


PERSONAL INFORMATION

PhD. Skerdi Zahaj



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Sex Male | Date of birth 18/07/1987 | Nationality Albanian

JOB APPLIED FOR  
POSITION  
PREFERRED JOB  
STUDIES APPLIED FOR

WORK EXPERIENCE

(September 2010 – Now)

**Lecturer and Researcher**

University of Tirana: Faculty of Social Science: Department of Education and Psychology  
( <http://www.unitir.edu.al> )

- Psychological Trauma: Assessment and Treatment
- School Crises: Psychological Intervention
- Introduction to Research Methods
- Theoretical Models of Counselling Psychology
- Counselling Skills in Clinical Settings

(September 2019 – Now)

**Schema Psychotherapist and CBT**

“My therapist” psychological clinic, Tirana, Albania

- Psychotherapy with adults suffering from complex trauma and personality disorders
- Psychotherapy with young adults suffering from psychological trauma and interpersonal difficulties
- Psychotherapy with the adults suffering from anxiety and mood disorders
- Clinical supervision
- Psychological assessment for third parties

(September 2014 – Now)

**Lecturer**

Marin Barleti University: Faculty of Social Science and Law  
( <http://www.umb.edu.al/> )

- Clinical Psychology

(September 2013 – 2019)

**Clinical Psychologist and Psychotherapist**

Bethany Psychosocial Service

- Psychotherapy with young adults suffering from psychological trauma and interpersonal difficulties
- Psychotherapy with the adults suffering from Axis 1 and Axis 2 Disorders
- Psychological assessment and treatment of adolescents
- Clinical supervision
- Psychological assessment for third parties

(October 2009 – November 2013)

**Project Implementation Officer**

Albanian Pain Association

- Planning and leading Research
- Organizing International and National Conferences
- Public Relation with International Organizations (IASP and EFIC)
- Crises intervention to exposed groups

( May 2010 – July 2012) **Head of Public Opinion Survey Centre**

American University of Tirana

- Design and implement research projects
- Write research reports

( May 2010 – July 2012) **Head of Academic Advising**

American University of Tirana

( August 2009 – September 2013) **Clinical Psychologist**

“Galenus” Multidisciplinary Pain Management Clinic

- Assessment and treatment of adolescents with cancer and chronic pain
- Psychotherapy with patients suffering from cancer and chronic pain
- Psychotherapy with the adults suffering from Axis 1 and Axis 2 Disorders

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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(01.05. 2016)

**PhD in Psychology**

“Identity development trajectories of adolescents suffering from cancer and chronic pain”.

University of Tirana: Faculty of Social Science: Department of Education and Psychology

<http://www.doktoratura.unitir.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Skerdi-Zahaj.pdf>

August 2017-December 2017

**Schema therapy training**

Specialization in schema therapy by “The Schema therapy Centre”

February 2015- February 2018

**Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist**

Postgraduate Specialization in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Israeli Cognitive Therapy Association and Albanian Association of Cognitive -Behavioural Therapy

( October-November 2014)

**Visiting Scholar and Research Associate**

Department of Cognitive and Clinical Neuroscience, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany

- Learning and brain plasticity in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Contextual Implicit Memory
- Phantom phenomena: a window to the mind and the brain

(2008- 2010)

**MSc. In Clinical and Developmental Psychology**

University of Tirana: Faculty of Social Science: Department of Education and Psychology

(Average of marks 10/10)

Golden Medal Awarded

(2005- 2008)

**Graduated in Psychology**

University of Tirana: Faculty of Social Science: Department of Education and Psychology

(Average of marks 9.75/10)

## PERSONAL SKILLS

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Mother tongue(s) Albanian

Other language(s)	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
English	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Certified by TOEIC 825/900					
Certified by University of Tirana, Foreign Language Faculty, Department of English					
Italian	Excellent	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

- Communication skills**
- Very good detail oriented gained through my experience as researcher and clinical psychologist
  - Very good presentation skills gained through my experience as Lecturer
  - Very good communication skills gained through my experience in all jobs

- Organisational / managerial skills**
- Ability to work in groups (Project Implementation Officer)
  - Ability to work independently (Researcher and Lecturer)
  - Leadership (Head of Academic advising)
  - Work under pressure ( Head of Public Opinion Survey Centre)

- Computer skills**
- Very good command of Microsoft Office™ tools
  - Very good command of IBM SPSS for quantitative research
  - Very good command of AMOS for SEM
  - Very good command of Weft QDA for qualitative research
  - Very good command of “Prezi” for presentations
  - Low command of N Vivo for qualitative research

- Driving licence**
- B Category

**National and International Projects**

1. **Improving the Nutrition Status of school age children in Albania**, ACER and UNICEF, Methodologist and coordinator for communication for behaviour change, 2020.
2. **The causes of unethical behaviours and corruption in Albanian Education system**, National Study in all Albanian education levels, Methodologist and data analyst, conducted by ACER and supported by Mary World Loreto, 2020.
3. **National study for needs assessment targeting LGBTI** in the project “Supporting LGBTI+ People in Albania through Empowerment Services, Standardization of Social Services and Changing of Negative Stereotypes” by “Streha” Center and German Embassy, 2020.
4. Evaluation Report **“My school is a safe place” UNICEF and YWCA**: Methodologist and Report Writer”, 2020
5. Evaluation Report for the project **“Early Childhood Care and Development for Roma Children in Albania”**, Save the Children, 2019
6. **Assessment of base line “My school is a safe place” UNICEF and YWCA**: Methodologist and Report Writer, 2019
7. **Assessment of children in Public Residential Care Institutions and development of**

- individualized care plans for their de-institutionalization**, Bethany Social Service and Save the Children Albania: Clinical Psychologist, 2019.
8. **Designing and implementing an action plan for changing the attitudes of parents and public at large on participation of Roma children in school** (2018). ACER, Methodologist for UNICEF.
  9. **Research on inclusive education and support with social education programs towards more friendly and contemporary schools in response to challenges of the capital**. Policy Research Programme for Young Academics: PERFORM in collaboration with the Academy of Political Studies (APS) and Tirana Municipality [http://www.asp.al/pdf/Inclusive\\_education.pdf](http://www.asp.al/pdf/Inclusive_education.pdf)
  10. **Impact of New Ways of Teaching and Learning applied in VET** in Integrating New Ways of Inclusive Learning in VET for Swiss Contact
  11. **School lunches, after school care and students' performance evaluation – Evaluation of the upcoming pilot programme in the municipality of Tirana”** (2018), ACER, Methodologist for UNDP.
  12. **The efficacy of Catholic schooling in Albania (2017)**, National Study. Research leader, supported by Catholic Education. <https://edukimikatolik.al/statistika-studime-raporte-broshura-manuale-te-ndryshme-botime-etj/>
  13. **Ethics in Albanian Education System (2016)**, National Study in all Albanian education levels, Methodologist and data analyst, conducted by ACER and supported by Mary World Loreto. <http://www.albaniahope.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Study-Report%E2%80%9CEthics-in-the-Education-System-in-Albania%E2%80%9D.pdf>
  14. **Roma minority in Europe (2015)**, International project. Researcher
  15. **Identity development in emerging adulthood. (2014)**, International project. Researcher

#### Publications and Conferences

1. **Zahaj, S.**, Sulstarova A., (2019). “Early maladaptive schemas in clinical population and nonclinical population in Albania: does schema severity predicts psychopathology” *International Conference “Applied Psychology and Educational Sciences”*, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.
2. Serjanaj, B., **Zahaj, S.**, (2019) “The Relationship Between Five - Factor Model Personality Traits, Maladaptive Schemas and Death Anxiety”, *International Conference “Applied Psychology and Educational Sciences”*, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.
3. **Zahaj, S.**, Dibra.S., Sula, G., (2018). Affordances and Constraints of Blended Learning applied in VET: A phenomenological study to explore the perspectives of students and teachers, *International Conference Education, Psychology and Society*, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.
4. **Zahaj, S.**, Dimitrova, R., (2018). *The Influence of Identity Styles on Adolescents' Psychological Problems in Postcommunist Albania* in Changing Values and Identities in the Post-Communist World. Springer,
5. Tamo, A, **Zahaj, S.**, (2017). *Counselling psychology: process and skills*, Academic book, Tirana, Pegi.
6. **Zahaj, S.**, Sula, G, Bodinaku B., (2017). The Young Person's CORE psychological problems in Albania: Parent, teacher, and child perspectives, *Current psycho-social dynamics of development and education, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania*
7. Bodinaku B., **Zahaj, S.**, (2017). An exploration of teachers', parents' and students' perceptions on unethical behaviors in basic education and higher secondary education in Albania, *Current psycho-social dynamics of development and education, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania*.
8. Dimitrova, R., Musso, P. Abubakar, A., Solcova, I., Stefenel, D, Uka,F., **Zahaj, S.**, Tavel P. & Jordanov V. (2017). *Identity Resources for Positive Adaptation of Roma Ethnic Minority Youth in*

*Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, Kosovo, and Romania* In book: Positive Youth Development in Global Contexts of Social and Economic Change, Publisher: Taylor and Francis, Editors: Anne C. Petersen, Silvia H. Koller, Frosso Motti-Stefanidi, Suman Verma, pp.184-199

9. Dimitrova, R., Buzea, C., Taušová, J., Uka, F., **Zahaj, S.** & Crocetti, E. Relationships between identity domains and life satisfaction in minority and majority youth in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Kosovo, and Romania, *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 1-22.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2017.1336997>
10. Dimitrova, R., Musso, P., Naudé, L., **Zahaj, S.**, Solcova, I., Stefenel, D., Uka, Jordanov, V., Jordanov, E., & Tavel P. (2017) National collective identity in transitional societies: Salience and relations to life satisfaction for youth in South Africa, Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Kosovo and Romania, *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 27:2, 150-158  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2017.1301722>
11. **Zahaj, S.**, (2016). The influence of identity styles on psychological health during adolescence: does identity commitment matter? Developmental challenges in changing society: Insights from research with adolescents and youth. Tirana University, Tirana.
12. **Zahaj, S.**, (2016). Does academic failure affects self-identity, self-esteem and purposes in life? A quasi-experimental design with university students. Developmental challenges in changing society: Insights from research with adolescents and youth. Tirana University, Tirana.
13. **Zahaj, S.**, (2016). Discrimination and Wellbeing of Roma Adolescents in Albania: Does identity development matter? 20th European IAAH Congress, Pristina, Kosovo.
14. **Zahaj, S.**, (2016). Identity development of adolescents' suffering from cancer and chronic pain: a phenomenological approach, 20th European IAAH Congress, Pristina, Kosovo.
15. **Zahaj, S.**, (2016). Gender and Identity development: The influence of educational policies on identity processing styles, *Diversity issues in cross-cultural research across Europe*, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania
16. **Zahaj, S.**, (2015). The Urgency for Evidence-Based Psychotherapies in Albanian Mental Health System: Moving from International Research to Cultural Treatment Practices, *International Psychology Bulletin*, Volume 19, No. 4, Fall 2015, 51-54.
17. **Zahaj, S.**, (2015). Identity Styles in Albanian (multi)cultural society: Does Identity Influence School Results?, *EARA Newsletter*, 5-9.
18. Dimitrova, R., Stefenel, D., Uka, F., **Zahaj, S.**, Abubakar, A., (2015) The protective influence of family connectedness and national identity for well-being of Roma adolescents in Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Romania., *17th European Conference on Developmental Psychology*, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal.
19. **Zahaj, S.**, (2014). Structure versus Agency: Exploration of professional identity development of health psychologists, *Conference of Qualitative Research*, Department of Education and Psychology, University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.
20. **Zahaj, S.**, (2014). Identity formation among Albanian adolescents: Identity statuses and psychotherapeutic approaches, *2nd National Congress of Psychotherapy*, Tirana, Albania.
21. **Zahaj, S.**, Dhima, S. (2014). The effects of failure on self-esteem, purposes in life and identity formation: A quasi-experimental design with university students, *Transforming Societies – A challenge for Social Work in Europe*, Sofia, Bulgaria.  
[http://www.tissa.net/tissa2014/abstracts/phd/t14\\_phd\\_zahaj.pdf](http://www.tissa.net/tissa2014/abstracts/phd/t14_phd_zahaj.pdf)
22. Vaso, A., Adahan, H., Gjika, A., **Zahaj, S.**, Zhurda, T., Vyshka, G., Devor, M., (2014) Peripheral Nervous System Origin of Phantom Limb Pain, *Pain*, Impact Factor 5.6.  
[http://www.painjournalonline.com/article/S0304-3959\(14\)00197-3/abstract](http://www.painjournalonline.com/article/S0304-3959(14)00197-3/abstract)
23. **Zahaj, S.**, Selmani, F. (2014) Crises response in public schools: An inquiry into Albanian School Psychologists experiences and perceptions, *Strengthening Families and Communities*, Balkan American Conference Tirana, Tirana, Albania. <http://www.clemson.edu/centers/institutes/fnl/ConferenceBrochure.pdf>

24. Peshkopia, R., **Zahaj, S.**, Hysi, G., (2014). The Myth of Enver Hoxha in the Albanian Cinema of Socialist Realism: An Inquiry into the Psychoanalytical Features of the Myth, Framework. The Journal of Cinema and Media 44, No 1, Pg. 66-82.  
<https://commerce.wayne.edu/wsujournals/framework/framework-back-issues/framework-volume-55-number1-spring-2014.html>
25. **Zahaj, S.** (2013), Current psychotherapeutic techniques to helping adolescents cope with cancer: Their impact on ego identity, *Challenges and the future of social work and psychology as new professions in Albanian labour system*, "Aleksandër Xhuvani" University.
26. **Zahaj, S.** (2013). The impact of cancer on adolescent identity formation: challenges for social workers, Third International Conference "Realities and challenges for social worker as a profession in labour market in Albania", EASSW and University of Tirana.
27. **Zahaj, S.**, (2013), Phenomenological methodology: A perspective of studying identity formation of adolescent suffering from cancer and chronic pain. The 1st international conference on research and education challenges towards the future, Shkodra.  
<http://icrae2013.unishk.edu.al/icraecd2013/doc/767.pdf>
28. **Zahaj, S.**, (2013). The impact of chronic pain on adolescent identity formation: Considerations for psychologists, 9th National Albanian Pain Conference, 48-49.
29. **Zahaj, S.**, Selmani, F., (2012), Gender differences reporting chronic pain: A bio-psycho-social analysis, National Conference of Psychology Department: "100 years development in the field of education and psychology", University of Tirana
30. **Zahaj, S.**, Bejko, D., (2012). The mechanisms of the relationship between chronic pain catastrophization and post-traumatic stress disorder, "Towards future sustainable development", 795-799. <http://www.pha-ks.com/uploads/files/Libri-pergaditje%20B5.pdf#page=70> ,  
<https://prezi.com/m6iwbpfm-j6d/konferenca-shkoder/>
31. Melonashi, E., **Zahaj, S.**, Hysi, G., Peshkopia, R., (2012), Expectancy Outcomes and Self-reported Alcohol Involvement in Educated Albanian Young Adults, Mediterranean Journal of Social Science, Volume 2, Issue 10, 73-81.
32. **Zahaj, S.**, (2011), Adolescent romantic relationship in transitional societies: Their function in Adolescent depression symptoms and self-esteem, *Development Problems of Childhood and adolescence in transitional societies*, 589-595.
33. Tamo A., **Zahaj, S.**, (2009) "Using of Sexual Lies by Adolescents", Periodic Journal of the Faculty of Social Science in the University of Tirana, 10-19.

## Trainings

1. October 19 - 21, 2018; 1st Congress of the Italian Society of Schema Therapy (SIST): Clinical Models and Applications, Rome, Italy.
2. 20 -24 April 2015, Academic Writing and Publication of Journal Articles", European Association of Development Psychology, Transylvania University of Brasov, Brasov, Romania.
3. 14-19, June 2014, Summer school "Risk and Resilience: Multilevel Dynamics", European Association of Development Psychology and Jacob Foundation, Island of Syros, Greece.
4. 31 May-1 July, Psychodrama workshop "The role of theory in psychodrama", Kosovo Psychotherapy Association, Prizren, Kosovo.
5. November, 09, 2013, Assiste assidument a la 3 eme sesion du 3 eme seminare du Champ Freudien En Albanie.
6. September, 21-22, 2013, Psychodrama workshop "Trauma and Trans-generational Work in Psychodrama, 20 hours, Albanian Association for Psychotherapy.



7. March, 30, 2012, National Conference 'Autism is a new "World"', American University of Tirana, (4 credits).
8. January, 14, 2012, Assiste assidument a la 2 de sesion du second seminare du Champ Freudien En Albanie.
9. December, 7, 2011, Seminar on 'Education and mental Health', American University of Tirana, (2 credits).
10. December, 2, 2011, Workshop on 'Assuring and Enhancing Quality in Higher Education', University of Sheffield and American University of Tirana.
11. September, 12, 2010, Attestation de presence au 1er seminaire du Champ Freudien en Albanie.
12. September, 2009 – September 2010, "IASP (International Associations for Study of Pain)", Psychotherapeutic treatment of chronic pain patients, Tirana, Albania.
13. 22-26 June 2009, "Assistenza e Cooperazione Italiana Verso I Paesi dell'Europa Sud Orientale Sul tema della Riduzione Della Domanda Di Droge" organized by "Regione Marche" dhe "Ministero Solidarieta Sociale", Ohrid, Macedonia.
14. 19-21 October, 2007, Albanian Psychotherapy Congress, Solution of problems and family conflict, European Association for Psychotherapy and Albanian Association for Psychotherapy.
15. December, 9, 2006, Winner of the 1st place of National Essay Competition "If you think that you can't fight corruption, think again", UASID, National Democratic Institute.