

Editorial

The second issue of CEPsJ in 2024 comprises different Varia papers focusing on mathematics education, LGBT issues in education, how practice education should be conducted in social work education, geology education, specific issues in different educational systems, effects of chronotypes on students' classroom behaviour, the problems that families with special needs children face, how speech and language therapists assess their knowledge and skills, and about autism spectrum disorder and education.

The first paper, *Assessing Student Teachers' Ability in Posing Mathematical Reasoning Problems* by Masriyah, Ahmad Wachidul Kohar, Endah Budi Rahaju, Dini Kinati Fardah and Umi Hanifah deals with assessing pre-service teachers' ability to pose mathematical reasoning problems. Such competences are essential due to the increasing challenges teachers face in 21st-century mathematics teaching. This paper presents a study investigating the quality of mathematical reasoning problems pre-service teachers pose. Thirty-four pre-service teachers from a public university in Indonesia participated in the study. The results indicate that more than 70% of them were successful in posing reasoning problems, but more detailed results are presented in the paper.

The second paper, by Marija Bartulović and Barbara Kušević, *When Does "Too Early" Become "Too Late"? Reflections of Croatian Secondary School Educators on the Persistence of LGBT Taboos in the Education System* presents one of the topics generated by a thematic analysis of data collected through a focus group process. The paper draws from the research project LGBT (In)Visibility in School: The Educators' Perspective, which focused on the taboo position of sexual and gender diversity within the education system. Focus group secondary school teachers identified key factors about the understanding of the student as an innocent being whose sexual education should begin at a time that educators themselves are unable to determine. They also identify parents as barriers to the inclusion of topics of sexual and gender diversity in the curriculum and the absence of a systematic, LGBT-inclusive approach to teaching about sexuality.

The next paper, *Reflexive Practice Learning as the Potential to Become a Competent Future Practitioner* by Tadeja Kodele and Nina Mešl, describes an example of social work education in which reflexive practice learning was used to help students work competently in professional practice. Within an action research project, new forms of mentoring support for students working with families facing multiple challenges were developed as part of their practice learning. This paper presents the results of a qualitative analysis of the students'

reflections on mentoring meetings. The analysis shows practice learning should be framed as a reflexive dialogue between mentors and students. Students need opportunities to share experiences and expand their knowledge with other students in small mentoring groups. The continuous and concrete support that the mentoring group provided to the students in practice enabled them to deal with the sense of uncertainty that often arises in collaborative processes of help.

The fourth paper, by Tereza Jedličková, Andrea Svobodová and Václav Kachlík, *Frequent Limits and Advantages of Conditions for Geology Education: Example of Czech and Slovak State Curricula* presents geology as a subject of low interest for many students and teachers. This study examines the organisational conditions for geology education using the model of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, drawing from the national curricula. The study discusses the possible reasons for the unpopularity of the field worldwide and proposes general recommendations that would contribute to increasing interest in geoscience. The main drawbacks of geology education seem to be the large volume of required knowledge, its thematic structure, and a lack of real-life contexts.

The next paper in this 2024 Varia issue, *Success in Education by Defying Great Odds: A Positive Deviance Analysis of Educational Policies*, by Eva Ponte, discusses the issues of education being currently in crisis in many parts of the world. This constitutes a significant drawback in terms of humanity's prosperity and well-being since education is the key to an educated workforce and humane, collaborative, and caring societies. Even within this dim landscape, certain educational systems defy the odds and perform significantly higher than their otherwise comparable systems. This paper proposes using an unusual lens for educational policy comparative studies of positive deviance to aid us in progressing towards a more stable educational state of affairs. Using a positive deviance methodology, which focuses on learning what is working well in systems that defy and overcome substantial challenges, this study investigates the patterns, attitudes, and actions of three selected cases: Massachusetts as a positive deviant in the US, Estonia as a positive deviant in Europe, and Castile-Leon as a positive deviant in Spain. By analysing educational policies, laws, and other related documents, the purpose is to find commonalities that explain why these systems outperform others. The results of the comparative analysis pinpoint areas and strategies informative to those leading struggling educational systems, such as a strong commitment to equity and justice, placing teachers at the centre of reforms, using assessment as a tool for process monitoring and summative inquiry, and making preschool education accessible to all.

The sixth paper, by Sandra Figueiredo, *Chronotypes, Disruptive Behaviour, and Schedules in Classrooms: 'Morningness' and Psychomotor Agitation*,

presents an empirical cross-sectional study that explored the effect of chronotypes on classroom behaviour. One hundred and forty 1st to 4th graders were examined regarding their chronotype and disruptive behaviours occurring in the classroom. Three groups of chronotypes (i.e., morning, intermediate and evening) were identified. Multivariate analysis of variance and analysis of regression parameters showed that morning children are more agitated and impulsive compared to evening peers. Concerning academic achievement, students did not differ in the subjects Portuguese and Mathematics for both semesters when considering chronotype and controlling for covariates such as age and gender. Parental qualifications appeared as an influential covariate for the chronotype effect in disruptive behaviour. This evidence addresses the contributions of school policies and family supervision regarding young children. This study highlights concerns and novelties for education and psychology.

The seventh paper, *The Families of Special Needs Children from the Perspective of Vulnerability*, by Darja Plavčak, suggests that families of children with special needs should be approached with sensitivity, flexibility, and balanced interventions. It is important to understand families in the context of their lives, including the emotional stages of caring for a child with special needs and other difficult circumstances they may face. Interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of families and developed collaboratively with them.

The eighth paper, by Jerneja Novšak Brce, Ingrid Žolgar and Damjana Kogovšek, *Self-Evaluation of Speech and Language Therapists on their Competence in Cooperation with Parents in Slovenia and North Macedonia* aims to examine how speech and language therapists from Slovenia and North Macedonia assess their knowledge and skills necessary for cooperation with parents. For the study, a questionnaire was developed to measure the competence of collaboration among speech and language therapists and parents in a sample of 110 speech and language therapists, including 62 speech and language therapists from Slovenia and 48 from North Macedonia. The results show differences between Slovenian and North Macedonian speech and language therapists in self-assessed attitudes towards parental involvement but no differences in the domain of knowledge and skills. The interaction of country and years of work experience is significant for the knowledge domain. Attitudes about cooperation with parents are not affected by years of work experience, area of work, or additional professional training; only the country where the therapists work has an impact. The competence of collaboration between speech and language therapists and parents varies between the two countries, but there is space for improvement in each domain.

The last paper in this issue, *Dimensions of Object Relations in People with Autism Spectrum Disorder as a Basis for Strengthening Social Relatedness Skills* by Simona Rogič Ožek, presents the results of a study focusing on the dimensions of object relations in people with autism spectrum disorder. An object relation denotes a relationship with a significant other, within which several identification processes take place through a meaningful emotional exchange. This is described by the developmental process of separation and individuation, which primarily occurs in children from birth to their third year of life. Although deficits in social relationships represent the most typical features of autism, there is still a great deal of uncertainty in this field. Based on the theoretical background, the author hypothesised that differences in the characteristics of object relations in people with autism spectrum disorder compared to the characteristics of object relations in people without autism spectrum disorder are reflected in a greater expression of disturbances in object relations, especially in the more pronounced dimensions of greater social isolation and symbiotic merging. Thirty-eight adults with autism spectrum disorder with normal intellectual abilities and 100 adults without autism spectrum disorder participated in the study. The results show statistically significant differences between the two groups of respondents, as the dimensions of symbiotic merging, social isolation and separation anxiety are more pronounced in adults with autism spectrum disorder. These findings serve as a basis for designing professional support for people with autism spectrum disorder to promote autonomy and strengthen the skills needed for social relatedness and social inclusion.

This issue concludes with a book review by Matej Zapušek, who presented a book *Handbook of Game-Based Learning* by Jan L. Plass, Richard E. Mayer and Bruce D. Homer (Eds.) published by MIT Press in 2020.

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