

# European Autism Congress

March 14-15, 2019 | Zagreb, Croatia



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## **The use of religious treatment practices as a form of alternative treatment to children with autism spectrum disorder in Kosovo**

Many parents of children who have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) choose to consider complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) to help treat overall health and potential behavioral problems. Alternative medicine is a term that describes medical treatments that are used instead of traditional (mainstream) therapies. CAM is often perceived as “natural”, without the side effects of conventional medical treatments. This is a very widespread practice though so far from the researches that have been made there is no accurate data on the effectiveness of these forms of treatment. The aim of this study is to identify in general the use of alternative treatment by parents during the treatment of their children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Kosovo. Religious treatment practices include visiting a religious cleric and follow practices to find a cure. This study will be realized through an anonymous questionnaire, supplemented by 40 parents, part of a Therapeutic Center that provides day-to-day therapeutic treatment for their children. Parents will be told that their responses will be kept confidential and will be only used for statistical purposes. The particular focus of this study will be the religious treatment as one of the alternative forms of treatment. The reason for choosing this form is based on the fact that Kosovo is a country with high religious influence. The research will find out if the parents of autistic children are using religious treatment as a form of alternative treatment. The research will also focus on analyzing greater opportunities for seeking religious treatment, taking into account influential factors such as parents’ education, children age, etc.

### **Biography**

Erza Ramadani has completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Prishtina. She is now pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Prishtina in the program School Psychology and Counseling. She is an Assistant Supervisor and Child Therapist at the NGO Autizmi in Prishtina. She has participated in various conferences, workshops and trainings in the field of autism and psychology.

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