



Slovak Blind and Partially
Sighted Union



European Region Interna-
tional Council for Education
and Re/habilitation of People
with Visual Impairment



Faculty of Education

5th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

20. – 21. November 2014

Bratislava – Slovakia

5th European Conference on
Psychology and Visual Impairment

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Bratislava 2014

FIFTH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON PSYCHOLOGY AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Dear colleagues,

we are privileged to welcome you in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, at the 5th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment which has been organised this year by European Region International Council for Education and Re/habilitation of People with Visual Impairment in cooperation with Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union and Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava.

We would like to thank – Peter Rodney and Peter Verstraten from ICEVI Europe, Branislav Mamojka, Tímea Hóková, Libuša Roblová and Lenka Sobotová from Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union and Mária Glasová and Marian Groma from Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava – for their time, energy and expertise they have invested in the preparation of the conference program and accompanying conference activities.

In particular, indeed, we would like to thank to all of you, dear colleagues from various countries, who are taking active part in 5th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment and who are bringing both your scientific and professional psychological expertise to share with all of us, which makes this conference to happen possible. The conference has been also included in the accompanying activities of Slovak Science and Technology Week, held in November this year, and we are convinced, that it will be enriching and encouraging experience. Despite the various social and political turbulences we have been experiencing last months we do hope and wish that personal encounters, professional bonds and collegial friendships will be renewed during the conference and that they contribute to very necessary climate of mutual respect, understanding and hope in peace.

Let us start the conference with reference to the words of the person, who is an outstanding example for all of us in overcoming limits and obstacles in our lives:

“Disability need not be an obstacle to success. I have had motor neurone disease for practically all my adult life. Yet it has not prevented me from having a prominent career in astrophysics and a happy family life. (...) I realize that I am very lucky, in many ways. My success in theoretical physics has ensured that I am supported to live a worthwhile life.”

Professor Stephen W. Hawking (World Report on Disability, WHO & World Bank, 2011)

Mária Glasová

for Slovak ECPVI Team

Key note papers

Slovak Psychology Focused on Persons with the Visual Impairments: Reflection on the Past and Present Developments of Theory and Practice

Key-note speaker: Mária Glasová, Slovak Republic

Authors: Ladislav Požár, Mária Glasová

Affiliation: Faculty of Education, Department of Psychology and Pathopsychology, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic

Paper offers a basic critical overview of the past and present developments in psychology field in Slovakia focused on persons with the visual impairments. The historical milestones (until and since “The 1989 Velvet Revolution”) and main outcomes of both basic and applied psychological research are presented, including the development of the theoretical models of pathopsychology and/or present psychology of individuals with the visual impairments, as well as the developments of related clinical and counselling psychological services. In concluding part the present and future challenges introduced to psychology field by influencing of behaviour related to emergence and use of the convergence technologies, and/or by new emergence technology-based functional enhancements, are discussed both from the perspective of clients perceptions and needs, as well professional perceptions and competencies.

Emotion-focused therapy: an introduction

Key-note speaker: Ladislav Timulak, Ireland

Author: Ladislav Timulak

Affiliation: Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Emotion-focused Therapy (EFT) is a unique empirically-based approach, based on methods designed to help people accept, express, regulate, make sense of and transform emotion. Recent years have seen a growth of EFT in individual and couples therapy, both because of its status as an evidence-based treatment, and also because the EFT approach focuses on the development of emotional intelligence and on the importance of secure relationships. Because of these emphases, EFT offers an alternative to more technically-oriented evidence-based treatments. Possible application of EFT for working with people who are visually impaired will be discussed.

Preventing depression and anxiety in visually impaired (older) adults

Key-note speaker: Ruth van Nispen, the Netherlands

Authors: Ruth van Nispen, Hilde van der Aa, Ger HMB van Rens

Affiliation: VU University Medical Center, dept. low vision research – ophthalmology, EMGO+ institute for health and care research, the Netherlands

Although depression and anxiety in visually impaired (older) adults is often not recognised in practice, it is a major problem. International studies have shown that many suffer from subthreshold symptoms which are debilitating in terms of decreased quality of life. Moreover, subthreshold symptoms are the most important predictors of developing full blown disorders. These facts pose responsibility on care providers and policy makers in low vision rehabilitation settings to detect symptoms

at an early stage in order to prevent them from getting worse, and, to develop cost-effective interventions to help reduce this psychological burden in our growing visually impaired older population. In this lecture, some of the important issues are tackled: How often do we encounter depression and anxiety in daily practice and how do we recognise symptoms? Why do some develop these psychosocial issues, while others do not; which characteristics are important predictors? And finally: Which treatment should we give visually impaired (older) adults in order to improve this psychosocial burden of vision loss? Already, there are some initiatives of research groups in different countries in which interventions are tested in randomised controlled trials. Most trials focus on reducing symptoms of depression, some on the prevention of depressive disorders, but not so much on the topic of anxiety. These initiatives and recent study results of a randomised controlled trial to the effects of a stepped-care intervention to prevent depression and anxiety disorders will be discussed in this lecture as well.

Plenary presentations

Plenary session: Interventions and Assessment Procedures: Family and Educational Contexts

Early intervention: a relational perspective

Author: Leo Delaet

Affiliation: Centrum Ganspoel, Belgium

In early intervention (as in other areas of counselling) there is a special relation between the counsellor, the young child and its parents. How can we understand and promote the development of this relation? And how can we support early intervention workers in coping with the demands of this relational perspective?

Working in families with a child with JNCL

Author: Annie Behiels

Affiliation: Centrum Ganspoel, Belgium

Working in families with a child who has got the diagnosis of JNCL imposes some special and heavy demands on the family counsellor. We can illustrate this by means of three different phases: 1) the time before and after the medical diagnosis; 2) family life with a child who has JNCL; 3) residential care and the needs of parents of children with JNCL.

Equal education for all? School outcome for six students with blindness/severe visual impairment in Swedish inclusive education

Authors: Kim de Verdier, Ulla Ek

Affiliation: 1. Swedish National Agency of Special Needs Education, Resource Centre Vision, 2. Stockholm University, Department of Special Education, Sweden

In Sweden all students with visual impairments, without major additional disabilities, have attended general education in local schools since the mid 1980's. The regular classroom teachers are responsible for the students' education, including the braille instruction. The teachers are offered braille courses and pedagogical support from The Swedish national Agency for Special Needs Education and the Resource Centre Vision.

The present study examined the school outcome for an entire age cohort of Swedish students with blindness or severe visual impairment (n=6). In a previous study, these students were followed during their first three school years (Rönnbäck, de Verdier, Winberg & Baraldi, 2010). When the students entered their last year of compulsory school (9th grade), the present study was initiated with the intention of describing the students' general academic achievement, reading development, psychological well-being and experiences of support. School grades, results from reading skills tests and ratings from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 2001, 2009) were collected, and individual interviews were conducted with the students, parents and teachers.

The study reveals great differences concerning the students' experiences of school, their levels of achievement and the support needed and offered. This presentation will describe some main results from the study, and implications for the support system in Sweden will be discussed.

But is it fair? Issues in cognitive and educational testing for visually impaired children

Authors: Simon Ungar, Bo Andersen

Affiliation: 1. Wandsworth Schools and Community Psychology Service,
2. PsyVIC, United Kingdom

Visually impaired students in the mainstream education system are submitted to entry exams and cognitive assessments which are aimed at the seeing population. The issues have been known for many years, and the solutions and adaptations which have been implemented have often been inappropriate and consequently unfair.

The project, a collaboration between RNIB in the UK and GL Assessment, was aimed at producing adapted exam papers and a set of guidelines for users of 11+ (secondary entry) exams.

Plenary session: Interventions and Assessment Procedures: Children and adults

A study of the policy and practice of psychological services in the psychoeducational assessment of school-aged children with visual impairment

Authors: Deirdre Forde, William Kinsella

Affiliation: National University maynooth Ireland

This study aimed to examine the policy and practice of psychological services in the psycho-educational assessment of school aged children with Visual Impairment in Ireland. Qualitative data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews with 17 key informants consisting of both psychologists and school personnel.

The findings indicate that the psycho-educational assessment process of children with VI is perceived as challenging, particularly in relation to the assessment of children with additional needs. Respondents expressed the need for training and, particularly, supervision. Research findings reveal that children with VI are in danger of being under assessed and not consistently or universally receiving the same quality of services during the psycho-educational assessment process. Findings also highlight the necessity for collaboration between psychologists, visiting teachers and school personnel in formulating recommendations during the psycho-educational assessment of children with VI. The findings of the study should prompt reflection on the delivery of psycho-educational assessments to children with VI in the Irish and the wider context.

Benefits of Regular Physical Exercises on Mental State in Visually Impaired and Deaf-blind Adults

Author: Airi Surakka

Affiliation: University of Eastern Finland, School of Medicine, Biomedicine/Exercise Medicine, Finland

The most common psychic problems in visually impaired and deaf-blind adults are depression, anguish, tension, difficulty in falling asleep, broken sleep, short sleep length, tiredness. These problems make worse power of concentration, self-esteem, tension in muscles, reactivity and dynamic balance making independent orientation and mobility difficult. Regular moderate physical exercises reduce these problems.

Twenty-four visually impaired and deaf-blind (12 with and 12 without previous physical activity) participated in a 5-6 week physical training program (three 60-minute sessions per week). The physical training program was designed for visually impaired and deaf-blind with the aim of reducing their most common physical problems. Motivation was enhanced through sharing the different measurements performed before and after the intervention, including weight blood pressure, flexibility of trunk and upper body and gait analysis.

After intervention the subjects assessed the effect of the intervention by answering freely in their own words to one question; "Did you feel or notice any effect of the physical training program?" Their answers were classified into three indicators: physical condition, mental state and balance. Mental state improved in twenty-one subjects. All subjects performed different regular physical activities three months after the intervention.

Physical exercises were effective for reducing most common problems. Motivation for regular physical exercises enhanced.

Psychological perspective of visual art education for blind persons

Author: Darja Kobal Grum

Affiliation: University in Ljubljana, Slovenia

The paper deals with the importance of inclusive visual art education for blind persons. We investigate, first, how the blind persons appreciate the visual art, and second, how to create successful art educational settings, in which the blind would develop and realize high levels of understanding of visual art. The psychology of perception enabled the understanding of interactions between the individual senses and highlighted the importance of touch, while the cognitive psychology pointed on the incentives from the environment, which are essential for the development and reorganization of operation of human brain and demonstrated the role of the cognitive processes. Taking into account modern inclusive approaches in the education of blind people, can be created conditions for the development of skills for the appreciation of art, which are immanent to every person who is blind. Among the key conditions the contribution recognizes so-called active involvement of blind people in direct gallery environment, which in this context takes over an educational role.

Executive Functions and Behavioural Problems in Students with Visual Impairments at Regular and Special Schools

Authors: Vera Heyl, Manfred Hintermair

Affiliation: University of Education Heidelberg, Germany

In this study, executive functions of school-aged children with visual impairments (VI) are examined in the context of behavioural problems and communicative competence. Teachers assessed the executive functioning of a sample of 226 blind and partially sighted students from

regular schools and schools for the blind and visually impaired, using a German version of the Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Functions (BRIEF-D). This was accompanied by a questionnaire measuring communicative competence and behavioural problems (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire; SDQ-D). The results show a significantly higher problem rate in executive functioning in the group of students with VI compared to a normative sample of children with normal vision, even when students with VI and additional handicaps are not considered in the analysis. A regression analysis revealed the significance of executive functions and communicative competence for behavioural problems among students with VI. The findings demonstrate that a wide range of executive functions significant for socioemotional development are not sufficiently developed in many students with VI. This seems to be particularly true for students from schools for the blind and visually impaired. In educational concepts for students with VI, a specific and early focus on competencies such as shifting and emotional understanding seems to be necessary, especially in the context of inclusion.

Visual attentional field development and training

Author: Marjolein Dik

Affiliation: Royal Dutch Visio, the Netherlands

The visual search development in regular children shows a certain patterns during the first years. Worsened visual attentional field in children present themselves in many different ways and tend to change over time.

The questions here are - How to deal with these early attentional field problems and how to prevent problems related to reading.

Workshops

Workshop A: Questions of Inclusion Process

A visual impairment is not just about seeing and watching. Get a view of the different aspects and dimensions of the emotional process

Author: Heidi Deknudt

Affiliation: BuSO Sint-Rafaël, Retraining centrum for blind and visual impaired adults,

Blindenzorg Licht en Liefde, Belgium

When you get a visual impairment, this requires an adjustment. After all, not only the vision is affected, too often people also experience a restriction in the activities that they can do. On top of this they can start doubting their role in the society, as well as the meaning of life. Of course, such adjustment is not without a fight. One can consider this as a specific process of bereavement.

In this presentation, I will explain different aspects of this emotional process:

- What is the impact of bereavement? I will explain this on five different dimensions: the body – the emotions – the behaviour – the context – the meaning
- A normal' process is an oscillation between two movements: a movement towards the processing of the loss (with the risk of depression when one gets stuck in this) and a movement towards recovery (with the risk of delayed bereavement when one gets stuck).
- Acceptance versus adaptation.
- The pattern of attachment and the influence this gives on maintaining relationships, on the acceptance of help either from family or friends and professionals.
- Risk of depression.

- Possibilities of and conditions for personal growth.

This workshop is meant for professionals who want to get a better view on the emotional aspect of the visual impairment and who want to get to learn about some possible angles to understand and guide (stranded) emotional processes. It is meant both for professionals and for psychotherapists.

The theory will be illustrated by some testimonies. There will be room for interaction.

A Social and Psychological Support Program for young adults

Authors: Bieke Ingels, Griet Van den Dries

Affiliation: Solidarity in Sight, Belgium

Our organisation, Solidarity in Sight, offers an overall Home Assistance Program for adults with visual impairment. Within this group, we determined that young adults between the age of 18 and 30 are vastly underrepresented. The transition from childhood to adulthood seems to be a breaking point, after which these youngsters disappear off the radar, often to return at a later age where they find themselves in a situation that is even more vulnerable than before.

Since February 2014, Solidarity in Sight, is addressing this issue by developing a guidance and service program, especially focused on these young adults.

Our main objective is to make sure that this target group, during the transition to adulthood, can find its way back to our variety of services in time and when needed, to avoid unnecessary problems later on in life.

The goal is to further develop the previously acquired knowledge and skills, and to integrate these into all aspects of a mature and independent life.

We do this by working together with these young adults and other youth organizations (from the start) in order to achieve a more integrated and inclusive approach towards a maximum participation in society. As

a professional organization, we stress the importance of pursuing this with them, instead of for them.

Apart from individual guidance, we also want to offer a continuous support group and several thematic workshops, each consisting of three full days.

The aim of the guidance program is to maximize their possibilities of empowerment, by stimulating these young people to become more active, more initiating, which in turn opens doors to an increased self-reliance and positive feeling of self-worth.

The workshop wants to initiate a dialogue with people who actively work with young adults with a disability by sharing “good practices”, giving people the possibility to learn from each other and share experiences.

Vlaams Senioren Oogpunt (VSOP) a project in case management for the elderly with visual impairment

Authors: Bieke Ingels, Chris Roeygens

Affiliation: Solidarity in Sight, Belgium

Solidarity in Sight, as a non-profit organisation for people with visual impairment in Flanders and Brussels, wants to move towards a society of integration and inclusion. Having this goal in mind, we initiated the VSOP project (short for “Vlaams Senioren Oogpunt”), approved and funded by the National Government, to provide alternative and supportive care for elderly people with visual impairment in an overall vulnerable situation. The project started in 2010 and still runs until 2014.

Our main objective is to prolong the time in which 120 seniors with visual impairment (age 60 and over) can stay in their own home environment, either independently or with adequate support. At the same time, we try to postpone or avoid hospitalisation in a home care centre. By building a broad support network – consisting of both professional and regular care - the aim is to increase and maximise their autonomy and self-sufficiency at home. By doing so, we want to contribute to an enhanced quality of life in all its aspects and on the other hand decrease the costs for residential care in society.

When included in the project, we set up a care pathway together with our client and his or her significant others. As a communal work instrument we draw up a support plan that is regularly evaluated and adjusted when indicated. During this pathway, our own services provide coordination of all care involved around the client, as well as the specific care concerning his or her visual impairment, going from psychosocial support to concrete adaptations in the living environment and/or visual revalidation advice and training. To do so we explicitly work with a multidisciplinary team of ergotherapists, orthoptists, psychologists and social care workers. In addition we have a close work relationship with VeBeS and VIVOR, our sister organisations, in order to work with volunteers, to organise accessible and inclusive activities, and to permanently engage in sensibilisation and education of the community.

The workshop is meant for all professionals and field workers in the sector of visual impairment and old age. Presented as a good-practice, we hope to bring inspiration in how case management and multidisciplinary work can lead to a more inclusive, empowering and cost saving approach for this growing group of people in our Western society.

Workshop B: Questions of Good Psychological Practise

Touch what I feel

Support for the mental health of blind children

Author: Knut Brandsborg

Affiliation: Statped southeast Department of vision, Norway

What do children in general, and blind children in particular, need to maintain their mental health? Based on a project with four blind children and youngsters I want to share experiences with you on how to conduct regular talks with them about feelings and their reactions to their own emotional experiences. Tactual objects, representing various feelings,

were used in addition to conversations. One basic assumption of the project: feelings are always true, for the one who has them.

Results of the Intelligence Test for Visually Impaired Children (ITVIC) on a Hungarian sample

Author: Beata Pronay

Affiliation: Eotvos University, Faculty of Special Needs Education,
Institute for the Psychology of Special Needs, Hungary

Background: ITVIC is the only available intelligence test containing haptic items for VI school children in Hungary. Building up by haptic and verbal subtests it can describe intelligence from various aspects.

Aims: Data from Hungarian sample are analysed in terms of factor structure, relationship between ITVIC quotients and ITVIC IQ, reliability aspects and comparison between Hungarian and original Dutch results.

Methods: Internal consistency was calculated. Principal component factor analysis was performed with varimax rotation and also with communality indicators. Relationship between ITVIC HQ, VQ and IQ were explored.

Results: Cronbach's alfa value for 7 haptic subtests were 0.83 while only 0,6 for verbal subtests. The ITVIC own IQ has a high correlation with all other quotients ($Rho=0.5$ to 1.00) ($p>0,000$)

Conclusions: Haptic subtests are reliable and the strengths of the ITVIC in the Hungarian sample. Results show a factor structure difference from the original Dutch results. Haptic and verbal subtests show that these are mutually complementary.

Some more results and outcomes are shown on the poster presentation as well.

Recommendations for the practise of psychologists working with visually impaired people

Authors: Francoise TOMENO, Agnès GUIBORA

Affiliation: 1. Psychologist, private practice, 2. Psychologist in a specialized institution, France

Our Association, the Association of French Speaking Psychologists Specialized for the Visually Impaired (« ALFPHV » in French: Association de Langue Française des Psychologues spécialisés pour Personnes Handicapées Visuelles) has produced a text which intends to become a tool of reference for psychologists practicing with Visually Impaired People.

It provides a framework for each psychologist to invent their own way of working, according to the uniqueness of the encounter with each visually impaired person.

Between moral code and ethic, this text brings us together, and yet it lets each of us choose his/her orientations and technics. It is based on the « Code de Déontologie des Psychologues Français », the moral code in force in France.

It describes how the specialized psychologist's work is articulated toward the blind or partially sighted persons, their entourage and different professionals working with them. The text thus considers the question of the place of the psychologist in this field and calls for a debate respecting the practices and theoretical references in use in different European countries.

This text intends to be “opposable” when it comes to the “Guide of Good Practice”.

The « Recommendations » fall into three categories: 1) the psychologist's status and role; 2) the psychologist's responsibilities; 3) the psychologist's methods of work.

Poster presentations

Computer Training System for TRIP without VISION

Authors: George Losik, Alena Brazevich, Dario Salerni, Georgios Dimitrakopoulos

Affiliation: 1. United Institute of Informatics Problems (UIIP), Belarus

2. Belarusian Society of Psychologists, Belarus

3. @uxilia Association - Cividale del Friuli, Italy

4. Harokopio University of Athens, Greece

A blind person can face difficulties when moving around in the modern city independently. This is obvious especially in using various transport systems. Luckily the invention of a speech synthesizer brought a kind of revolution in a sphere of his/her rehabilitation.

It is necessary for a person with visual impairment to organize a computer (IT) and psychological support for transport and moving.

Goal: Navigation assistance for blind and visually-impaired people in scientific-and educational trips around Europe. We suppose to create special program

called 3D-excursions. in vision to travel in the interactive mode.

Methods: development of speech synthesizers in English, Italian, Greek, Latvian, Belarusian – including places where an individual with visual impairment might go.

There are four groups of specialists involved in the creation of this system: “Motive”, “Geography”, “IT”, “Guide” Group.

Developmental setback in congenital blind children

Authors: Ans van Eijden, Ellen van den Broek

Affiliation: Royal Dutch Visio, the Netherlands

In our clinical work with blind and VI children we have the impression that a part of the group of blind children seem to experience a regression in development from the age of 18 to 24 months, after normal developmental progress. Some children develop autistic like features or ASD.

Researchers of the Developmental Vision Service, London (a.o. Cass, Dale, Sonksen, Salt) published about this “developmental setback” in blind children.

Our issues and questions:

- Do other researchers report on this developmental setback?
- Are there any prospective studies?
- How sensitive are the developmental scales used in the above mentioned studies?
- Is this phenomenon mentioned earlier in the longitudinal studies?
- Which % of our own caseload of blind children experienced a setback?

Method:

A. Literature review:

- 1) Visual impairment and developmental setback
- 2) Longitudinal studies

B. File search; retrospective analysis of the files and the assessments of own caseload.

We intend:

- To publish our findings in a peer reviewed journal;
- To discuss practical implications for professionals and parents;

-To give recommendations for future prospective research of this phenomenon.

We would like:

-To present our preliminary findings both of the literature review and the File searches with colleagues outside The Netherlands and exchange information.

-To discuss the relationship Developmental setback and ASD with colleagues specialised in the field of blindness and ASD in young children.

iPad Application supporting development of visual skills in early age

Authors: Marketa Skalicka, Alice Pexiederova, Martina Herynkova, Martina Vankatova

Affiliation: Early Intervention EDA, Czech Republic

Our early intervention centre deals with the issue of developing the visual functions and visual skills of children from birth up to 7 years of age. We try to employ technical innovations and tools like light boxes, CCTV etc. to ensure the efficiency of visual stimulation and training.

With the expansion of iPads and tablets, we acquired a very efficient tool for our work. The applications available from the market are designed for the children with good visual skills, with a number of details and only a low contrast between the character and the background. We decided to develop an application which would suit the needs of children of early age with various levels of low vision.

The application we have developed enables the setting of four levels of displayed objects, four visual levels: 1) full-colour figures are displayed with no details; 2) objects with several details appear; 3) pictures with more details, often in two or more colours; 4) the pictures are only treated as outlines.

The application also offers four task levels. Thus, the fine motor skills and task difficulty are also graded in terms of sensory-motor and psycho-motor level.

To improve and maintain visual attention and task graphicness, the object on the screen is accentuated with a pulse movement, lighting shows the direction of the movement the child is supposed to perform.

All objects of the tasks are displayed against dark background which ensures a high-quality contrast and prevents the glare effect.

The Skills section records the work of the child with the application. Thus, the parents and therapists can observe the development of the child's skills over time.

The audio and visual treatment of the application supports the focus on the task developing vision, motor skills and sensory-motor coordination.

The EDA PLAY application has been available at the App Store since the end of April, 2013.

Psychological resilience of people with visual impairment

Authors: Eva Vancu, Tímea Hóková

Affiliation: Faculty of Education, Department of Psychology and Pathopsychology, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic

Resilience, as a psychological concept, was taken over from the field of physics where it originally meant being able to “spring back” after being held down. Psychologically speaking, the term has come to mean an individual's ability to overcome adversity, or difficult life challenges, and continue his or her normal growth and development. The present study is focused upon mapping resilience factors of blind and partially sighted young adults and adults. Data was collected with The Child and Youth Resilience Measure questionnaire, processed by statistical methods. Further analysis is concerning specific determinants of resilience, whereas the variable of congenital and acquired visual impairment is taken into account. Provided results may be utilized by professionals

directly supporting people with visual impairment. The study was supported by the KEGA grant No. 067UK-4/2014

Psychological aspects of success of blind and partially sighted in comparison to persons with hearing impairment, physical disability and intellectual disability

Authors: Marián Groma, Tímea Hóková, Katarína Jariabková

Affiliation: 1. and 2. Faculty of Education, Department of Psychology and Pathopsychology, Comenius University in Bratislava, 3. Institute for Research in Social Communication, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovak Republic

Variety of research results concerning social representations of people with disabilities within the society show that success is rarely associated with a person with disability.

In order to explore the problem of successfulness from the perspective of people with disabilities a semi-structured interview focused on individual history and experiences with personal success was used.

Nineteen adult people with disabilities participated in the study - 5 with visual impairment, 5 with hearing impairment, 4 with physical disability and 5 with intellectual disability.

The results show that whereas success in people with visual impairment is mostly associated with the acceptance of psychosocial consequences of their sight loss and with the extent of their autonomy in daily life, for people with hearing impairment the emphasis is mostly upon self-determination, self-efficacy and the presence of a significant other. Individual success of people with physical disabilities is linked to their autonomy and to overcoming of their own personal barriers. As for people with intellectual disabilities, success is rather related to their participation in activities of the general population and their acceptance and appraisal by the mainstream society.

The study was supported by the VEGA grant No. 1/0829/13

Slovak Psychology of Individuals with the Visual Impairments: An Overview of Related Basic and Applied Psychological Research and Practice

Authors: Mária Glasová, Viera Andreánska, Marian Groma, Ladislav Požár

Affiliation: Faculty of Education, Department of Psychology and Pathopsychology, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic

The chronological overview of the main basic and applied Slovak psychological research projects associated with the original fields of patopsychology and/or psychology of individuals with the visual impairments are presented. Also, the past and present major theoretical framework of psychotherapy and psychological counselling services for persons with the visual impairments in Slovakia are described critically. The necessity of the evidence-based practice in mental health services and more complex interdisciplinary approaches are highlighted.

Good ideas & Notes

Good ideas & Notes

Good ideas & Notes

List of participants

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