

# RITA MUFFARIJ MERHEJ

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## EDUCATION

**Université René Descartes, Sorbonne, PARIS V** Paris, France February 1985  
Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS) in Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology

**American University of Beirut (AUB)** Beirut, Lebanon February 1981  
Masters of Art in Psychology

**American University of Beirut (AUB)** Beirut, Lebanon June 1977  
Bachelor of Art in Psychology

**Collège Protestant Français de Beyrouth (CPF)** Beirut, Lebanon June 1974  
Baccalaureate Part II

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Haigazian University** Beirut, Lebanon September 2010  
Lecturer in Psychology and Education till present

- General Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology
- Abnormal Psychology
- Trends in Early Childhood education
- Educational Administration
- Special Education
- Curriculum and Methods in Special Education
- Child and Adolescent Psychopathology
- Introduction to Industrial-Organizational Psychology

Orientation Program Moderator (for new undergraduates)  
Faculty Advisor for Social and Behavioral Sciences Society

**Lebanese American University (LAU) / Social Sciences Department** Beirut, Lebanon February 2010  
Part-time Lecturer in Psychology till present

### Courses taught:

- Child Development
- Social Psychology

**American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC)** Beirut, Lebanon Oct. 2013 to present  
Clinical Supervisor  
Advising and guidance for Intern in Clinical Psychology program

**Friends of the Disabled Association/I'dad Center for Children and Youth with Special Needs** Mechref, Lebanon 2004 to 2010

Director and Clinical Psychologist

### In charge of:

- Training workshops for special educators (behavior modification techniques, writing IEPs)
- Supervision of Department of Specialized Therapies (physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy)

- Parental guidance and counseling
- Clinical assessment of children upon admission
- Founded the Early Intervention Unit at the Center (2006)
- Created a Nucleus Group of Self-Advocates for Intellectually Disabled Youth (2010-2011)

<p><b>Young Women Christian Association (YWCA Lebanon)</b>          Consultant for Evaluation Report on the National YWCA Lebanon Project: Communities Free of Violence. Report included in-depth analysis of strengths and challenges of the YWCA Non-Violence campaign in Lebanon.</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	Jul – Aug 2013
<p><b>International Labor Organization (ILO)</b>          Consultant for Mission on Employment of People with Disabilities: Carried 2012 till Nov 2012out research on Good Practices for the Employment of People with Disabilities in Lebanon</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	Jun-Nov 2012
<p><b>American University of Beirut (AUB) / SBS Department</b>          Part-time Lecturer in Psychology  <u>Courses taught:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Psychology</li> <li>• Development over the Lifespan</li> <li>• Abnormal Child Psychology</li> </ul>	Beirut, Lebanon	Oct-1993 till Jun-2009
<p><b>Future Television</b>          Host of “Awladouna” (Our Children), an awareness-raising segment during the morning show dealing with child development, child and adolescent psychology, including family guidance</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	Apr 1998 till Feb 2004
<p><b>United Nations Relief Agency for Western Asia (UNRWA)</b>          Clinical Psychologist on Consultancy basis for diagnosis of learning disabilities and difficulties in young Palestinian children toward their integration in regular schools of UNRWA</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	2000 – 2006
<p><b>National Center of Educational Research and Development (CNRDP)/ Ministry of Education</b>          Consultant for Teacher Training Program in private and public schools in Lebanon for the detection and treatment of learning difficulties in the Elementary classes</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	1991 – 1993
<p><b>United Nations Development Program (UNDP), New York and Kuwait</b>          Consultant (two expert missions) in Rehabilitation Programs Design and Staff Training for institutions dealing with intellectually disabled children and youth in affiliation to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Social Affairs, and centers for children with multiple disabilities in the private sector in Kuwait.</p>	Kuwait	1989 – 1990
<p><b>Friends of the Disabled Association, “Marie Rose Boulos Center for Curative Education”</b>          Director of the Day Care Center for children and youth with intellectual disabilities, and Clinical Psychologist in charge of assessment, diagnosis and design of individualized educational plans for admitted children.</p>	Beirut, Lebanon	1988 – 1993

<b>Al Amal Institute for Children with Intellectual Disabilities</b> Director of the Psycho-educational programs at the Institute: Assessment, diagnosis and design of treatment plans for children and youth with intellectual disabilities, and follow up reporting.	Brummana, Lebanon	1984 – 1986
<b>United Nations, Statistical Office (New York, UN Plaza)</b> Consultant on Disability Statistics for the Middle East Participant in Experts Group Meeting on Disability Statistics	New York, USA	Jul-Aug 1983
<b>Haigazian University</b> Instructor in Psychology and English Communication Skills <u>Courses taught:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Psychology</li> <li>• Abnormal Psychology</li> <li>• Psychology of Learning</li> <li>• Experimental Psychology</li> </ul> Editor-in-chief of College Yearbook ("Focus", 1981-1982 and 1982-1983) Director of Student Life Office (1982-1983)	Beirut, Lebanon	1981-1983

## **PUBLICATIONS**

**Merhej, Rita, *Our Children from Birth to Adolescence, New Edition (Arabic)*,**  
Academia International, Beirut, Lebanon 2012

**Merhej, Rita, *Manual for Psycho-social support for children in Emergency Situations (Arabic)*,**  
Arab Resource Collective ARC, Beirut, Lebanon 2010

**Merhej, Rita, *The Educational Kit for Teachers of Children with Intellectual Disabilities, (Arabic)*,**  
For "Lana Al Mostaqbal" Association in cooperation with OXFAM-Quebec ,2009

**Nabti, Patricia, *Learning to Care, review by Rita Merhej,***

Association for Volunteer Services, in collaboration with World Bank, Lebanese Canadian Bank, Indevco and Byblos Bank 2006

**Merhej, Rita, *Our Children from Birth to Adolescence,***

Academia, Beirut, 2001 (In Arabic), Winner of the Souad Al Sabbah Award for Best Cultural Achievement for (in coordination with AUB Alumni Association)

**Merhej, Rita, *Autism: diagnosis, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation manual.***

Ministry of Social Affairs / Lebanese Organization for the Rights of the Disabled, (in Arabic), 2001

Miles, Christine, *Special Education for Intellectually Disabled Pupils*, scientific editing and translation by **Rita Merhej**  
and Moussa Charafeddine, Arab Resource Collective (in Arabic), 1994

**Merhej, Rita, *Rehabilitation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities,***

UN/TCD Project, Kuwait/85/001 Technical Reports (2)

**Merhej, Rita, Chouaib, Jamal and Za'za', Rima, "The Hadikat as Salam Programme for Special Education, First Steps: Stories on Inclusion in Early Childhood Education, UNICEF, Paris**

## **LOCAL and REGIONAL CONFERENCES & LECTURES**

**Arab Organization for Disabled Persons (AODP)**

Conference on UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,  
Beirut, Lebanon, July 2012

**American University of Beirut, Media Studies Program, (AUB, Beirut)**

16th annual conference of the Arab-US Association of Communication Educators (**AUSACE 2011**) :

Digital and Media Literacy: New Directions  
Speaker on the Role of Media Psychology: Presentation entitled "Fifteen Minutes of Child Education"  
Beirut, Lebanon, October 2011

**American University of Beirut Alumni Association, (AUB, Beirut)**

- Keynote Speaker for the AUB Alumni Association Legacy Ceremony, Beirut, Lebanon, October 2010
- Speaker at the Panel for the Education of Children with Special Needs, and Featuring Book Author in the AUB Alumni Book Exhibit, Beirut, Lebanon, March 2010

**Parents of Handicapped Association (Sharjah, UAE)**

Workshop on Disability and the Family  
Sharjah, UAE, November 2008

**Kuwaiti Guardians' Association (Kuwait)**

Workshop for Parents and Professionals on Autism: Diagnosis, Educational Programs and Behavioral Management  
Kuwait, 2008

**The Shafallah Third International Forum, Shafallah Center (Doha, Qatar)**

Presentation on Art and Disability  
Doha, Qatar, April 2008

**The Shafallah Second International Forum, Shafallah Center (Doha, Qatar)**

Presentation on Media and Disability in Lebanon  
Doha, Qatar, April 2007

**The Open Art Seminar , The Levuk Center for Disabled Youth (Denmark)**

Presentation on the Importance of Art Therapy in the Education of Children and Youth with Intellectual Disabilities  
Hillerod, Denmark, April 2007

**Al-Amal Rehabilitation Center for Cerebral-Palsied Children (Syria)**

Fund-raising presentation entitled "Our Adolescents: Problems and Solutions"  
Damascus, Syria, November 2006

**Dijla River Training Center (Amman, Jordan)**

Fund-raising presentation entitled: "Give your Child an Opportunity"  
Amman, Jordan, April, 2004

**Iman Early Learning Center (Amman, Jordan)**

Presentation entitled: "What makes Children Happy?"  
Amman, Jordan, April 2003

**Association of Orthodox Women for Social Services (Syria)**

Presentation on Parental Practices and their effects on Children's Behavior  
Homs, Syria, December 2002

**Global Investment House (Kuwait)**

Guest Speaker for the seminar on Women and Achievement  
Kuwait, October 2002

**Abu Dhabi 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference by the U.A.E. Women's Federation (Theme: Nutrition and Challenges Ahead)**

2 presentations on: "Relationship between Nutrition and Behavioral and Learning Problems in Children", and  
"Anorexia and Bulimia in Adolescents"  
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E, April 2001

**SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

- Lebanese Psychological Association/LPA (Board Member 2014-2017)
- Autism Coordination Committee (Member)
- Arab Resource Collective / ARC (Consultant)
- Association for Volunteer Services/AVS (Volunteer)
- AUB Alumni Association (Member)
- Ex-Director of VSA (Very Special Arts) of Lebanon Program
- Delegate of the Shafallah International Forum (Qatar)

## **SKILLS**

**Languages**       Fluent in Arabic, English, French  
**Computer**       Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Power Point

## **REFERENCES**

- Dr Samir Khalaf, President of the Center of Social and Behavioral Studies, American University of Beirut, Tel: 961-1-350 000
- Dr. Shahe Kazarian, Chairman, Social and Behavioral Sciences Department, American University of Beirut, Tel: 961-1-350 000
- Dr. Makram Oueiss, Chairman, Social Sciences Department, Lebanese American University (LAU), Tel: 961-1-786464