe*

THE ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

MSc. Zana LIPOVECI KASTRATI. Psychologist - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: Mental health includes emotional, psychological and social well-being, affecting cognition, perception and behavior. It also determines how an individual copes with stress, interpersonal relationships, and decision making. Mental health at work is taking on even more importance for the company culture in the wake of the Covid -19 pandemic. Among employed adults, anxiety, depression and other disorders are the most common mental health problems. Mental health risks, also called psychosocial risks, may be related to work content or work schedule, specific characteristics of the workplace, or career development opportunities among others. Over the past few years, our working environments have changed in ways that would have been hard to imagine a generation ago. New communication technologies and expanded internet access enable us to work outside of the workplace at almost any time of day or night. Increasing competition from around the world has led to increased pressure for cost efficiency and increased productivity. Many factors affect the mental health of employees. Organizational issues include poor communication practices among staff, limited participation in decision-making, ineffable working hours with advanced technology and lack of team cohesion. Productivity losses due to mental health problems have been quarantined in several studies. Research shows there are more workers missing work because of stress and anxiety than because of physical illness or injury.

Purpose: The purpose of this review is to identify factors that inhibit or promote employee mental health and well-being at the three interconnected macro-meso- and micro-level levels, and to identify employee mental health consequences. The research will support the link between mental health disorders and decreased

productivity and work efficiency, causing more shortages, not job presence and impel emotional states with consequences for work and family!

Methodology: The methodology used for research will be comparative, metaanalysis, descriptive methods, in primary and secondary data. Survey methods (around 1000 employees) will be used and results will be processed in SPSS. There will also be metaanalysis of the world's research and the World Health Organization related to this topic!

Expected results: This research and the findings that come from it aim to provide the basic knowledge of determining the impact of different factors on mental health in the workplace that follow the decrease of productivity, job loss and insatiable emotional state in general. (variable 1000 participants)

Conclusions: Finally, it will be proven to draw conclusions arising from the reviews of the paper and research that will show and be complementary and guiding recommendations on this topic. Reduced emotional well-being among staff can contribute to increased mental health and stress concerns. It is therefore vital that staff understand the factors that affect mental health. This will facilitate the recognition and the chance of proper intervention of mental health care in the workplace and in a fair manner of their staff. Understanding and supporting mental health in the workplace helps create an inclusive, happy, healthy and motivated work environment that benefits both parties.

Keywords: *mental health, productivity, mental health services in the workplace, emotions, work-related stress management interventions, anxiety*

THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS IN SHAPING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: OVERVIEW ON ALBANIAN SOCIETY.

PhD. Ilva LAMAJ. Psychologist - University "Ismail Qemali" Vlorë - Albania

Abstract

Introduction: Family relationships are shaped by a complex interaction of psychological and social factors, which influence communication, emotional bonds, and overall family stability.

The purpose: This paper examines how individual mental health, emotional regulation, and attachment styles contribute to the quality of relationships within families. Psychological issues, such as depression, anxiety, and unresolved trauma, can negatively impact family interactions, leading to withdrawal, misunderstandings, and conflict (Gottman & Notarius, 2000). Attachment theory further underscores how early relationships with caregivers influence emotional patterns that persist throughout life, affecting how family members relate to one another (Ainsworth, 1989). Social factors, including economic stress, societal expectations, and the presence or absence of external support systems, also play a critical role in family dynamics. Financial instability, for example, can heighten tensions within a household, exacerbating conflict and diminishing emotional closeness (Karney & Bradbury, 2005). Cultural norms often place pressure on family members to conform to specific roles and behaviors, which can create friction when personal goals or values diverge from these expectations (Hofstede, 2001). Social support from extended family or community resources is essential in mitigating the negative effects of stress, fostering resilience and emotional well-being in family systems (Berkman & Glass, 2000).

Conclusions: This paper highlights the importance of understanding both psychological and social influences on family relationships to develop effective interventions. Mental health professionals, educators, and policymakers can use these insights to create supportive environments that promote healthier family dynamics and improve individual well-being.

Keywords: *family relationships, mental health, attachment theory, economic stress, communication, social support, psychological factors.*

MILESTONES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT-CHILD CONSULTATIONS (0-5 YEARS OLD)

*Dr. Xhezide LUMI. Child, Adolescent, and Family Psychiatrist
and Psychotherapist - Switzerland*

Abstract

- Triangulation and triadic communication
- Psychiatric-gynecological consultations and guidance on peripartum depression
- International Diagnostic Classification DC:0-5
- Pyramid model: case concept
- Parent-child interaction

Objective: To observe parent-child interactions, support, and improve mother-child interactions, encourage paternal involvement in cases where the mother is experiencing depression, and ensure early intervention for parental psychopathology. The aim is to increase the likelihood of the child growing up in a healthy social and emotional environment.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT IN CHILDREN: INSIGHTS FROM A CASE STUDY.

PhD. Giovanni MASCIARELLI. Neuropsychologist - Italy

Abstract

Neuropsychological assessment in children is a complex problem solving and it is certainly not a simple sum of results obtained from a list of tests. Historically, there have been different approaches to assessing of patients from a neuropsychological point of view: from the use of a fixed battery of tests, to the use of a process-oriented approach. In addition, in the clinical practice, neuropsychological assessment should guide treatment, taking into account the patient's needs and adaptive functioning.

Keyword: *child neuropsychological assessment, language pragmatics, conversational analysis, social cognition, cognitive rehabilitation, communication development.*

PSYCHOSOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN CURRENT CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES OF MENTAL HEALTH

Prof. Dr. Musa MUSAI. UT, Tetovo - Psychologist - North Macedonia

Prof. Dr. Qufli OSMANI. UBT, Pristina - Psychologist - North Macedonia

Abstract

Has the last word been said by experts and the academic world regarding mental health?

Problem: The world of mental health workers, whether they are professional or academic, the applicants (practitioners, implementers) over the years are weaving knowledge about mental health and the best practices of this field, taking into account the actuality of the phenomenon in the framework of social life. Due to the fact that scientific knowledge and combined practices in terms of treatments related to mental health lay the need for the development of competences, the integration of knowledge and practice of all those who have decided to deal with the issue that is both sensitive and challenging for the phenomena in words.

Methodology: The study of literature related to mental health issues offers a whole range of knowledge and findings that the last word has not yet been said regarding the issue in question. Therefore, starting from this fact, the paper in question aims to provide an objective approach to the current state of mental health through literature analysis and positive practices, as well as to channel the perspective towards its establishment. Divergences in the knowledge system regarding mental health, evaluation criteria, variety of practices implemented so far, non-unified institutional approach, etc. the mental health worker is placed at a crossroads with confusing perspectives.

Conclusion: The recommendations from this paper go in favor of providing an ideographic and pragmatic approach which as such offers an integrative perspective and lays down the need for the unification and institutional strengthening of the two actors involved in the field of action against mental health: the academic one and practice as well as undertaking concrete and coherent steps in a short-term perspective.

Key words: *mental health, psychosocial inclusion, positive practices, institutional unification of mental health practices*

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT, AND WORK EFFICIENCY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

PhD. Cand. Dorentina MURTURI. Clinical Psychologist - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: Teachers' emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in professional well-being and classroom effectiveness.

Main aim: This study aims to investigate the relationship between EI on teacher burnout and teaching effectiveness, using a mixed-methods approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between these variables.

Methodology: In this cross-sectional study, it is used the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to measure EI, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to assess burnout, and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) to evaluate teaching effectiveness in 202 teachers from elementary and secondary schools of Kosovo, selected randomly.

Results: Quantitative analyses revealed a significant negative correlation between EI and burnout dimensions—emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Higher levels of EI were associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, as well as a stronger sense of personal accomplishment. Teachers with higher EI demonstrated greater overall teaching effectiveness, characterized by improved classroom management, student engagement, and instructional strategies. Qualitative data from open-ended questions supported these findings, revealing that teachers with higher EI had better stress management skills, more

positive student-teacher interactions, and a greater sense of professional accomplishment.

Conclusions: These findings highlight the critical role of emotional intelligence (EI) in reducing burnout and improving teaching effectiveness, supporting the necessity for integrating EI development into teacher training programs.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, teaching effectiveness, school settings.*

THE IMPACT OF ART-THERAPY ON THE REDUCTION OF PERCEIVED STRESS AND ITS BENEFITS ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

MSc. Erolina MORINA. Clinical Psychologist - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: This study aims to evaluate the impact of art therapy on perceived stress and other possible benefits in the mental health of people with disabilities.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of art therapy in reducing perceived stress and its benefits in the mental health of people with disabilities, analyzing the improvements in their emotional, social and personal functioning. Through art therapy in the group these individuals have the opportunity to explore their feelings non-verbal and verbal, develop new skills and improve their emotional and social functioning.

Methodology: In this study, we assessed the level of perceived stress in 12 participants before and after a cycle of art therapy sessions for five months, twice a week, a total of 26 group sessions. The assessment was carried out through a standardized scale of perceived stress, with a maximum of 40 points and a test of possible specific personal benefits.

Results: After the completion of the art therapy sessions, the assessment was repeated, and the results showed a significant improvement in the level of perceived stress. The results of the study show that art therapy has a positive and significant impact on the well-being of the participants. Daily and emotional-social functioning improved significantly for most participants, with 8 reporting major improvement in daily life and 10 reporting improvements in emotional and social functioning. Regarding

improvements in specific personal domains, all participants reported increased self-confidence, improved self-image, and greater ability to cope with their limitations.

Conclusions: In conclusion, art therapy appears to be an effective approach for improving the mental health and well-being of people with disabilities, offering significant benefits in their daily and emotional functioning as well as stress management.

Keywords: *mental health, people with disabilities, stress, art therapy, group therapy*

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DIMENSIONS OF PARENTING STYLES ON SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

MSc. Elisja REXHO, Counseling Psychologist - Albania

Abstract

In this study, the relationship between self-esteem and the dimensions of parenting styles was addressed.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to show that the dimensions of parenting styles are related to the child's self-esteem. The dimensions of parenting styles that have been studied in this paper are: permissive, authoritative and authoritative. The research shows that the dimensions of parenting styles are related to self-esteem, where respectively the permissive and authoritative dimension is related to the increase of self-esteem, while the authoritarian dimension is related to the decrease of self-esteem.

Methodology: Two tests were used for this study, the PAQ test for parenting styles and the Rosenberg test for self-assessment. 116 people participated in this study, where 103 are women and 13 are men. To see if the hypotheses used in this study have been proven or not, the SPSS program was used. As for the basic hypothesis, which has to do with the relationship between the dimensions of parenting styles and self-esteem, it has been partially confirmed since the results show that the authoritarian dimension does not have a correlational relationship with self-esteem.

Results: Based on the data extracted from the results of the SPSS program, it has been found that there is a negative correlation between self-esteem and the permissive dimension of parenting styles. Which means that the more permissive the parents are, the lower self-esteem the children have. For the authoritative dimension, a borderline significant relationship with self-esteem

has resulted. This bond is established only with the mother. So an authoritative mother increases the child's self-esteem. Regarding the relationship between the authoritarian dimension and self-esteem, based on the results of the data, no correlational relationship between them was found. Based on the studies done, it appears that this result may come as a result of the fact that children do not see their parents today as authoritative.

Conclusion: From this study we come to the conclusion that the relationship between the dimensions of parenting styles and self-esteem depends on how parents behave with their children, that is, the dimension of parenting styles they use with them. From the analysis made, the first hypothesis, which is about the relationship between self-esteem and the dimensions of parenting styles, is partially confirmed, since the results did not establish a correlational relationship between the authoritarian dimension and self-esteem. Regarding the second hypothesis: based on the data of the analysis, which show the gender differences of parents and the ways in which they raise their children, this hypothesis is partially confirmed, since in the Albanian context only the authoritative dimension of the mother has shown borderline significant relationship with self-esteem. The third hypothesis for the permissive dimension has been confirmed but it has created a negative correlation that means that the more permissive parents are, the lower self-esteem children will have. The fourth hypothesis, which is about the relationship between the authoritative dimension and self-esteem, which has created a significant borderline relationship with the mother, which means that an authoritative mother leads to an increase in self-esteem, and the last hypothesis is not proven because a correlational link has not been established.

Key words: *dimensions, self-esteem, children.*

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION, SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY IMAGE, AMONG YOUNG MALES AGED 18-25

Jehona RUHANI, Psychologist - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: The rise of social media has revolutionized communication, providing platforms for interaction, entertainment, and self-expression. However, excessive social media use has raised concerns regarding possible relationships with mental well-being. This study focuses on understanding the relationship between social media addiction, self-esteem, and body image perception among young men aged 18-25, an under-researched demographic.

Objective: The main objective of this study is to investigate the correlations between social media addiction, self-esteem, and body image perception in young men aged 18-25.

Methodology: This quantitative study used a correlational design. Data were collected from 19 participants through surveys using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), and the Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA). Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the relationships between the variables.

Results: The analysis did not show any statistically significant correlations between the variables. Specifically, the correlation between self-esteem and social media addiction was moderately positive ($r = .417, p > .05$), the correlation between self-esteem and body image was weakly negative ($r = -.213, p > .05$), and the correlation between social media addiction and body image was very weak ($r = .075, p > .05$).

Conclusion: These results suggest that the relationships between social media addiction, self-esteem, and body image are complex and associated with individual and contextual factors. Future research should include larger and more diverse samples to gain deeper insights into these relationships.

Keywords: *social media, self-esteem, body image, young men, quantitative study, addiction.*

THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN OPIOID AGONIST SUBSTITUTION THERAPY FOR HEROIN ADDICTS: HOLISTIC PARTNERSHIP MODELS IN THE TREATMENT OF THESE PATIENTS IN SWITZERLAND

Dr. Valbona MIFTARI. Specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy. Chief physician at the Addiction Department, PDAG – Switzerland.

Abstract

The purpose of this abstract is to highlight the importance of integrating psychotherapy into heroin addiction treatment through opioid agonist substitution therapy, using Switzerland as a successful model in this field.

It aims to:

- Explain how psychotherapy, when combined with substitution therapy, contributes *to a more comprehensive and effective approach to heroin addiction treatment.*
- Illustrate how Switzerland has developed and implemented an integrated treatment model that incorporates psychotherapy and substitution therapy, and how this model can serve as a guide for practice at the European level and beyond.
- Highlight Switzerland's holistic approach, which involves the collaboration of various professionals and the integration of different treatments, leading to improved outcomes for patients and the fight against addiction.
- Provide insights and recommendations for professionals and policymakers in addiction treatment, based on proven successes and practices in Switzerland.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND OPENNESS: FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH PERSONALITY

*PhD. Cand. Anita SADIKAJ – Clinical Psychologist – UBT,
Pristina, Kosovo*

PhD. Cand. Zehra SAITI – Skopje, North Macedonia.

Abstract

Introduction and purpose: This study investigates the relationship between transformational leadership and the personality trait of openness to experience among employees at the University of Business and Technology (UBT), focusing on their impact on team innovation.

Methodology: A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing data collected from 130 employees through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Big Five Inventory (BFI). The analysis involved Pearson correlation and multiple regression using SPSS software. The MLQ assessed transformational leadership behaviors, while the BFI measured levels of openness to experience.

Results: The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and openness to experience ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, transformational leadership was significantly associated with team innovation ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.01$), and openness to experience also showed a positive correlation with team innovation ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$). Multiple regression analysis indicated that both transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$) and openness to experience ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$) significantly predicted team innovation, explaining 36% of the variance in innovation scores.

Conclusion: The findings highlight the critical role of transformational leadership and openness to experience in

enhancing team innovation at UBT. These results suggest the need for leadership development programs that focus on fostering these traits to improve organizational performance.

Keywords: *transformational leadership, openness to experience, personality, team innovation, UBT.*

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

PhD. Klarida RRAPAJ, Psychologist. Tutor for the Faculty of Psychology at the Campus University in Rome - Italy

Abstract

Introduction: In the digital age, the use of technology has significantly impacted various aspects of our lives, including mental health. The rise of social media usage has brought forth a range of challenges that require special attention.

Objective: This presentation aims to examine the impact of technology on mental health by identifying key issues related to social media use, such as anxiety and depression, and to provide strategies for improving mental health in this context.

Methodology: Through an analysis of existing literature and case studies, we will explore how technology influences mental health. We will also utilize surveys and interviews with individuals affected by these issues to gather valuable data.

Results: The research findings indicate that excessive use of social media is linked to higher levels of anxiety and depression. Participants reported feelings of isolation and social pressure as a result of digital content.

Conclusions: Considering the challenges of mental health in the digital age, it is crucial to develop effective strategies for managing technology use and promoting mental well-being. This will help create a healthier and more supportive environment for individuals in our society.

Keywords: *mental health, technology, social media, anxiety, depression.*

SELF-HARM IN PSYCHIATRY

Dr. Arlind ZEQRIL - Emergency Unit - Kosovo

Abstract

Introduction: Self-harm is a relatively common finding in psychiatric and forensic practice and is defined as intentional bodily harm without suicidal intent. This behavior is considered a global public health issue and is common in the general population (2.9% - 41.5%).

Objectives: The purpose of this research is to analyze statistical data on the number of cases registered with self-inflicted injuries at the Psychiatric Clinic at UCK during 2021, in Prishtina.

Methodology: The work is of retrospective type. Patient data were obtained from the protocols of the Psychiatric Clinic in Prishtina. The data include: age, gender, marital status, employment status, month of presentation, mechanism of injury and anatomical position of the injury. The results were analyzed through software such as SPSS.

Results: During 2021, in the Psychiatry Clinic, in UCCK, in Prishtina, were registered a total of 60 cases with self-inflicted injuries. 26 of them or 43.3% were male, while 34 cases were female or 56.7%. The mean age of the registered cases \pm DS was 32.18 ± 10.513 years.

The most affected age group was 26 – 40 years old, with 23 cases in total or 38.3%. Out of 60 registered cases, 33 of them (55.0%) were single.

Most of the cases presented to IML with self-harm were unemployed, exactly 44 of them stated that they are not employed (73.3%). In June and July, the most cases were registered during the whole year 2021. Each month with 8 cases (13.3% each).

The most common mechanism of injury was “superficial cutting / scratching” in 28 of the cases (46.7%). The upper extremities were the most common anatomical position where persons had caused injuries to themselves, in 24 cases in total or 40.0%.

Conclusions: Females were the largest number of cases recorded during 2021. The unemployed and single were among the most vulnerable groups to suffer such damage. There was no significant difference between the sex and the mechanism or anatomical position of the injury.

Key words: *Self-harm, Clinic of Psychiatry – Prishtina, 2021, incidence, forensic medicine.*

AGE DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF GROWTH, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SELF-ACCEPTANCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

PhD. Cand. Fatime ZIBERI, Developmental and School Psychologist, North Macedonia.

MSc. Kaltrina REXHEPI PAJAZITI, Clinical Psychologist, Kosovo

Abstract

Abstract Personal growth is considered an important factor for health and well-being. Personal growth and development are a lifelong process vital to human growth and experience, they can be explained as the processes involving the growth of social members towards maturity of capacity in the civic, emotional, intellectual, physical, psychological, social, and spiritual facets (T. L. Shek & K. Wong, 2011). University students have confronted various changes, including individual and social roles, academic life and peer relationships, self-image and values, and family structure. These transitional events are developmental tasks to be dealt with. However, due to their developmental characteristics and the transitional context, university students are vulnerable. Most of the personal growth-related studies have focused on younger individuals, hence, our focus is on exploring the aspects of personal growth and development, (personal growth, and self-acceptance most preciously) among University Students based on age group categories.

Introduction: University life is the beginning of individuals' social lives, which might bring opportunities for personal growth or negative experiences hindering personal growth. Personal growth refers to a person's desire to learn, develop themselves, and achieve life goals, including being aware of who they are and what they want from life. Stewart et al. proposed "personal growth initiative," or PGI, a concept of intentional change in self-

awareness and self-development toward psychological well-being confronted with developmental tasks

Aim and objective of the study: The present study explores personal growth and development aspects among university students based on age. Specific objectives are outlined: first, to find whether there are differences in self-awareness based on age; to determine differences in confidence based on age; to explore differences in reflection based on age; and, to examine differences in personal growth plan based on age. Each of these objectives will aid in addressing the research aim. This study aimed to investigate age differences in the level of personal growth and provide a basis for psychological counseling and guidance to meet the individual growth needs of university students.

Methodology: The personal growth subscale from the Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Ryff and Keyes (Uppal, 2007) was used in this study to measure personal growth. The Ryff Scales are widely used in research and clinical settings to assess the quality of life and mental health. It was hypothesized that the different ages of university students would influence their perceptions of personal growth, specifically that there would be significant group differences in the scores of personal growth and self-acceptance. The questionnaire was prepared in Google form and shared with students willing anonymously to participate in the research.

Results: As our results report participants of our study (N= 110), were divided into three age categories younger individuals (19-21) often report higher satisfaction with their personality and a stronger sense of confidence in their opinions but also feel more burdened by everyday life. While, the (22-24 age) group generally shows lower levels of agreement across many statements, with a more even distribution in responses. As the third age group category, the (25-27 age) group displays a

stronger sense of control and personal growth, though this group is smaller, which could affect the generalizability of the results.

Conclusion: Overall, the data highlight age-related differences in personal perceptions and feelings, with the younger group expressing higher satisfaction and confidence in their characteristics compared to the older groups. This study is motivated by the phenomenon that personal growth is an essential aspect of significant life transitions between adolescence and adulthood (Thomas & Lampadan, 2016). University years are considered to be the period with the greatest potential for personal growth. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding the changes in personal growth that occur during different stages of university life and the need for psychological support and personalized counseling for students based on their age. Personal growth is a key aspect during major life transitions, and the university period offers substantial opportunities for personal development. However, efforts to adjust to new independence and increased responsibilities may affect reflections and focus on further personal development. To support students in this process, a more focused and informed approach is necessary, tailored to the changes occurring at each age stage. Some of the suggestions derived from our results are as follows: improving psychological counseling with tailored programs that address the specific needs of students in different age groups; training mentors and advisors to understand and manage variations in personal growth and age-related challenges; implementing personal growth programs that include workshops and seminars on self-awareness and self-acceptance; and conducting further research to analyze the impact of different stages of university life on personal growth and student development, which is also a crucial aspect to study in future research. These suggestions aim to improve support and personal development for students by addressing their specific needs at each stage of university life.

Keywords: *personal growth, self-acceptance, university students*

ANXIETY LEVELS AMONG STUDENTS AGED 20-40 BEFORE AND AFTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Introduction: Students' anxiety levels often increase during exam periods. The aim of this study was to investigate how exam season affects the anxiety levels of students aged 20-40..

The purpose: The main objective of this study was to compare students' anxiety levels before and after their final exams..

Methodology: A sample of sixteen students from AAB College and Haxhi Zeka University participated in a one-group experimental design. Anxiety levels were measured using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI-S). Participants completed the STAI-S both before and after their final exams.

Results: Although differences in anxiety levels were observed before and after the exams, the results were not statistically significant. According to a t-test analysis, there was no significant difference in mean anxiety levels before ($M = 96.00$, $SD = 13.246$) and after ($M = 93.88$, $SD = 6.742$) the exams.

Conclusion: The study's findings suggest that while exam timing may influence students' anxiety levels, the variation is not substantial enough to be statistically significant. Due to limitations such as the small sample size and the absence of a control group, further research is needed to better understand the relationship between exams and student anxiety. Future studies with larger samples and control groups may yield more reliable and generalizable results. Additionally, individual factors such as study habits, coping strategies, and support networks should be explored, as they may provide valuable insights into how students manage exam-related anxiety.

Key words: *Anxiety level, students, exams, t-test, impact.*

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