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My Happiness at School Reflects on My Life: The Role of Demographic Variables in Shaping the Relationship Between Academic Satisfaction and Well-Being

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The university years represent a critical developmental stage in which academic satisfaction and subjective well-being are shaped by demographic factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and year of study. This study examined the relationship between academic life satisfaction and subjective well-being among undergraduate students in Turkey, while exploring the moderating roles of gender, socioeconomic status, and year level. Participants were 427 undergraduates (77.52% female, N = 331; 22.48% male, N = 96). Data were collected through the Personal Information Form, the Academic Life Satisfaction Scale, and the Short Form of the General Well-Being Scale. Results revealed a strong positive association between academic life satisfaction and subjective well-being. Importantly, gender significantly moderated this relationship, with the association being stronger among female students. These findings highlight the importance of considering gender differences in student support programs and suggest that efforts to improve academic satisfaction may foster students' overall psychological well-being.

Keywords: Academic life satisfaction, subjective well-being, demographics, undergraduate students.

Digital assessment tools and their influence on student engagement and educational outcomes

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As education continues to evolve in the digital age, the use of digital assessment tools has emerged as a crucial element in enhancing both teaching strategies and student learning outcomes. These tools offer dynamic and interactive ways to assess student progress, moving beyond traditional evaluation methods to create more engaging and personalized learning experiences. This study aims to comprehend the complex connections among digital evaluations, learning motivation, and overall academic accomplishment by taking a student-centered approach. Direct classroom observations, teacher and student interviews, and a survey of the body of research on digital learning technology are used to gather data. By integrating both empirical data and firsthand perspectives from teachers and learners, this research presents a well-rounded analysis of the effectiveness of digital assessment methods. Key findings reveal the transformative potential of digital assessment tools in fostering real-time feedback mechanisms, enabling adaptive learning

pathways, and encouraging collaborative learning experiences. Additionally, students gain from receiving feedback right away, which helps them think more critically about their performance and make the required adjustments. The study also highlights that digital assessments contribute to increased student motivation, as interactive and gamified elements make the learning process more engaging. Teachers may establish more inclusive, flexible, and student-centered learning environments that eventually result in better academic results by skillfully utilizing digital assessment technologies. As technology continues to advance, further research is necessary to explore long-term impacts and best practices for digital assessment integration across various educational settings.

Keywords: digital assessment tools, educational technology, learning outcomes, student engagement, real-time feedback, adaptive learning

The evolution of language teaching theory and its reflection in the Albanian curriculum, through a literature review

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Background: This paper aims to provide a review of the scientific literature in the field of Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA), focusing on the paradigmatic shift from traditional descriptive approaches to descriptive and communicative approaches to teaching. The review is motivated by the fundamental question raised by Plangarica (2018) regarding the choice of language norm in the classroom.

Objectives: The main objective is to map the theoretical evolution of the main ideas in this field and to analyze how these theories have been reflected and implemented in the official curriculum documents of the Albanian pre-university education system.

Methodology: The research was conducted using a rigorous literature review methodology. A corpus of foundational scientific texts (e.g., Blanchet, 2000; Ellis, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Krashen, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 2013) and policy documents (IZHA's Curriculum Framework, 2016; CEFR, 2011) was analyzed and synthesized to identify the main links, influences, and trends between theory and practice.

Key Findings: The literature review reveals a theoretical consensus on the importance of communicative and student-centered approaches, where language is seen as a dynamic system rather than a set of rigid rules. The examination of Albanian documents shows a full appropriation of these principles at a strategic level, with a clear focus on communicative and intercultural competences and the Common European Framework of Reference. The literature in the field of LLL,

in particular, highlights the importance of affective factors and the need for meaningful input and authentic practice.

Conclusion: Through the literature review, it is concluded that the Albanian curriculum is based on the most advanced principles of modern language didactics. However, the academic literature emphasizes that the success of implementing these principles in the classroom depends largely on the teacher's ability to translate theory into practice, an area where further research remains necessary to assess real effectiveness.

Keywords: Literature review, applied linguistics, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Albanian curriculum, theory and practice.

Psychological games: A phenomenological analysis of therapist-client interaction

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This study investigates the psychological games that occur within therapist-client relationships and their impact on the therapeutic process, using a phenomenological approach. Drawing on Eric Berne's Transactional Analysis, the research examines the experiences of three therapists and three clients during psychotherapy sessions. The main research questions are: (1) What psychological games are played in individual therapist-client relationships? and (2) How do these psychological games influence the development or disruption of the therapeutic relationship?

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to describe their experiences in detail, and were analyzed using thematic analysis combined with phenomenological interpretation paying special attention to the bracketing technique. The study explores specific patterns of psychological games, including manipulative interactions, hidden intentions, and recurring relational strategies that both therapists and clients may unconsciously adopt. It examines how these games shape the emotional climate of therapy, influence communication, and affect the trust and collaboration between therapist and client.

Findings reveal that psychological games are pervasive in therapeutic settings and can pose significant challenges to maintaining a constructive and cooperative relationship. The research highlights instances in which recurring game patterns created misunderstandings, tension, or avoidance, as well as situations where the therapist's awareness and responsive strategies helped to mitigate these patterns and maintain engagement. The study provides valuable insights for mental health professionals, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and addressing unconscious psychological dynamics to support more effective and meaningful therapeutic interactions.

Keywords: Transactional Analysis, psychological games, therapeutic relationship, therapist-client interaction

Teaching love language in couples for relationship satisfaction

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Gary Chapman's theory on the five primary love languages and other studies in the field of relationships; have helped many couples in the functioning of their relationship and have been widely used, in therapeutic work. My interest, in carrying out, this paper is to understand how the situation is presented in the Albanian context : How do couples love and how is love expressed in our country? The purpose of this study is to explore the use of love language in couples, for relationship satisfaction. The research questions that are posed are: 1. What is the most used love language among adults in a love relationship or marriage? 2. How do men and women show their feelings for their partner? 3. What are some of the psychological obstacles to expressing feelings through communication? 4. Does good communication between partners really help their relationship? The methodology, that will be used in the realization of this paper ; include literature research, for a comparative perspective of the language used, in couple relationships. The likert type survey of love languages, as a second instrument, will be administered to a sample of adults aged 25-65, in the city of Elbasan. It turns out, that most of the problems in marriage, come from the emotional poverty in expressing love through communication.

Keywords: love language, communication, couple relationship, marriage

Balancing Digital Learning, AI, and Academic Integrity: Insights from Higher Education Students

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Transformations in higher education in Kosovo are increasingly evident due to the expansion of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI). This study explores students' perceptions of the impact of technology and AI on their learning experience, while also addressing digital equity and academic ethics as key dimensions of contemporary education.

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach, based on semi-structured interviews with 12 students from psychology and social sciences at AAB College. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis, incorporating triangulation and participant validation to ensure methodological rigor and reliability.

Findings reveal a clear preference for hybrid learning modalities, which offer flexibility and opportunities for physical interaction. Technology and digital devices have an ambivalent effect on academic performance, while AI is perceived as a supportive tool for organizing information and developing digital competencies. Inequalities in technological access directly influence the quality of learning, and the ethical use of digital tools is essential for maintaining academic integrity. The study emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that integrates digital flexibility, human interaction, and ethical education—contributing to a more inclusive, efficient, and equitable learning environment.

Keywords: *higher education, digital technology, artificial intelligence, student perceptions, academic ethics*

Vocational Education as a Pathway to Active Citizenship and Labor Market Integration of Roma Youth in Albania

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The integration of Roma youth into the labor market remains one of the most pressing social and educational challenges in Albania. Despite national policies and reforms aimed at increasing inclusion, Roma communities continue to experience high levels of poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion. This paper explores the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) as a potential mechanism for both economic empowerment and active citizenship among Roma youth. Drawing on recent literature, policy documents, and secondary data, the study highlights the dual function of VET: equipping young people with market-relevant skills and fostering their participation as active members of society. Findings suggest that while access to VET programs is limited due to socio-economic barriers, discrimination, and lack of information, successful initiatives demonstrate that vocational training can significantly improve employment opportunities, self-confidence, and social integration. Moreover, the paper argues that VET should not be treated solely as a technical pathway to employment but also as a civic tool that strengthens social inclusion and prepares Roma youth to engage meaningfully in their communities. By bridging education, labor policies, and citizenship, this study underscores the importance of evidence-based strategies that combine professional skills with civic education to ensure sustainable integration and equal opportunities for Roma youth in Albania.

Keywords: Roma youth, vocational education, labor market integration, active citizenship, Albania

Developing Critical Thinking Skills through Mathematics Textbooks: A Qualitative Study on Teachers' Experiences

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This study aims to explore primary school teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of mathematics textbooks as a tool to foster critical thinking among students. Ten teachers participated in the research, offering insights from their daily classroom practice. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing participants to elaborate on the strategies they employ, the challenges they face, and the effectiveness of textbook exercises in promoting analytical reasoning, problem-solving, and reflective thinking. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which enabled the identification of recurring pedagogical patterns and perceived gaps in textbook content. Preliminary findings suggest that while textbooks provide structured exercises and problem sets, their potential to encourage higher-order thinking depends largely on how teachers interpret and adapt the materials. Teachers emphasized the importance of open-ended tasks, real-life problem contexts, and prompts that stimulate discussion and reflection. Moreover, the study highlights differences in how experienced and less experienced teachers utilize textbooks to support critical thinking, suggesting that professional development and collaborative planning play a vital role in maximizing the educational value of textbooks. The findings also point to the need for curricular materials that go beyond procedural knowledge and actively engage students in reasoning and exploration.

Conducted during the final phase of the research process, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between curricular resources and classroom practice in mathematics instruction. It offers practical implications for textbook authors, curriculum designers, and teacher training programs, reinforcing the importance of designing materials that support both mathematical content and the development of critical thinking skills in primary education.

Keywords: *Critical thinking, mathematics textbooks, primary education, teacher perceptions, classroom practice*

Challenges and opportunities for the inclusion of students in decision-making

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The study aims to analyse the importance of civic education as an essential process in the development of students' civic competencies and in their preparation as future citizens. The attention is focused on several key dimensions of active citizenship, such as the role of the teacher and the influence they have on shaping students' democratic attitudes, participation in decision-making, respect for laws and rules, engagement in activities to help the community, free expression of opinion, etc.

The paper is based on a quantitative method of scientific research, conducted through a survey using the Google Forms platform. In the study, 1760 pre-university education teachers in Albania were included, and the data were analysed using SPSS/JASP. For a more in-depth treatment, this method was also intertwined with the analysis of educational documents, national and international studies conducted over the years.

The results showed that teachers display a high awareness of the importance of developing democratic citizenship. They state that young people should be more active in decision-making, which affects the improvement of their lives. The irreplaceable role of the teacher in promoting the culture of participation, civic responsibility, and the ability to make the right decisions is emphasised. The study's findings underline the need for the school to become a practical space of democracy, where teachers, students, and the community interact actively, for the building of a fairer, more inclusive, and more sustainable society. Teachers face challenges such as students' indifference in expressing their opinions, their low interest in the decision-making process, the program's workload, curricular limitations, insufficient institutional support, etc. Of importance is the organisation of as many practical activities in the service of the community as possible, the addressing of current topics, thus contributing to the building of a more sustainable democratic culture.

Keywords: *democratic citizenship, participation, decision-making, free opinion, the role of the teacher.*

Leadership and effective management in education

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Leadership in education is one of the most defining elements for the effective management of educational institutions. This paper aims to analyze the multidimensional roles of the school leader in ensuring quality in education, with particular focus on their impact on strategic planning, leading change, and professional development, as key elements for creating a unique institutional identity.

The study was based on a quantitative research method, conducted through a questionnaire designed with Google Forms, as well as a review of studies, reports, and theoretical materials published by researchers in the country and abroad. A total of 319 leaders of public and private preschool institutions from different districts of Albania participated in the study. Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS program.

The findings indicate that educational leadership is widely perceived as a critical issue among the respondents. This is evidenced by the increasing awareness of the leader's role in the effective administration of the institution, staff management, collaboration with the community, the improvement of education quality, and student achievement. Kindergarten leaders are aware that personal integrity, professionalism, managerial competencies, effective communication, and honesty are essential components in building a sustainable and trustworthy institution. They value the qualities and competencies that an educational leader should have and work toward meeting professional standards.

Leadership requires competence, responsibility and the ability to inspire positive changes and achievements in education. The professional development program aims to improve all elements that influence the formation of the necessary leadership skills, but also the development of individual qualities of educational leaders.

Keywords: *leadership in education, professional development, effective management, leading changes.*

Integrating Clinical Psychology Perspectives in Educational Settings: A Framework for Supporting Student Mental Health and Academic Achievement

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The intersection of clinical psychology and educational practice represents a critical frontier in addressing the growing mental health challenges facing students across all educational levels. This presentation explores how clinical psychology frameworks can be systematically integrated into educational environments to create more supportive, therapeutically-informed learning spaces.

Drawing from evidence-based clinical interventions and educational research, this work examines the bidirectional relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance. The presentation outlines a comprehensive framework that incorporates trauma-informed practices,

cognitive-behavioral strategies, and developmental considerations into educational planning and intervention design.

Key areas of focus include: (1) early identification protocols for students experiencing psychological distress that impacts learning, (2) adaptation of clinical assessment tools for educational contexts, (3) collaborative models between clinical psychologists and educational professionals, and (4) preventive interventions that promote both psychological resilience and academic success.

Through case study analysis and empirical findings, this presentation demonstrates how clinical psychology principles can enhance traditional educational approaches, particularly for students with anxiety, depression, ADHD, and trauma histories. The proposed framework emphasizes the importance of addressing underlying psychological factors that often manifest as academic or behavioral challenges.

The implications of this work extend beyond individual student outcomes to inform institutional policies, teacher training programs, and system-wide approaches to student support. By bridging the gap between clinical practice and educational theory, this integration model offers a pathway toward more holistic, effective educational environments that recognize the fundamental connection between mental health and learning.

This presentation will provide practical tools and strategies for educators, administrators, and mental health professionals seeking to implement evidence-based psychological interventions within educational settings, ultimately fostering environments where students can thrive both academically and psychologically.

Keywords: *clinical psychology, educational psychology, student mental health, trauma-informed education, cognitive-behavioral interventions, academic performance, psychological assessment, school-based interventions, evidence-based practice, educational integration*

The Egoic Burden: How Self-related mental content fuels Psychological Suffering

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This study builds on the framework of mechanistic theories of consciousness, treating the 'self' not as a metaphysical or a priori entity, but as a subjective construct that can be explained empirically through phenomenological and neurocognitive processes that generate conscious experience. The empirical aspect of the study, led by IPA, attempts to explore how 8 participants, psychology students, experience suffering in relation to thoughts, emotions, sensations and perceptions that are related to a sense of self. The findings showed that, as the literature predicted, the main purpose

of identifying with self-related mental content was the demand for global control in a transitory reality and consequently the demand for identity across different experiences. Therefore, the study supports the idea that psychological suffering does not stem simply from negative experiences, but from the way these experiences are internalized into the structure of the self, experiencing mental content as representative of the self and not as transient experiences. The analysis also revealed experiences that showed that externalizing self-talk, through therapy or writing, reduced the intensity of suffering, suggesting that breaking the fusion with narrative is possible and therapeutic. In conclusion, the study contributes to the construction of future intervention practices by informing that breaking away from rigid identification with the structure of the self and becoming aware of the self as a stable algorithm of the brain and not an essential truth, presents itself as a possible path towards liberation from psychological suffering.

Keywords: *Self, Psychological suffering, Predictive processing, Self-awareness, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*

The Dynamic Interaction of Reflective Practice and Self-Efficacy Development in Pre-Service Teaching

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Through reflection, educators gain deeper insights into their practice, transforming challenges into opportunities for growth. Reflecting on unanticipated difficulties and challenges during the early stages of a teaching career also contributes to increased self-confidence and professional self-efficacy. The study aims to explore the levels of pre-service teachers' reflection in action and reflection on action during their pedagogical practice and examine how these reflective practices relate to their self-efficacy beliefs in teaching. This case study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the levels of reflection in action and reflection on action among pre-service teachers, alongside their relationship with self-efficacy beliefs in teaching. The participants consist of 70 third- and fourth-year students from the Faculty of Education, University of Prishtina. Data were collected after the students completed their pedagogical practice—six weeks for third-year students and ten weeks for fourth-year students. To assess participants' teaching self-efficacy, the study utilized the standardized questionnaire developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). Participants were asked to rate their confidence in performing various teaching tasks using a Likert scale. A reflection questionnaire based on Schon's (1983) theory was developed by Odeh, Kurt, and Atamtürk (2010). Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to examine patterns and test relationships among the study variables. The results show varying levels of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, with differences observed between third- and fourth-year students. A significant positive relationship is anticipated between self-efficacy beliefs and the levels of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Teachers who engage more frequently and

deeply in reflective practices are expected to show higher self-efficacy, particularly in managing classrooms, engaging students, and implementing instructional strategies.

By focusing on reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, teacher education programs are expected to better equip future educators with the skills necessary to adapt to diverse classroom situations and improve teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: *Reflection, Self-efficacy beliefs, Pre-service teachers, Pedagogical Practice;*

Guilt, Shame, Anxiety, Depression among Young Albanian Adults

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This study aims to explore the relationship between feelings of guilt and shame and the levels of anxiety and depression among young Albanian adults aged 18 to 25. Understanding the emotional mechanisms that contribute to poor mental health in this population is essential for early intervention and tailored therapeutic support.

To assess anxiety and depression, standardized instruments were used: the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI). In addition, the Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale (GASP) was translated and adapted for this context and preliminarily piloted with 40 individuals, showing acceptable reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.71$). Data collection is still ongoing via an online questionnaire (Google Forms), with a target sample size of $n = 200$ participants. Preliminary findings indicate a stronger correlation between guilt and shame with depression than with anxiety, aligning with previous research, such as Kim et al. (2011), which suggests that shame, in particular, is a more consistent predictor of depressive symptoms than anxiety-related symptoms. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional factors affecting the mental well-being of young adults in Albania. The findings may also support mental health professionals in developing more targeted therapeutic interventions, especially those addressing shame and guilt in order to mitigate depressive symptoms effectively.

Keywords: *Guilt; Shame; Depression; Anxiety; Young Adults*

The construction and validation of a psychometric aptitude test for the selection of security personnel in Albania

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This article presents the construction and validation of a psychometric instrument that measures the cognitive aptitude tendencies of candidates, intended for use in the selection of personnel in security institutions in Albania. This psychometric test is conceptualized as an instrument for the assessment and prediction of the core competencies and performance of security personnel. The instrument will aid in the selection and professional development of security personnel operating in various organizational and operational environments.

During the research, mixed-method approaches were employed, beginning with a detailed analysis of the work and functional tasks of the personnel, and identifying the key competencies related to effective performance in the security field. These competencies were then elaborated into measurable constructs through the study of work regulations, interviews, and piloting.

The validity of the instrument was tested by following several steps, which include item analysis, reliability testing, and construct validity assessment through recognized psychometric methods. The study aims to understand the multidimensional nature of work in the security field and to test the predictive validity of the instrument, aiming to identify employees with high job performance from those with lower performance. Statistical analysis indicated that this instrument exhibits high reliability, clear construct validity, and practical utility for both recruitment and training purposes.

The instrument is envisioned to serve not only as a selection tool but also as part of a broader framework for continuous professional development. Future steps include exploring predictive validity, construct validity, and interdisciplinary applications to ensure the test remains relevant and up-to-date with the evolving challenges in the field of security.

Keywords: *psychometric test, predictive validity, reliability, cognitive competencies, personnel selection, security personnel, employee performance, professional development, job task analysis, measurable constructs, pilot testing, psychometric methods.*

Mental health in Middle Childhood: A Quantitative Study on Stress, Anxiety and Depression in Albanian Children Aged 6 – 10

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Mental health problems often begin in early years but systematic data from the Albanian context are limited. This ongoing research aims to explore the levels of perceived stress, anxiety and depression in Albanian children aged 6 – 10, using a multi – informant design. The research provides quantitative data into the prevalence and patterns of these mental issues. For ages 6 – 7 the Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale, (RCADS - parent version) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ- parent version) were used, while for older children, 8 – 10 years old a broader assessment was administered: the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS – Child version), RCADS – parent and child version & SDQ – parent and child version. A total number of 250 parents and 200 children comprised the sample of this research. The following analyses were applied: descriptive statistics, reliability, the confirmatory factor analyses of the three measures to verify their structure, correlations between stress, anxiety and depression as well as correlations between parent and child reports, intergroup comparisons through t-test and ANOVA and the clinical prevalence through the percentage of children who are above the clinical cut off of stress, anxiety and depression. The preliminary results show that all these measures are suitable for use in the Albanian context, and most importantly most of children through their own perspectives and that of their parents are far below the cut off of the clinical prevalence, therefore indicating no sign for concern. However, a deep interpretation of these results is still ongoing and much needed considering the cultural context and the self -report nature of the measures.

Keywords: *stress, anxiety, depression, middle childhood*

Empowering Communication: The Role of Assistive Technologies in Supporting Children’s Learning and Psychological Well-Being

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Recent progress in advanced Assistive Technologies (ATs), particularly those powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), has significantly enhanced the lives of people with neurodevelopmental and Communication Disorders (CDs), supporting progress in education, social inclusion and psychological well-being. Scientific research shows that Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) enhanced by high-tech Assistive Technologies (ATs), such as Socially Assistive Robots (SARs), Virtual Reality (VR) and Conversational AI (ConvAI), improves communication and psychological skills of children with CDs. [J. Leinweber, B. Alber, M. Barthel, et al., “Technology use in speech and language therapy: digital participation succeeds through acceptance and use of technology,” *Frontiers in Communication*, 8, 1176827, 2023]. Emotional responsiveness is an important aspect to consider when investigating children with developmental CDs. Evidence in literature highlights the significance of early affective interactions with social partners, suggesting that such emotional exchanges during early development form the basis for more advanced forms of communication [D. Scambler, S. Hepburn, M. Rutherford, E. Wehner, S. Rogers, “Emotional responsivity in children with

autism, children with other developmental disabilities, and children with typical development,” Jour. of Autism and Developmental Disorders, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 553–563, 2006.]. Based on a national study of emerging trends and future directions in Assistive Technologies (ATs), we carried out a six-month experimental study within the framework of the ATLog project [ATLog project. Available online: <https://atlog.ir.bas.bg/en/>] . This project focuses on Socially Assistive Robots (SARs), Virtual Reality (VR) and Conversational AI (ConvAI) as tools for speech and language therapies. The study involved 20 children (aged 3–10), diagnosed with CDs and recruited from the Logopedic Center at the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. The study presents preliminary evidence from analyses of children's communication skills and emotional expressions during free or structured interactive playful scenarios with SARs and VR. (Each session lasted approximately 30–40 minutes and was audio- and video-recorded, capturing the child's speech, voice pitch and intensity, as well as facial and bodily expressions of emotion. Parents' informed consents were obtained in accordance with ethical standards, preregistered and approved by the Ethics Committee of the South-West University (protocol N 2410-1/29.10.2024).

Results from emotional analysis

During the experiments, we assessed children's emotional responsiveness by focusing on ... during interactions with robots or in VR. These characteristics are essential for effective communication and verbal output in children with CDs. While interacting with the robots, the children On the other hand, during the VR sessions the children demonstrated From a psychological perspective, the early-age individuals showed interest and cooperation during all sessions with the robots. Some more emotionally expressive children demonstrated joy and amusement when they found the robots' misunderstandings entertaining. They were attentive while collaborating with the robots, while during VR children are more engaged and curious. They also displayed emotional expressivity and joy because they have control over the play. There were phrases, such as "... ". Besides spontaneity, the children showed curiosity and excitement.

These research findings are supported by the National Scientific Research Fund, Project "Application of innovative assistive technologies in the process of social inclusion of people with autism spectrum disorders and/or intellectual disabilities", Grant № КП-06-KOCT/14.11.2022

Keywords: *High-tech Assistive Technologies, Communication Disorders, Communication, Psychological well-being*

From Curriculum to Classroom: The Need for Explicit Focus on Disciplinary Literacies in Pre-University Education.

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This study investigates the extent to which Albanian official national curricular documents explicitly require teachers to foster students' academic language and discipline-specific literacies. The research question guiding the analysis is: Do national curricula make clear to teachers the obligation to develop these essential skills? The rationale stems from ongoing work within COST Action CA21114 (CLILNeTLe), which highlights the centrality of disciplinary literacies for successful learning in content and language integrated contexts. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of the Action specifies the analysis of curricular frameworks in Mathematics, History, and Science. For this contribution, we focused on the History and Biology curricula for the 9th grade, a crucial stage as students transition toward high school, where the mastery of abstract and complex content increasingly depends on advanced academic language competence. Using the CLILNeTLe Codebook as an analytical tool, we examined the official national curricular documents for explicit and implicit references to academic language development and subject-specific literacies. Our findings show that, while the curricula frequently recommend that teachers support students in developing these skills, such guidance remains partial and insufficiently operationalized. The documents acknowledge the importance of literacy support but stop short of providing detailed, actionable strategies to ensure systematic development of productive disciplinary literacy skills.

We argue that the current level of attention to academic language in the national curriculum risks leaving teachers without clear direction in addressing this key dimension of learning. Therefore, we recommend that in future revisions of the curricula, greater emphasis should be placed on equipping teachers with explicit guidance to foster students' productive disciplinary literacies, ensuring they are adequately prepared for the demands of upper-secondary education and beyond.

Keywords: *curriculum analysis, disciplinary literacies, Albania, students' academic language.*

From Distraction to Engagement: Exploring the Potential of BYOD in Secondary Education

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This study explores the potential implementation of the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy in Albanian secondary schools by analyzing the perceptions of teachers and students regarding its benefits and challenges. The research was designed as a qualitative case study, employing semi-structured interviews with teachers and focus groups with students, complemented by a review of the existing literature on the integration of mobile technologies in education. The theoretical framework was guided by the expectancy-value theory of academic motivation, emphasizing how BYOD may influence students' engagement, motivation, and performance.

Findings indicate that the use of personal mobile devices in the classroom is perceived positively by most students, who view it as an opportunity for immediate access to multiple information sources, enhanced collaboration, and personalized learning pathways. Teachers also acknowledge that BYOD can increase student engagement and provide flexibility in differentiated instruction. However, the study highlights significant challenges: student distraction due to non-educational use of devices, risks of plagiarism, socioeconomic inequalities in device ownership, as well as the lack of adequate infrastructure and teacher training.

The practical implications underline the need for schools to ensure robust ICT infrastructure, comprehensive professional development for teachers, and curriculum adaptation that supports technology integration. Additionally, addressing issues of digital equity is essential to guarantee equal access for all students.

This study contributes to the ongoing debate on the modernization of the Albanian education system, suggesting that BYOD, when implemented with careful planning and institutional support, has the potential to transform traditional classrooms into 21st-century learning environments, equipping students with the critical skills required for both the labor market and digital society.

Keywords: *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD); Digital equity; Student engagement; Teacher training; Educational technology*

Family in Transition: Changing Roles, Values, and Structures from the Socialist Past to the Global Present

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This study examines the transformations of the Albanian family through a comparative textual approach between the socialist period (1945–1990) and the contemporary global era (post-1990). The methodology is based on discourse analysis and content analysis, drawing on legal documents (Family Code, social policies), academic and sociological texts, as well as media discourses on the family. The texts were coded according to three analytical categories: gender roles and family functions, value systems, and family structures.

Findings indicate that during the socialist period, the family was conceptualized as a space of discipline and ideological mobilization, with clearly defined gender roles and an emphasis on collectivism. By contrast, in the contemporary period, discourses on the family reflect greater flexibility of roles, value pluralism, and the legitimization of alternative forms of cohabitation (nuclear family, non-marital unions, transnational families).

These results can be interpreted in light of theories of late modernity (Giddens, 1992; Beck, 1994), which frame the family as a “reflexive” space shaped by individual choice and negotiated relationships. Whereas the socialist period represented a normative and uniform model of family life, the global era displays a more open, fragmented, and globalized model.

The study concludes that the Albanian family, as both a discursive and social construct, is not merely a private institution but a mirror of the profound political, economic, and cultural transformations accompanying the post-socialist transition.

Keywords: *discourse analysis, content analysis, family, socialist period, globalization, late modernity, gender roles, values, family structures.*

Emotional Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence in Pre-University Education

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Pre-university education is facing new challenges in an era where technological developments and artificial intelligence (AI) are transforming how students learn, communicate, and prepare for the labor market. In this context, emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognized as an essential competence that helps young people develop self-awareness, empathy, and social skills which complement and balance the technological skills demanded by AI. This study aims to explore the role of EI in educational policy development and its intersection with the use of AI in schools.

Approach: A qualitative methodology was applied, combining document analysis with focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with teachers and school leaders. Additionally, interviews were conducted with policymakers at the Ministry of Education to better understand their perceptions on the importance of integrating EI into educational programs, as well as the challenges and opportunities brought by the use of AI in this process.

Findings: The findings indicate that while current educational policies emphasize the integration of technology and AI in schools, the aspect of emotional intelligence remains undervalued and lacks institutionalization. Both teachers and policymakers stressed that the absence of balance between technological and emotional skills risks creating gaps in students’ holistic development. Moreover, there is no clear policy framework that connects the development of EI competences with the use of AI in education.

Conclusions: The study argues that meaningful implementation of AI in pre-university education requires embedding emotional intelligence into policies, training, and teaching practices. This entails revising curricula, creating teacher training mechanisms, and ensuring institutional support for the parallel development of emotional and digital competences, ultimately preparing students for the challenges of the future.

Keywords: education, emotional intelligence, digital education, competences, policy making.

Perception of students graduating as english language teachers toward the digitalization of foreign language learning process

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The linguistic scholars and experts during the end of 1970s and early 1980s presented for the first time the brand-new technique named “Communicative Language Teaching” (CLT) and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). The research in the following decades brought the enormous advancement of technology and smart applications usage, which found the significant correlative relation and proved the right hypothesis that the most frequent use of technology in foreign language teaching and learning process, the better the result in language learning is. This was studied at the beginning of 21st century.

These abstract aims to find the attitudes of students during the graduation year in Master Study Program as English teachers toward the exposure of technology usage and digitalization of foreign language learning. The instrument used in this study is the questionnaire “Eight Questions to Ask Yourself”, (Hockly N., 2011b). The questionnaire is adopted into a test mode, comprising eight items to respond in a Likert scale, coded from 1-6. The data was processed with SPSS 24 and checked with descriptive analysis for mean values, standard deviations and frequencies to gather a thorough perception. It resulted that a great majority (97%) have positive perception for the effect of technology usage in language learning in classrooms. They strongly agreed that digitalization plays a great role in language learning process, however they only slightly agreed for an extensive technology time span in lessons schedule. A slight agreement at value (4) out of (6) was found also for the perception that students produce more and consume less, in terms of learning outcomes and tasks, when exposed to smart-tech equipment and use of tools in language learning.

Keywords: Students perceptions, Digitalization, Foreign Language Learning Process, graduation year, English language teachers, advancement of technology and smart applications usage

Cognitive-Emotional Mechanisms in Grief: Toward a Contextualized Framework

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Grief is a multidimensional response to loss that engages both affective attachment systems and higher order cognitive processes such as memory, meaning making and rumination. Many bereaved individuals adapt successfully, however, a subset develop Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD). This disorder is a condition codified in ICD 11 and DSM 5 TR and is linked to poor health outcomes such as increased rates of suicidality and low life satisfaction (Eisma & Stroebe, 2021). Contemporary cognitive behavioral theories argue that maladaptive thought patterns and dysfunctional appraisal mechanisms drive the transition from adaptive to pathological grief. This view is supported by empirical findings that autobiographical memory deficits, negative cognitions, and avoidance predict PGD severity and that cognitive emotional integration explains variance in grief outcomes (Boelen & Eisma, 2019; Boelen & Klugkist, 2010). Further research highlights maladaptive cognitions, attachment insecurities, and cultural expectations as pivotal contributors to prolonged grief trajectories (Maccallum & Bryant, 2013; Keser & Boelen, 2025). Building on these models, the present paper proposes a doctoral study that will (1) test the hypothesis that individual level differences in cognitive emotional integration (e.g., rumination, meaning making) differentiate adaptive from prolonged grief responses, and (2) explore how Albanian cultural norms shape these processes. A mixed methods design will combine standardized questionnaires (e.g., PG 13 R, Grief Cognitions Questionnaire) with semi structured interviews to capture lived grief experiences and cultural coping strategies. The central aim is to refine a culturally sensitive, cognitively informed framework for assessment and intervention that can improve clinical outcomes for individuals at risk of PGD in Albania and comparable contexts.

Keywords: *Grief; Bereavement; Adaptation; Meaning-Making; Coping*

School Dropout and the Phenomenon of Migration in “Skënderbeu” High School, Has

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This study explores the intertwined phenomena of school dropout and migration in the municipality of Has, a northern Albanian region severely affected by socio-economic challenges and youth depopulation. Over the last few years, an increasing number of students in “Skënderbeu” High School have abandoned education, often linking their decisions to economic hardship and aspirations for migration. The study aims to identify the underlying causes of school dropout and to understand the relationship between educational disengagement and migration intentions among young people. A qualitative research design was employed, using semi-structured interviews with eleven students from grades XI and XII and five former students who had emigrated. The analysis followed a phenomenological approach, allowing participants to express their lived experiences,

emotions, and motivations regarding schooling and migration. Thematic analysis revealed three core themes: academic and motivational challenges within the school environment; external socio-economic and family pressures; and perceptions of limited future opportunities in Albania. Findings show that financial difficulties, perceived poor educational quality, and weak school-family support networks are major drivers of dropout. Moreover, the belief that migration provides better educational and employment opportunities significantly shapes students' life choices. The study concludes that addressing school dropouts requires coordinated efforts between schools, families, and local institutions to improve educational quality, provide psychological and financial support, and enhance youth engagement in community development.

Keywords: *school dropout, migration, education, youth, socio-economic factors*

The impact of major depressive disorder in one partner on relationship satisfaction, cohesion and consensus within couple relationships

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Mental health disorders are often accompanied by significant difficulties in individual and social functioning, as well as in the quality of couple relationships. Partners who have experienced symptoms of major depressive disorder during the course of their relationship often face substantial challenges in maintaining the emotional stability and functionality of the dyadic relationship. Findings indicate that caring for a spouse who lives with mental health problems is a unique role compared to other caregiving roles. Along with efforts to accommodate major depressive disorder in their lives in order to protect the relationship, it often happens that one of the partners takes on more responsibility than before and may be exposed to multiple risks, including stress and the burden of caregiving.

Study Aim: This study examines this issue from the perspective of 12 couples, using a mixed-method approach, where the main part consists of semi-structured qualitative interviews with open-ended questions and a theoretical approach (thematic content analysis) to identify themes from participants' narratives, while the quantitative measurement instrument is used as a complementary tool to support and enrich the analysis. To measure the main components of functioning in the couple relationship, the "Dyadic Adjustment Scale, short version (DAS-32)" was used, a structured instrument that assesses three essential dimensions of couple relationships: satisfaction, consensus, and cohesion. Additionally, in this study, the 24 participants described the strengths and difficulties of their relationship during the interview process.

Results: Deep emotional connections with their partners, willingness to work, and good communication skills were identified among the strengths of the relationship. Mental health symptoms and internalized stigma were identified as major contributors to relationship problems. Participants spontaneously described intentional strategies they used to cope with mental health

challenges in their relationship, which included self-directed, partner-directed, and couple-directed actions. The themes revealed through interpretative phenomenological analysis reflect the challenges of individuals whose lives are intertwined with the symptoms of major depressive disorder.

Keywords: *couples, lived experiences, mental health disorders, major depressive disorder, satisfaction, consensus, cohesion.*

The Association Between Parental Divorce and Anxiety in Children Aged 8-13 - Correlational Study.

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Introduction: The impact of family structure on children's mental health has been consistently emphasized in the literature, with parental divorce identified as a primary source of stress and emotional difficulties among adolescents and young children (Amato, 2001; Kelly & Emery, 2003). Numerous studies have demonstrated that children experiencing parental separation tend to exhibit higher levels of anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems, attributable to changes in the familial environment, loss of emotional stability, and a lack of consistent support (Kelly & Emery, 2003; Wolchik et al., 2013).

Study Aim: This study aims to explore the relationship between children's family status (living with both parents or divorced) and the levels of anxiety they experience between the ages of 8 and 13. The primary objective is to analyze how anxiety experiences differ between children of divorced parents and those who live in intact family environments. The main hypothesis posits that children with divorced parents will report higher levels of anxiety, particularly in terms of general and social anxiety.

Methods: Data collection involved three standardized instruments: the Pediatric Symptom Checklist, SAS-TR (Child Anxiety Scale—Teacher Report), and a modified self-report questionnaire (SCARED) tailored for this age group. Data were analyzed using SPSS, employing t-tests and correlation analyses to assess relationships between anxiety variables and sources of reporting.

Results: The findings suggest that children of divorced parents exhibit higher levels of generalized anxiety symptoms and face greater difficulties in seeking psychological help. Conversely, children living with both parents demonstrate more prominent social anxiety symptoms. Although many of these differences did not reach statistical significance ($p \leq .05$), they indicate noteworthy clinical and psychological trends warranting further discussion.

Conclusion: This study underscores the importance of considering family structure within the broader context of children's mental health assessments and highlights the need for tailored interventions sensitive to emotional and familial dynamics. It offers valuable contributions to

school psychology practice and clinical interventions for children, emphasizing the necessity of therapeutic strategies focused on family-related emotional experiences and sacrifices.

Keywords: child anxiety, divorce, family, family status, emotional experiences.

The Pedagogical Dimension of Physical Education During the Communist Regime in Albania: The Impact on Soft Skills and Life Skills Development

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This study explores the nature of physical education during the communist regime in Albania (1945–1990), situating it within its pedagogical dimension and examining its role beyond the mere promotion of physical health. During this period, physical education was a compulsory component of the national curriculum and served as a tool for shaping the “new socialist personality.” Beyond its ideological function, it also acted as an educational domain where students developed soft skills and life skills, becoming part of a broader process of social and personal formation. The study employs a pedagogical-historical approach, combining the analysis of curricular documents, teaching plans, and physical education textbooks of the time with archival sources and interviews with former physical education teachers. This methodological framework aims to reveal how the concept of physical education was structured within the educational system, its instructional objectives, and its contribution to the development of students’ personal and social competences. Findings indicate that physical education under the communist regime served a dual function: on the one hand, it enhanced motor abilities and physical health; on the other hand, it fostered values and soft skills such as cooperation, respect for rules, effective communication, self-discipline, time management, and resilience. As part of the pedagogical process, physical education classes functioned as practical laboratories for the acquisition of transferable competences applicable across other areas of school and social life. In conclusion, despite being constrained by ideological frameworks, physical education during the communist era holds a significant pedagogical legacy. It demonstrates that physical activity can serve not only as a means of physical development but also as a foundation for building essential life and social skills. This pedagogical dimension remains relevant today, reaffirming physical education as an indispensable component of inclusive education.

Keywords: *physical education, pedagogy, communist regime, soft skills, life skills, competences, educational process.*

From evidence to vision - Albania's participation in TALIS 2024 and perspectives for teacher professional development”

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Albania’s participation in the OECD international study TALIS 2024 (Teaching and Learning International Survey) marks a significant milestone for the country’s education system. This global survey, encompassing more than 280,000 teachers across 55 education systems worldwide, provides a comprehensive overview of teachers’ experiences, practices, and perceptions, offering a new foundation for evidence-based policymaking. For Albania, participation in TALIS has opened a new phase of reflection on professional development, working conditions, and the transformation of the teacher’s role in the digital age. In line with TALIS findings, recent educational reforms in Albania have focused on curriculum modernization, the empowerment of teachers’ continuous professional development, and the integration of technology and artificial intelligence in learning processes. The National Program for Teachers’ Professional Development aims to enhance the quality of teaching by addressing key 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving, inclusive education, social and emotional learning, career orientation, and environmental sustainability.

This new policy approach highlights the teacher’s role as an agent of change and the school as a space for innovation and professional reflection. TALIS thus serves as a key reference point for reshaping the education system on the basis of evidence, with the ultimate goal of building a more modern, inclusive, and sustainable education that meets the challenges of the contemporary world.

Keywords: TALIS 2024, teachers’ professional development, curriculum modernization, critical thinking, artificial intelligence, inclusive education, social and emotional learning, digital education, evidence-based policymaking.

Teacher Competencies in Inclusive Education.

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Teacher competence represents a dynamic combination of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, cognitive and metacognitive capacities, and ethical values (González & Wagenaar, 2005). Within an inclusive education system, teachers have a key role in ensuring equal access and effective support for all students, regardless of their diversity. This study aims to explore the professional competencies that teachers need to develop to meet the demands of inclusive education in Albania.

The study is based on an analysis of contemporary literature that addresses teacher professional development and inclusive practices in education. Findings indicate that some of the most important competencies for teachers include: promoting equity in the classroom, providing functional and meaningful teaching for all students, and building a flexible and interdisciplinary approach to teaching content (Kochhar et al., 2000). It also emphasizes the importance of a pedagogy based on the individual needs of students, their cultural experiences and personal interests (Florian & Rouse, 2009). A teacher with high professional competence positively influences the inclusion, success and behavior of students with different abilities (Ahsan, Sharma & Deppeler, 2012). Experts who study inclusive education argue that teachers should be aware of a number of broad principles, such as recognizing that there is diversity in the classroom, that individual differences are more visible, and that they should pay more attention to students with special needs (Mintz, 2019).

The study highlights the need for sustainable development of teacher capacities through training, updating of initial education programs and building positive attitudes towards diversity. This is essential for building a fair and inclusive education system in the Albanian context.

Keywords: *teacher competencies, inclusive education, students with different abilities.*

Using STEM education to improve student achievement in mathematics and develop life skills

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This action research examined the impact of STEM utilization on improving students' achievement in mathematics and developing life skills. At the same time, by linking the subject of mathematics with other disciplines such as science, technology, and engineering, through various activities, the aim is to awaken students' curiosity and interest in mathematics.

The research was conducted with students of two ninth grades, with 20 students in each class, of the school SH.M.U "Durak Ahmeti" in Demjan, municipality of Gjakova, where the researcher works as a teacher of mathematics. The methodology used for this research is action research. Initially, a pre-test was conducted to assess students' prior knowledge, then an intervention was made with an action plan based on STEM education, and a post-test was conducted to highlight the impact of the action plan. in improving student achievement in math and developing life skills. Finally, students completed a questionnaire to observe their attitudes toward STEM education.

This study highlights students' creativity during STEM-related activities, which has influenced the development of students' skills to better understand mathematical concepts in problem-solving and their connection to other subjects included in STEM. Also, the results of this research show the

increased of students' interest in mathematics through creating an attractive and collaborative environment, which is created during the activities.

Keywords: *Achievement in mathematics, collaboration, creativity, STEM, problem-solving*

Physical, social, and psychological well-being require economic support: State financial assistance for vulnerable groups; how the eligibility conditions and the monetary value of payments have changed year after year.

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This study analyzes the evolution of the legal framework for economic assistance and social protection in Albania during the period 1992–2022, assessing its impact on improving the living conditions of individuals and families in need. Based on a documentary analysis of laws, decisions of the Council of Ministers, and by-laws, the research highlights the main changes in benefits, application procedures, and beneficiary categories. The results show a positive trend toward the expansion of social coverage and the improvement of transparency, with particular emphasis on alignment with European Union standards. The laws of 2005, 2016, and 2019 represent key moments of institutional consolidation and the strengthening of social justice. However, significant challenges remain at the implementation level, due to the lack of financial resources and administrative capacities. A comparison with other Western Balkan countries reveals similarities in terms of reforms and the need to increase the effectiveness of social policies. The study concludes with recommendations for strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing laws, as well as for developing further research to assess the concrete impact of reforms on vulnerable groups.

Keywords: *economic assistance, social protection, Albanian legislation, social policy, vulnerable groups, legal reform, Albania.*

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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