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Editorial

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ABSTRACT

The present issue of the *Journal of Clinical and Developmental Psychology* offers an opportunity to reflect on emerging themes within the field, with particular attention to the interplay between psychological functioning, developmental trajectories, and contextual influences. The contributions gathered in this issue highlight how psychological research continues to evolve in response to contemporary challenges, including educational inequalities, social inclusion, and the impact of adverse and high-risk environments on mental health.

The articles address a range of interconnected topics, including school attendance problems and learning processes, developmental transitions and work inclusion, and the psychological consequences of trauma in contexts such as forced migration and incarceration. Together, these contributions provide insights that are relevant for psychologists, educators, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for context-sensitive and evidence-based approaches to support well-being and participation across the lifespan.

Keywords: school attendance problems; learning disabilities; trauma; social vulnerability; job readiness; self-advocacy; biopsychosocial model

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The present issue of the *Journal of Clinical and Developmental Psychology* brings together contributions that converge on the analysis of the relationship between psychological functioning, developmental trajectories, and life contexts. Taken together, these works highlight how processes of adaptation, vulnerability, and inclusion emerge from the dynamic interplay between individual characteristics and environmental conditions, in line with an integrated developmental perspective that emphasizes the interdependence between person and context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Sameroff, 2010).

A first thematic axis concerns the educational and school context, understood as a crucial setting for development and the prevention of psychological distress. The contribution by **Meduri et al.** examines School Attendance Problems as a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be reduced to mere physical absence from school. The study highlights the role of individual variables, such as learned helplessness and procrastination, associated with greater attendance difficulties, as well as protective factors, including mastery orientation and positive perceptions of school climate, which are linked to lower levels of attendance problems. These findings underscore how school absenteeism represents the outcome of intertwined psychological and contextual processes, in which motivation, perceived efficacy, behavioral regulation, and the quality of the school environment play a central role.

Also within the educational domain, **Vascelli et al.** present a pilot study on the use of Bionic Reading® in students with Specific Learning Disorders and neurotypical participants. The results indicate an improvement in reading accuracy among students with SLD, whereas no comparable benefits emerge in participants without a diagnosis. The study suggests that digital tools supporting learning must be empirically evaluated and tailored to the specific profiles of students. From this perspective, educational technology should not be regarded as a universal solution, but rather as a resource to be selectively and thoughtfully integrated into support pathways.

A second thematic axis addresses trauma, psychological distress, and vulnerability in critical social contexts. The contribution by **Benedetto et al.**, adopting a narrative approach, explores the consequences of sexual violence among refugee women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The testimonies collected reveal manifestations consistent with Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, including affect dysregulation, internalized shame, relational difficulties, and experiences of

hopelessness. The study highlights the narrative and culturally situated nature of trauma, showing how psychological suffering cannot be understood independently of the broader conditions of war, forced migration, gender-based violence, and social instability in which these experiences are embedded, in line with a relational and contextual understanding of trauma (Herman, 1992). From a complementary perspective, **Shateri and Tahan** analyze the psychological effects of solitary confinement on inmates with pre-existing mental disorders. Their review documents how solitary confinement may exacerbate psychiatric symptoms, increase the risk of self-harm and suicide, and impair cognitive functioning, raising significant clinical, ethical, and legal concerns. This contribution draws attention to the psychological consequences of highly restrictive institutional practices and underscores the need for correctional models that are better informed by mental health considerations and respect for human dignity. Alongside these areas, the review by **Iacomini et al.** focuses on developmental transitions and inclusion within social and occupational contexts, highlighting the role of interventions aimed at promoting job readiness and self-advocacy in adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities. The findings indicate that the development of communication, decision-making, and autonomy skills represents a key factor for participation in work environments. These insights are consistent with a life-span perspective (Baltes, 1987), which conceptualizes development as a continuous process shaped by opportunities and constraints emerging across different stages of life.

Across various methodological and theoretical approaches, the contributions included in this issue converge in challenging linear interpretations of psychological functioning. School-related difficulties, transitions to employment, and traumatic experiences are not understood as isolated expressions of individual deficits, but rather as complex outcomes of interactions between vulnerabilities, resources, and contextual conditions. This perspective is consistent with the biopsychosocial model (Engel, 1977), which advocates for an integrated understanding of health and illness.

Taken together, the works presented in this issue contribute to a nuanced reading of clinical and developmental processes, encouraging consideration of the complexity of life trajectories and the role of contexts in supporting or hindering psychological functioning. In this direction, clinical and

developmental research assumes not only a descriptive role but also an applied one: generating knowledge that can inform personalized interventions, inclusive educational practices, and institutional policies attentive to human dignity and participation.

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