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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Topic: Educational Psychology

Hostility and anxieties in education. Violence prevention

Ion Negrilă, Alexandra Gologan

Spiru Haret University, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Braşov, Romania

negrilaion.psiholog@gmail.com

Conflict is a prevalent issue in today's society, as humans have a natural instinct to protect and defend themselves. In educational settings, conflict is defined as any deliberate harmful action or inaction among members of the educational community, including students, teachers, parents, administrative staff, and other educational stakeholders. These conflicts occur within the physical confines of the school premises or in areas closely associated with the school, such as neighboring spaces or locations where extracurricular activities are conducted. Addressing this phenomenon requires a collective effort from educational authorities, teachers, parents, and students themselves, who should have a voice in establishing preventive measures rather than resorting to reactive actions.

From a young age, children may learn that violence is a bold method to resolve personal conflicts, particularly if they have experienced it at home, either as victims of bullying or as witnesses. Over time, violence may become a common means of expressing various emotional states like anger, frustration, or fear. This behavior extends beyond the confines of the family and inevitably influences how each family member interacts with society.

Educators play a crucial role in identifying and preventing potentially risky situations for students by establishing relationships with the children and their families, thereby fostering a culture of prevention within the educational community. Families also play a vital role in preventing violence in the educational system, as they serve as role models for their children.

Keywords: education, violence, parents, school, children

A meta-analysis of the relations between achievement goals and internalizing problems

Loredana Diaconu-Gherasim¹, Andrew Elliot², Alexandra Zancu¹, Laura Brumariu³, Cornelia Măirean¹, Cristian Opariuc-Dan^{4,5}, Irina Crumpei-Tanasă¹

¹Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, Romania, ²University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, USA,

³Adelphi University, Garden City, NY, USA, ⁴University of Bucharest, Romania, ⁵Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania

copariuc@gmail.com

This systematic meta-analytic review investigated the relations between achievement goals and internalizing symptoms and disorders, namely, anxiety and depression. The number of samples for each focal relationship ranged from 3 to 36. The results indicated significant effect sizes for the relations between mastery-approach goals and anxiety ($r = -.10$) and depression ($r = -.18$), as well as performance avoidance goals and anxiety ($r = .25$) and depression ($r = .16$). A significant effect size was also found for the relation between performance-approach goals and anxiety ($r = .15$), and a non-significant effect size was observed for the relation between performance-approach goals and depression ($r = .05$). Mastery-avoidance goals were not significantly related to either anxiety ($r = .08$) or depression ($r = -.13$). Several moderators representing the conceptualization of achievement goals (e.g., theoretical model), sample characteristics (e.g., education level), and methodology- and publication-based characteristics (e.g., year of publication) were significant, and suggested avenues for future research. These findings herein have implications for intervention programs that could focus on reducing the links between achievement goals and internalizing problems

Keywords: achievement goals, internalizing problems, depression, anxiety

Addressing social media impacts on youth mental health in a comprehensive focus group - based research approach

Claudia Maria Oprescu

National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

claudia.oprescu@upb.ro

This paper examines the psychological health effects of excessive social media use among teens, addressing the increasingly concerning issue of internet addiction as a global health threat. Specifically, the study explores how adolescents need for freely expressing themselves, connecting with peers, exploring and shaping their own identity, and searching for entertaining online experiences. All these types of behavior drive prolonged online presence, leading to detrimental emotional consequences in interpersonal relationships, difficulty or lack of interest in enjoying social interactions, physical activities, maintaining the same level of motivation and academic performances, and overall well-being. A focus group research study into the emotional and psychosocial effects reveals that adolescents frequently immerse themselves in social media and use it as an escape mechanism, driven by the accessibility of the internet, anonymity and lack of enjoyable alternatives in their real life. The findings highlight the pressing need for tailored interventions to mitigate the potential emotional negative effects and to provide integrated services solutions to support safer and healthier online habits among youth.

Keywords: youth, psychological health, internet addiction, healthier online habits

Academic success, failure and resilience in youth education in a digitized society

Georgeta Pânișoară¹, Andreea Șițoiu²

¹University of Bucharest, Romania, ²Transilvania University of Brașov, Romania

andreea.sitoiu@unitbv.ro

The digitized society imposes dynamic in the education of young people from the perspective of free time, but also of the way in which one's own resources and responsibilities are managed. Resilience becomes a necessary skill for managing the stress associated with academic failure (Walsh, 2016), but also for adapting to the conditions necessary to achieve academic success (Sony & Mekoth, 2023). The purpose of this literature review is to describe the role of resilience for academic success and failure. It was found that factors such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, parental support, mentoring, but also

educational programs that contribute to development of management skills, act in opposition to risk factors (Zimmerman, 2013).

Keywords: academic success, academic failure, resilience, youth

Feedback in formative assessment

Maria Iulia Felea

"Babeş-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, "1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia, Romania
felea_mariaiulia@yahoo.com

In modern didactics, assessment is perceived as a complex, continuous activity, designed to take place in distinct but interconnected stages throughout the educational process. Formative assessment involves the constant monitoring of outcomes throughout the instructional process, thus ensuring progressive and well-structured learning in small sequences. An important aspect of this process is the feedback that provides useful information to students on their performance. In the research that I carried out in the undergraduate program Pedagogy of Primary and Pre-school Education, a number of key elements were investigated that refer to the aspects of feedback in formative assessment. The mode of investigation used in the research was the survey, carried out using the questionnaire as an instrument. A number of novel elements of the presence of feedback in formative assessment emerged from the research.

Keywords: feedback, assessment, formative assessment, students

Dimensions of career decisions: A validated tool for Romanian High School students

Roxana Elena Stoica^{1,2}, Oana Alina Bota², Ana-Maria Cazan^{1,2}

¹Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania, ²Institute of Philosophy and Psychology „Constantin Rădulescu-Motru”, Romanian Academy, Romania
roxana.stoica@unitbv.ro

Difficulties in career decision-making are expressed as potential obstacles that can hinder better career decisions (Saka et al., 2008; Willner et al., 2015). Career choice decisions involve various factors, such as skills and abilities, life goals, career objectives, career preferences, and individual expectations. The study proposes a psychometric questionnaire designed to assess difficulties in career decision-making among high school students in

Romania. The sample included 778 students with an average age of 16.65 years from various educational profiles: theoretical (humanities and sciences), vocational (theology, sports, arts, and education), and technological (technical, services, natural resources, and environmental protection). Factor analysis identified two main dimensions: Resources and Options Exploration, and Career Decision Self-Efficacy. Results show significant differences between educational profiles, while gender differences were not significant. The study validates a new instrument for measuring high school students' career decision-making, emphasizing the importance of resources for career exploration and self-efficacy in decision-making. Future research should explore the predictive validity of this instrument and analyze measurement invariance based on additional variables, such as age and field of study.

Participants and Instruments: This study aimed to develop and analyze the psychometric properties of a questionnaire measuring career decision-making among Romanian high school students. The sample included 778 students with an average age of 16.65 years from various educational profiles: theoretical (humanities and sciences), vocational (theology, sports, arts, and education), and technological (technical, services, natural resources, and environmental protection). Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire as part of career counselling activities, with parental consent.

Results: Data analysis included both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), which validated a two-factor solution: Resources and Options Exploration, and Career Decision Self-Efficacy. The two-factor model showed a good fit, while the three-factor variant was rejected due to weak loadings and low reliability. The results indicated significant differences between educational profiles in the Resources and Options Exploration dimension, with students from technological profiles reporting more resources than those from theoretical profiles. No significant differences were found between genders regarding overall scores or career-related dimensions.

Conclusions: The study has several limitations, including its cross-sectional design, potential self-assessment errors, and an unbalanced sample, particularly regarding the vocational profile. Future research should explore the predictive validity of this instrument and analyze measurement invariance based on additional variables, such as age and field of study. The study validates a new instrument for measuring high school students' career decision-making, emphasizing the importance of resources for career exploration and self-efficacy in decision-making. Future research should address improving samples and exploring the predictive validity of the instrument.

Keywords: career decision-making, psychometric questionnaire, high school students

Topic: Applied Psychology

Psychometric validation of the Generalized Problematic Internet Use Scale 2 in a Romanian sample

Eryka Probierz¹, Laura Teodora David²

¹Silesian University of Technology, Institute of Innovative Technologies EMAG, Poland, ²Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania

lauradavid@unitbv.ro

The aim of this study is to test and conduct a psychometric validation of this scale on a Romanian version of The Generalized Problematic Internet Use Scale (GPIUS2). To realize this objective, dimensionality, reliability and theoretical relevance of the scale under study were analysed. The sample consisted of 347 people (M=27.52 years, SD=9.82). In addition, the Internet Addiction Scale (IAT) and the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS) questionnaires were also used in the study. The conducted research indicates that the Romanian version of GPIUS2 is characterized by satisfactory indicators of reliability and theoretical accuracy, as well as scale structure.

Keywords: problematic internet use, psychometric validation, reliability, validity, Romanian sample

Perceived invulnerability in road traffic: Illusion of control, desire for control, and risk perception

Elena-Cristina Nae

Institute of Philosophy and Psychology „Constantin Rădulescu-Motru”, Romanian Academy, Romania

elenacristina.nae@gmail.com

This study aimed to identify the relationships between risky driving behavior, traffic control perception, the illusion of control, desire for control, and risk perception among drivers. The goal was to understand how perceived invulnerability relates to engaging in risky driving behaviors. A convenience sampling method was employed to gather data from participants through surveys assessing their driving behaviors and perceptions. The sample consisted of individuals from diverse social backgrounds, age groups, and educational levels. The study was conducted on a convenience sample of young and adult drivers. The total number

of participants was 115, aged between 19 and 74 years, with a mean age of 29.83 and a standard deviation of 13.05. Of these, 73 were female (63.5%) and 42 were male (36.5%).

According to the analysis of the results, there is an association between risky driving behaviors, the illusion of control, the desire for control, and risk perception. Furthermore, risky driving behaviors are predicted by these factors. Therefore, there is a tendency among drivers to engage in risky behaviors on the road when they perceive that they have a higher level of control over the situation than they actually do.

Regarding the association between risky driving behaviors and types of control location, the results are inconclusive. Both internal and external locators engage in risky driving behaviors. In relation to age, it has been shown that it positively correlates with risk perception and risky driving behaviors, as well as with the type of control location based on religious beliefs. In contrast to studies on the same topic, in the Romanian population, it seems that as drivers age, they engage in more risky driving behaviors, despite having a higher level of risk perception compared to younger drivers. A possible explanation is associated with the external control location type, where people believe they are protected by a higher power in case of accidents.

The results also revealed that the illusion of control, the desire for control, and risk perception predict 40% of risky driving behaviors in participants with little experience; 57% in participants with moderate experience; and 51% in those with significant experience. In the case of highly experienced individuals, none of the variables studied predict risky driving behaviors. Additionally, the results showed that there is a difference between those with moderate experience and those with much experience in terms of risk perception, with the latter having significantly higher levels. Moreover, there was also a difference in attitudes towards rule-breaking and speeding between the same groups, with those having much experience showing significantly higher levels.

Keywords: risky driving behaviors, illusion of control, desire for control, traffic risk perception, locus of control in traffic

Psychological perspectives on fear of childbirth

Kanellopoulos Dimitrios, Gourounti Kleanthi

Department of Midwifery, University of West Attica, Greece

drdimitrios8@gmail.com

The current review aims to shed light on the psychology of tokophobia (fear of childbirth) with an emphasis to its etiology, as well as to its physiological, cognitive and behavioral aspects for the suffering women/mothers. Findings from the most recent reviewed articles support the perspective that its etiology is attributed to the neurobiology of pregnancy and childbirth, the way the woman's/mother's personality is structured and organized, the comorbidity with anxiety or depressive disorders, the possibly unfavorable family and/or social environment, the poor emotional husband support, the possible history of abuse, as well as any previous traumatic child delivery experience. At the same time, other factors such as family finances, the woman's/mother's age and emotional maturity, the degree to which the gestation was desired, and the woman's/mother's education on labor and motherhood, are also proven to play a key role in the gradual psychological construction of that specific type of phobia. The variety of the primary articles reviewed make any further conclusions hard to draw - nevertheless, these endless and unjustifiable vicious circles of fear seem to be a major concern for future scientists and psychologists to further investigate.

Keywords: tokophobia, etiology, childbirth, perspectives

Effects of midwifery psychoeducational intervention on reducing the number of cesarean sections due to tokophobia

Kanellopoulos Dimitrios, Gourounti Kleanthi

Department of Midwifery, University of West Attica, Greece

drdimitrios8@gmail.com

The purpose of the current review was to underline the beneficiary effect that the appropriate midwifery psychoeducational intervention can have on the reduction of the number of cesarean sections that are attributed to tokophobia (fear of childbirth). The research data available so far show that pregnant women who attend midwifery psychoeducation and maternal preparation classes (both prepartum and postpartum) tend to better recognize, understand and interpret their deep and personal feelings and beliefs regarding gestation, labor and motherhood, thus being able to experience less intense

anxiety and fear for the upcoming labor, as well as to be ready to ask for the appropriate help or information whenever needed. Additionally, midwifery intervention proves to be valuable in terms of highlighting the stronger emotional bonding that vaginal delivery will naturally bring between mother and newborn -which serves as an extra factor that encourages women's choice in favor of vaginal delivery. In that context, most psychoeducated women can documentedly and more confidently choose vaginal delivery over cesarean section and have higher possibilities of enjoying an overall better quality of life-both prenatally and postnatally.

Keywords: tokophobia, psychoeducation, midwife, vaginal delivery

Gender differences in Quality of life of people with addictive behavior

Oxana Paladi, Bogdan Cristian Voicu

Moldova State University, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

voicubogdancristian@gmail.com

Addiction affects multiple areas of quality of life. Previous research has shown that the Quality of life of individuals with substance and behavioral addictions is significantly lower compared to the average of the general population. The aim of the paper was to identify the gender differences of quality of life of individuals with substance and behavioral addictions. The study was conducted with 118 participants, aged 18-42 years. Quality of life was assessed using Quality of Life Inventory by B. Frisch. There are gender differences in terms of the quality of life within the studied group that present various forms of addiction. The results are consistent with the scientific literature present findings.

Keywords: gender differences, quality of life, addiction

Gender differences in self-efficacy of people with addictive behavior

Miruna Elena Moanță

Moldova State University, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

miruna.moanta@gmail.com

The study of self-efficacy in the field of addictions represents a valuable component due to the involvement in the management of relapses and in giving up addictive behavior. The aim

of this paper was to identify gender differences of self-efficacy of individuals with behavioral and substance addiction. The study was conducted on a sample of 134 participants, women and men between the ages of 18 and 40 years. Self-efficacy was measured by Schwarzer's self-efficacy questionnaire. The sample consists of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, gambling, pornography and other previously diagnosed addictions. The results are in line with present literature findings showing differences of self-efficacy between gender.

Keywords: self-efficacy, gender differences, addiction

Mental health needs of mobile students – need analysis results

Adrian Alexandru Moşoi¹, Ana Maria Cazan¹, Ana Reis², Ilona Kazlauskaitė³, Rytis Pakrošnis³, Abdulkadir Gölcü⁴, Raquel Lázaro Gutiérrez⁵, Bianca Vitalaru⁵, Aniko Makkai-Kovacs⁶, Oana Alina Bota¹, Roxana Stoica¹, Nicoleta Andreea Neacşu¹, Cătălina Georgeta Dinu¹, Cosmin Spirchez¹

¹Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania, ²University of Porto, Portugal, ³Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania, ⁴Selcuk University, Turkey, ⁵University of Alcala, Spain, ⁶European University Foundation, Luxembourg

adrian.mosoi@unitbv.ro

The (Mobile Minds in Motion - MMM) consortium conducted two pilot studies in 2023 and 2024 to explore the mental health needs of mobile students before, during, and after their mobility experiences. Surveys gathered responses from 700 students in 2023 (10 European countries) and 1,425 students in 2024 (pan-European). The findings revealed that the majority of mobile students lacked mental health preparation or consultation, with 71%-79% of respondents indicating no support at various stages of mobility. However, 75% in 2023 and 83% in 2024 rated the importance of mental health support between 7-10 on a 10-point scale. A parallel survey targeting International Relations Office (IRO) staff at Higher Education Institutions (61 responses in 2023; 133 in 2024) highlighted that most staff deal with mental health issues among students, particularly during mobility (50% in 2023; 70% in 2024). Staff overwhelmingly emphasized the need for additional resources and training (90%+ rating 7-10 on importance). The results underline the critical need for enhanced mental health support mechanisms for mobile students and training for IRO staff to address these challenges effectively.

Keywords: mental health, students, mobility, higher education

Topic: Educational Challenges in the Digital age

Educational changes through online instruction and the role of parental awareness

Georgeta Gabriela Cornea

Spiru Haret University, Romania

gabriela.cornea@spiruharet.ro

Approximately 99% of children worldwide – over 2.3 billion children – live in one of the 186 countries that have implemented various forms of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although children are not at high risk of contracting the virus, they have been disproportionately affected by its indirect impacts. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, families, particularly parents, have assumed the primary responsibility for ensuring the harmonious and balanced physical and psychological development of their children, as schools and educational institutions have been restricted in their influence due to the shift to online environments. As a result, education has undergone a significant transformation, marked by a notable increase in e-learning, where teaching takes place remotely through digital platforms.

Research suggests that technology-assisted learning enhances information retention and reduces the time required for learning, indicating that the changes prompted by the coronavirus may have lasting effects. Parents had to quickly adapt to the shift to online schooling and support their children's learning at home. They were responsible for creating an adequate learning environment, ensuring access to necessary equipment and the internet, supervising school activities, and guiding their children in distance learning.

The aim of this research was to assess parents' awareness of the potential risks associated with the transition to online schooling. The study focused on parents of students in Braşov aged 6 to 18.

Keywords: online learning, technological overload, digital skills, internet risks

Caught in the virtual learning environment: Finding a way out

Mirela Mihaela Doga

Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania

mirela.doga@365.univ-ovidius.ro

The rapid shift to virtual learning environments (VLEs) has transformed education, presenting both opportunities and challenges for teachers and students alike. Teachers and students have mixed views on virtual education. Some see it as distinct from traditional classrooms due to less feedback, while others believe it can yield better outcomes. This reflects the complexities of virtual learning, where the lack of direct interaction impacts the process. This article explores the difficulties encountered in adapting to these digital platforms and identifies practical strategies for overcoming them. For teachers, technical barriers, increased workload, and challenges in maintaining student engagement have proven to be significant hurdles. Meanwhile, students face issues such as lack of motivation, technical limitations, and feelings of isolation.

Through a study involving questionnaires for both educators and learners, this article analyses the common obstacles each group experiences and proposes effective solutions. Key recommendations include providing professional development for teachers, fostering peer collaboration among students, and enhancing institutional support systems. The article emphasizes the importance of continuous adaptation and innovation in virtual learning, advocating for a hybrid approach that combines the strengths of both online and traditional methods.

Keywords: virtual learning environment, difficulties, engagement

Current trends in educational communication in the age of digitalization. The perspective of Higher Education students

Daniela Căprioară, Anamaria Bezem, Iuliana Lungu

Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania

iulianalungu@yahoo.com

Current trends in educational communication from the perspective of digitalization reflect significant changes in how educators, students, and institutions interact, share knowledge, and collaborate. In the context of the innovation of the educational process, these trends are driven by rapid advancements in technology, shifts in educational philosophy, and the

increasing demand for personalized, accessible, and efficient learning experiences. The present study focuses on the key trends in educational communication influenced by digitalization derived from the results of the student questionnaire applied on a sample of students in the initial training program for the teaching profession.

The questionnaire focuses on gathering insights about students' experiences, preferences, and perceptions of digital tools and communication methods in their learning environments. It is designed to cover a broad range of topics related to educational communication in a digitalized environment, including the use of various tools, the effectiveness of personalized learning, and the impact of digitalization on collaboration and inclusivity. It aims to gather student perspectives on both the benefits and challenges of these technologies.

Keywords: educational communication, digitalization, innovation in education, technology, students' experiences

Reading on paper and screen. Consequences on comprehension skills

Cosmina Simona Lungoci, Elena Denisa Andronie

West University of Timișoara, Romania

cosmina.lungoci@e-uvt.ro

Reading comprehension is a topical issue facing today's learners, and particular importance is attached to how information is understood depending on how it is received. Reading has undergone changes, the shift from traditional (on paper) reading to technological reading has been rapid, and people have adapted quickly to this change. Digital devices are present in everyone's lives, and this modernization has also brought some transformations in reading. With the advent of highly advanced technology, many electronic resources have been generated that have reading screens, such as e-readers, computers, tablets, etc.

In this context, our study aimed to observe how students comprehend the text they read, depending on the medium from which the reading is done: print or digital. The theme focuses on the differences between reading on paper and on screen, in terms of comprehension. For this purpose, we conducted a quantitative, quasi-experimental, cross-sectional research, involving 70 third grade students from a primary school in Timisoara. The data collection instruments were represented by two docimological tests, designed according to the PIRLS model. Students solved the comprehension tests both on paper and digitally. After data were collected using the research instrument, they were analyzed using SPSS. T-tests for paired groups and independent T-tests were applied to test the

hypotheses. The results of the study indicate that students who read on paper have a better understanding of the information conveyed in the texts they read, even if reading takes longer, compared to reading in digital format, which is faster but does not ensure very good comprehension. Therefore, reading on paper is beneficial for pupils. Following the application of the two tests, the highest scores were obtained by pupils in the tests solved on paper.

Keywords: literacy, comprehension, digital reading

Digital parenting in the early years: A needs assessment for parental interventions

Anitha-Teodora Tața

Institute of Philosophy and Psychology „Constantin Rădulescu-Motru”, Romanian Academy,
Romania

tata.anitha91@gmail.com

This study aims to assess the needs of parents with preschool-aged children in managing their children's use of digital technologies. This analysis serves as a preliminary step towards developing a parental intervention program designed to foster early development of healthy digital habits in children. A convenience sample was used for this analysis, and both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized. The developed questionnaire measures dimensions of digital parenting, socio-demographic factors, as well as parents' perceptions of the importance of digital parenting. The results of this study provide a relevant starting point, aligned with parental needs, for optimizing future parental interventions.

Keywords: digital parenting, preschool children, needs assessment

Education in the era of Artificial Intelligence: Benefits, challenges, and perspectives

Marius Bazgan

Transilvania University of Brașov, Romania

bazgan_marius@unitbv.ro

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has begun to reshape the educational landscape, promising to bring profound changes to how teaching and learning are conducted in schools. The integration of AI into the educational system is expected to influence various aspects of schooling. The

current research investigates the perceptions of educators and students regarding the integration of AI in education, focusing on five key dimensions: personalized learning, assessment and feedback, administrative efficiency, ethical considerations, and specific challenges related to AI implementation. Data were collected through anonymous responses on a 5-point Likert scale to ensure candid insights for research purposes.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, personalized learning, AI-based assessment, administrative efficiency, ethical concerns

Challenges of digitalization in psychotherapy training – Insights from the Wellbeing and Psychotherapy Center

Oussama Medjahdi¹, Ismail Ainad Tabet², Soufyane Badraoui¹, Houari Kerdouci¹, Mohammed Messad¹

¹University Centre Of Maghnia, Algeria, ²Ibn khaldoun University of Tiaret, Algeria
oussamamedjahdi98@gmail.com

Specifically, this paper examines the digital revolution and its impact on education across a range of fields—with focus on a new generation of clinical psychologists and psychotherapists for whom the primary mode of intervention is still with regard to interpersonal relationships formed directly between therapist and patient. This paper reviews the challenges, trends and transformative potential that opens with digital educational platforms for training of psychotherapists using applications running in real clinical cases, focused on the experience of the Well-being and Psychotherapy Center, which have established a stringent protocol for maintaining supervision confidentiality sessions. The paper discuss how practical training can be provided through e-learning tools like Moodle, Zoom and virtual classroom apart from exploring the novel methods using advanced tools such as Augmented Reality (AR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for increasing the reach of training. This paper also considers issues relating to the ethical imperatives for digital education, including patient privacy and confidentiality and the usability of such tools by trainees, as well as outlining potential benefits, specifically increased access and cost savings. These findings also indicate a potential future development of how technology will shape education and training for psychotherapists, to generate practitioners that will be fit for practice in an increasingly digital world.

Keywords: digitalization, psychotherapy training, e-learning platforms, hybrid learning models, wellbeing and psychotherapy center

Topic: **Teacher Professional Development**

The impact of education on emotional development in teaching and training

Georgeta Gabriela Cornea

Spiru Haret University, Romania

gabriela.cornea@spiruharet.ro

Cutting-edge research emphasizes the need for learning emotional behaviors, as there is a growing observation of feelings of loneliness, not only among children but also among adults. In Romania's current educational system, a great deal of importance is placed on academic performance, with a strong focus on achievements in competitions and contests, often overlooking the emotions that lie in the shadow of success or, conversely, failure. In this context, it is essential to train educators to become aware of the need to control and understand their own emotions, so they can express them and subsequently guide students through this process. The emotional development of students is a complex process that involves parents, teachers, and other members of an interdisciplinary team, such as psychologists or school counselors.

Given the crucial role that emotional skills play in students' lives, a strong partnership between educators and parents is necessary. Research shows that relationships between children and adults contribute significantly to the development of children's socio-emotional competencies, as child-parent and child-teacher relationships are linked to the development of peer interaction skills, emotional growth, self-regulation, and adaptation to the school environment. The early school years represent a critical period for the discovery, shaping, and acceptance of emotions. This time is particularly favorable for helping children establish positive emotional habits that will accompany them throughout their lives.

Keywords: emotional development, intervention strategies, emotional and social skills

Backward Design - An innovative instructional model in planning Higher Education courses

Iuliana Lungu

Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania

iulianalungu@yahoo.com

The aim of the present study is to provide the basic engineering of the Backward Design, an instructional model focusing on active learning, on a curriculum and course planning that takes a lot of openness on the part of higher education teachers to break away from ready-made plans or the usual way of working (creative and enjoyable activities selected on the fly, without a red thread that follows some specific skills). It also requires time and deep thought to plan a single unit as well as a different approach to assessment, which means more feedback to students, who will need further clarification. This approach, developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (1998) centers on identifying desired outcomes before establishing teaching methods and learning activities.

Keywords: backward design, instructional process, curriculum, course planning

Specific difficulties in conducting an educational research project: The perspective of students from the Teaching Master's Program

Daniela Căprioară, Mirela Mihaela Doga

Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania

mirela_doga@yahoo.com

Research competences represent a crucial aspect of future teacher training within the didactic master's program, as outlined in its specific curriculum. By reviewing and analyzing the research conducted by the last three graduating classes of the didactic master's program for their dissertation projects, a series of specific challenges related to this process have become evident, ranging from the development of research design to the effective utilization of results.

The study highlights these difficulties based on data obtained from students and professors involved in the supervision of the dissertation papers, through observations and opinion surveys (interviews, focus groups, questionnaires). The main objective of this paper is to

propose regulatory measures to support the achievement of high-quality educational research, intended to optimize and innovate the educational process.

Keywords: educational research, innovation of the educational process, research design

Warning signs of aggression in the school environment and the issue of their perception and evaluation

Tibor A. Brečka

Department of Health Sciences and Population Protection Faculty of Biomedical Engineering CTU in Prague, Czech Republic

tibor.brecka@seznam.cz

This article explores the warning signs of aggression in school environments and examines the challenges associated with their perception and evaluation. Recognizing early indicators of aggressive behavior is crucial for maintaining a safe educational setting and preventing escalation. However, subjective interpretations and varying awareness levels among educators can hinder the accurate identification of these behaviors. This article analyses common signs of aggression, factors affecting their recognition, and suggests strategies for improving response mechanisms in school contexts. By enhancing awareness and evaluation methods, educational institutions can better address aggression, promoting a safer and more supportive learning environment.

Keywords: school aggression, warning signs, psychology of perception, educator awareness, school safety

Investigating the role of personality factors on primary school teachers' self-perceived reflectivity

Anastasia-Mălina Cioloca¹, Muşata-Dacia Bocoş²

¹Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania, ²Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania

anastasia.cioloca@unitbv.ro

The present study aims to investigate whether certain personality traits held by the participants (extraversion and conscientiousness) can influence the degree of self-perceived reflexivity of teachers. After applying the Big Five©plus_short personality test and examining the relationship between self-perceived professional reflexivity and

teachers' personality factors, the statistical analysis of the data emphasizes that there is no significant correlation between extraversion and self-perceived professional reflexivity. But, on the other hand, we found that there is a significant correlation between conscientiousness and self-perceived personal reflexivity.

Keywords: professional development of teachers, self-perceived reflexivity of teachers, teacher personality, conscientiousness, extraversion

Global Teachers for a Sustainable Future Program: Pilot results from Romania

Adrian Alexandru Moșoi¹, Amaia Ojer Sánchez², Mihaela Voinea¹, Mariela Pavalache-Ilie¹, Daniela Popa¹, Alina Turculeț¹, Cornelia Lazăr¹

¹Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania, ²CEU Cardenal Herrera University, Spain

adrian.mosoi@unitbv.ro

This project aims to develop innovative, evidence-based teaching and learning practices within higher education institutions to promote education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship in home learning contexts. A key focus is fostering a global mindset among students while equipping teachers to actively contribute to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To assess the program's impact, the following tools were employed: a civic education questionnaire with 90 teacher respondents, distributed across early childhood education (25 responses, 28%), primary education (16 responses, 19%), secondary education (28 responses, 31%), vocational education (10 responses, 11%), and school principals (10 responses, 11%). Additionally, the Questionnaire for Internationalization of the Curriculum (QIC) was completed by 50 PhD-level teachers. The findings revealed a significant interest in advancing global education and integrating it into the preparation of future generations, aligning with the vision of a sustainable and resilient future.

Keywords: global, sustainability, curriculum, civic education, teachers

Topic: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Education

Analyzing sustainability in European University Alliances: A thematic analysis of mission and vision statements

Elena Ungureanu, Romiță Iucu

University of Bucharest, Romania

elena.ungureanu@fpse.unibuc.ro

The European Universities Initiative (EUI), the flagship program of the European Commission, has positioned university alliances as key structures in higher education. These alliances foster partnerships between higher education institutions (HEIs), enhancing academic collaboration, research, and mobility. By bringing together resources and engaging in joint activities, these alliances enable universities to achieve shared objectives (De Wit & Hunter, 2015). From informal networks to long-term consortia like the EUI, alliances promote cross-border cooperation, contributing to European integration in education and research (Charret & Chankseliani, 2022; Stensaker, Maassen, & Rosso, 2023).

As these alliances evolve, digitalization plays a critical role in meeting collaborative goals and addressing global challenges like sustainability. Innovative technologies integrate sustainability into administrative functions, educational strategies, and community engagement, making collaboration more efficient and adaptable (Menon & Suresh, 2020; Ceulemans et al., 2015). European university alliances increasingly position themselves as leaders in sustainability, fostering academic collaboration while addressing global environmental challenges. Understanding how they construct sustainability in the context of digitalization is crucial for assessing their contributions to sustainable development and education.

Hence, this study uses reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) to explore how sustainability is framed in the mission and vision statements of European university alliances. The central question is: How do European university alliances articulate sustainability in their mission and vision statements within the context of digitalization? Analyzing statements from 64 alliances, the study provides insights into how sustainability is institutionalized, identifying both explicit references and underlying values. The inductive analysis, conducted with MaxQDA, reveals three main themes, that will be further developed: 1) sustainability as an ethical responsibility and global challenge, 2) commitment

to education, research, and community for sustainability, and 3) leadership and proactive approaches to sustainability.

Keywords: European University Alliances, education for sustainability, thematic analysis, higher education, qualitative research

Training ecological thinking in early school age students through integration of curriculum contents

Elena Chiriac

Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova
chiriacelena1973@gmail.com

The article explores the formation of ecological thinking in young school-age students by integrating ecological education into the school curriculum. The need for individual and collective responsibility towards the environment and influence on student behavior is highlighted. The study promotes the use of STE(A)M methods to stimulate involvement in practical ecological projects, demonstrating that primary education can form responsible and empathetic citizens with nature.

Keywords: ecological education, sustainable thinking, STE(A)M methodology, ecological responsibility

Role storytelling, a method used in the study of the literary text and character

Emilia Sofia

Secondary School No. 19, Braşov, Romania
emilia_nitescu@yahoo.com

The article presents the role storytelling method, used mainly in the study of the text and the character. The method, belonging to the constructivism, is the result of several transformations of the original idea. It was defined, named and described. The necessary emotional and cognitive background was clarified in practical contexts. The requirements for the teachers come from the systematic observation of the students. The method is applied to a fourth graders group, during a school year.

The research aimed to examine and evaluate a new educative reality, created by introducing the role storytelling to investigate the text and character. Therefore, the research intends to observe the impact the new method has on the text comprehension.

Keywords: role storytelling method, text investigation, character investigation

Andragogic competences in the labor market of the Republic of Moldova: From pedagogy to heutagogy

Liliana Poștan

State University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

cercetareim@gmail.com

In several articles, initiated in 2014, we analyzed the need for andragogic skills on the labor market in the Republic of Moldova. We support the relevance of designing units of andragogic skills in the curricula for the general fields of study: educational sciences, arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, journalism and information, administrative sciences, economic sciences, law.

At a distance of 10 years, I note, in the article, the evolution of learning towards the heutagogic model. Heutagogic views are integrated into the latest educational policies and strategies: lifelong learning, learner-centered learning, competence as a learning outcome, the formation of the competence to learn to learn.

In the paper, we issue the idea of the movement of adult learning from andragogy to heutagogy. We look for the arguments in learning practice, professional practice, social practice, policies and strategies regarding education and learning.

Keywords: andragogic skills, labor market, pedagogy, andragogy, heutagogy

Digitalized exercises versus practical exercises in training physiotherapists in the skill of identifying motor movements

Elena-Simona Indreica

Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania

elena.indreica@unitbv.ro

This study proposes a comparative analysis between two exercises carried out in teaching activities with students from the study program with a physiotherapy profile – the digitalized version and the practical version. The aim was to determine which is the most optimal option in developing the skill of physiotherapists to identify movements and the muscles related to each movement in a motor process. A grid with seven performance descriptors on a five-level scale was used for the analysis. The conclusion was that in terms of developing cognitive skills (identification of movements and the muscles associated with each movement) for future physiotherapy specialists, practical exercises are the ones that favor performance.

Keywords: digitalized exercises, practical exercises, physiotherapists, identifying motor movements

Topic: Special Education

Enhancing social and academic success for high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder Students in Tertiary Education

Ioana Kocurova - Giurgiu, Miluse Loffelmanova

Skoda Auto University, Czech Republic

ioana.giurgiu@savs.cz

Incorporating strategies to support students with high-functioning autism in higher education requires addressing challenges like impaired Theory of Mind (ToM) and social thinking difficulties, which affect interpreting intentions and emotions. This article examines these cognitive challenges and proposes inclusive strategies to meet both cognitive and social needs in university settings. Effective approaches include explicit teaching of social cognition, peer mentoring, flexible communication channels, and sensory accommodations. Educators must adapt teaching practices, continually reassess assumptions, and apply evidence-based methods to enhance learning for ASD students, ensuring they can apply academic knowledge practically.

Keywords: theory of mind, social thinking, HFASD, tertiary education

Implications of personal development activities on the self-esteem of students with SEN

Andra - Maria Jurca, Claudia - Vasilica Borca

West University of Timișoara, Romania

andra.jurca@e-uvt.ro

Our entire life is a continuous development, from the prenatal period until old age. Harmonious development cannot occur by itself, but needs to be stimulated, learned by the person concerned. In this sense, it is known that self-esteem is an important predictor for children's development and adaptation. For this reason, it is all the more important to emphasize how children's self-esteem develops from the primary cycle. In schools in Romania, we have not identified an intervention program based on personal development activities that would develop the self-esteem of students with CES (Special Educational Needs) integrated in mainstream schools together with students with typical development. The reason why the present study investigates the impact that personal development

activities have on the development of self-esteem of students with typical development and those with CES in the primary cycle. Students with CES, together with those with typical development, participated in an intervention based on personal development activities, organized in 3 modules: knowledge and self-knowledge, managing emotions and communication and team-building. The intervention was carried out after classes, the students being included in an after-school program. The design used in this study is quasi-experimental, pretest-posttest, with experimental and control group. The study participants were 40 students from the urban environment. Of these, 20 were part of the control group and the other half constituted the experimental group, who took part in the planned intervention. The experimental group also included three students with CES who participated in the activities carried out together with the other colleagues, as well as three students with CES from the control group. Students were tested before and after the intervention using Q-SORT as a subjective research method. The method was devised by William Stephenson in the year 1935. It presents a set of statements concerning a certain topic which are then presented to a person who orders them from strongly disagree to strongly agree according to the participant's opinion. This operationalization is called "Q sort". As a result of the qualitative analysis of the data, improvements were registered in the areas of activities that were worked on. The results of this research suggest that personal development activities are necessary within after-school programs, and for those institutions that cannot afford such a program for various reasons, the proposed activities can be carried out within the management hours or be included in the type of extra-curricular activities that the school should make available to students.

Keywords: self-esteem, personal development, special educational needs, Q-sort