‘Specialization in ICTs and Special Education: Psychopedagogy of Integration’ Postgraduate Program
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THE EVOLUTIONARY COURSE OF THEORY OF MIND AND ITS RELATION TO SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS. LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Autism Spectrum Disorder involves a distinct way of perceiving, processing, social and cognitive behavior. It is directly related to the ability of the Theory of Mind, the evolution of which affects the course of the individual in the autism spectrum on a personal, social, academic and consequently professional level. The present research is a literature review of articles in approved scientific journals, which focuses on the correlation of the cognitive ability of the Theory of Mind and Autism, as well as their influence on the social-emotional and cognitive development of the child. The results showed the existence of an interaction between the Theory of Mind and the social, emotional and cognitive skills that the child develops from the first years of life. As a result, deficits in the Theory of Mind displayed by children on the autism spectrum cause social, cognitive and metacognitive limitations in their development. Therefore, the targeted holistic approach to their weaknesses is considered the most effective way to deal with them, as it reduces existing deficiencies and creates compensatory problem-solving factors, enhancing their capabilities.

Key-words: Theory of Mind, Autism Spectrum Disorder, social-emotional development, social interaction, self-regulation, empathy, cognitive development, executive functions, language development, memory, working memory, attention, cognitive flexibility, planning, inhibition control, Weak Central Coherence, interplay between emotional and cognitive development in Autism Spectrum Disorder, metacognition, ICTs, alternative therapies for Autism Spectrum Disorder

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