

EDITORIAL

Schools and society in Albania: psychoeducational approaches to well-being and inclusion _____

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This special issue of *Polis* is conceived as an academically grounded yet practice-oriented contribution to the field of psychoeducation in Albania, developed through close collaboration between researchers and practitioners engaged in school, clinical, and community settings. The volume reflects the Faculty of Humanities, Education and Liberal Arts' commitment to advancing evidence-based approaches to children's development and inclusion, while addressing the practical constraints faced by professionals in contemporary educational environments. Co-edited with Prof. Dr. Erika Melonashi, Head of The Department of Psychology, Education and Sports, whose expertise in psychology has significantly informed the thematic and methodological direction of this issue, the edition aims to offer a rigorous, multidisciplinary treatment of psychoeducational processes within the Albanian context.

The education system constitutes a dynamic environment where children develop psychological, social, physical, and intellectual dimensions. The structure and characteristics of the immediate environment have a fundamental impact on their formation, requiring ongoing professional engagement and research in psychoeducation. However, the psychoeducational process often faces challenges related to children's individual characteristics, the level of parental involvement, and the professional competencies of teachers (often limited by insufficient training and lack of institutional support). The inadequate involvement of school psychologists or organizational inefficiency of the system (class size, curriculum, schedules, etc.) can negatively affect children's development and learning. Significant challenges might also arise in the psychoeducation of children with

neurodevelopmental disorders, due to the complexity of these conditions and the lack of specific resources and intervention programs.

The psychoeducation of children, whether with typical or atypical development, represents one of the primary challenges of the Albanian educational system and society. Recent studies show that Albania is undergoing a slow transition toward inclusive education, where social expectations, the lack of professionals, and rapid technological changes directly influence the way children develop academic, emotional, and social abilities. This special edition of *Polis* is a collection of scientific papers presented at the National Conference “**Challenges of psychoeducation for children with typical and atypical development in Albania**” and provides a multidimensional analysis of psychoeducation in the Albanian context. Studies provide recommendations for policymakers, schools, psychosocial workers etc.

Psychoeducation of children with autism is discussed in a considerable number of papers of this edition. As highlighted in the study by Sulaj, Cani, and Mehmetaj, children with autism face significant difficulties in developing social skills, not only due to the disorder but also to the lack of structured psychoeducational strategies in schools and development centers. The study highlights the need to promote effective programs and professional training in Albania to improve the independence and well-being of children with autism.

The study by Kapo et al. provides a comprehensive literature review on classic and modern theories and techniques in psychoeducation of children. Authors critically discuss theoretical and practical issues involving mental health, technology, neuroscience, extracurricular projects, diversity, and inclusion in the education process and provide recommendations for the specific Albanian context.

Along the same lines, the study by Kotherja, Mucaj, and Zhilla emphasizes that classroom management strategies, especially for children with disabilities, are often inadequate and pose several challenges during the learning process. The article identifies effective techniques and strategies that teachers can apply to ensure an inclusive classroom environment. Drawing from contemporary literature and practical experiences, the aim of this paper is to provide a structured approach to classroom management with a focus on inclusion.

The study by Sulaj and Cani shows that support teachers, despite their dedication, are only partially equipped with professional training, thus hindering the inclusive approach in the public education system. This study highlights the importance of an integrated and well-supported approach to strengthening the role of support teachers in inclusive education and the need for sustained policy interventions, including regular training programs.

Case study articles provide a special contribution to this edition, as they provide in-depth analysis of cases of children with phonetic disorder, social communication disorder, and challenging behaviours. These articles are particularly useful for