



# WELFARE

## INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

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Scientific journal *SOCIAL WELFARE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH* is a joint periodic international research volume of Lithuania and Ukraine that presents methodological studies and researches of authors from different countries, reflects variety of scientific sociocultural schools and topics concerning interdisciplinary approach in the understanding of human social welfare. The articles published in the journal are reviewed by two members of the editorial board or their appointed experts. The journal is published twice a year: in June and in December of each year. June edition is published in Šiauliai University (Lithuania). December edition is published in Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” (Ukraine)

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## Preface by Editors-in-Chief

We are proud to present to the readers already the third issue of a joint journal “Social Welfare Interdisciplinary Approach”, published by the universities of two countries – the Faculty of Social Welfare and Disability Studies, Šiauliai University (Lithuania) and Open International University of Human Development, “Ukraine” (Ukraine).

We are glad that our scientific project has gained momentum, that the circle of readers and researchers suggesting their ideas and knowledge for the journal is forming. At the beginning of the publishing of the journal its initiators from Šiauliai University and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” agreed about the main principles: new knowledge, interculturality, interdisciplinarity and activity oriented towards the creation of social welfare in the society. We think that we manage not only to maintain these principles but also develop them. For the creators of the conception of our journal it is important not only to promote new knowledge but we very much value those researchers who are able to implement it for the welfare of all of us.

In the third issue of the journal the works by twenty researchers (thirteen articles) have been presented, the authors of which are not only from Lithuania or the Ukraine, but also from the Czech Republic, Russia, Latvia. For the first time in the short history of the journal we received articles from Poland and Belarus. We also have articles that are the result of scientific collaboration of several states. In the present issue not only the principle of intercultural collaboration is maintained (the authors are from seven countries) but also interdisciplinarity is clearly observed: the articles have been presented by sociologists, pedagogues, psychologists and lawyers.

According to the topics of the research the scientific articles are traditionally divided into four chapters: “Social Challenges”, “The Development of Professional Competences”, “Disability Studies”, “Psychosocial Rehabilitation”. All presented articles are original scientific works oriented towards the possibility of actualization in many states. Certain articles are interesting and valuable because of original attitude and thought that is slightly different from what we are accustomed to reading social welfare studies. Although not always agreeing with the authors we published these articles in our journal thus not only accepting the variety of attitudes but also wishing to stimulate scientific discussion. Wishing critical reading to our readers we look forward to scientific reflections.

Striving for special attention to the quality of our articles we are grateful to all who participate in the activities of the editorial board of the journal. The editors are helped not only by the researchers from the universities of Šiauliai and Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” but also by other high qualified researchers from the USA, Italy, Poland, Canada, Russia, Latvia, the Czech Republic, the Ukraine and Lithuania. The articles published in our journal are confidentially and professionally reviewed by two members of the editorial board or their appointed experts. We are grateful that Professor PhD Liuda Radzevičienė from Šiauliai University has agreed to take the responsibility of a scientific secretary. With her practical activity and scientific insights she has made a great contribution to make the present issue as it is.

We remind you that the articles in the journal are presented in English. The journal is published twice a year. The June edition is published at Šiauliai University. International University of Human Development “Ukraine” (Ukraine) is responsible for the December

edition. We believe that our academic publication will gain further popularity not only among Lithuanian and Ukrainian researchers, students and specialists creating social welfare but also will become known in Europe and other parts of the world. We consider the fact that the journal was included in global database – EBSCO's Academic Search Complete database – as the sign of the first acknowledgement.

Editors-in-chief express thanks to the authors, editorial board, director of the library of Šiauliai University, staff of the publishing office and everyone who has contributed to the publication of the journal “Social Welfare *Interdisciplinary Approach*”. Special thanks go to our readers. We will not be able to exist without you. By inviting you for the collaboration we believe that scientific ideas promoted in our journal will serve for the welfare of all of us.

***Editors-in-chief – Kateryna Kolchenko and  
Ingrida Baranauskienė***



# I. SOCIAL CHALLENGES

# RARE DISEASES AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF CAREGIVERS

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## **Abstract**

The quality of life of persons caring for a family member with rare disease is discussed in the article and the results of the quantitative research (N = 298) in the Czech Republic are presented. The idea of the research is to determine basal psycho-social markers defining the quality of life of persons caring for a family member with rare disease and describe phenomena characterizing the conception of understanding the term quality of life by representatives of the target group (and compare this conception with how the term is understood by the intact population). Long-term care for a child with a serious, incurable disease means a significant change of life situation including not only personal growth, but also social, partner, health and economic associations. In the present research it has been focused on the existence of states and changes that were evaluated by caregivers themselves.

**Key words:** *quality of life, children with rare diseases, socio-psychological stability, expectations.*

## **Introduction**

The presented results are a part of an extensive research of the quality of life of persons caring for a family member with rare disease that was conducted in the Czech Republic in years 2009-2011 as a part of a research supported by the Czech Grant Agency (The quality of life of persons caring for a family member with severe disability 406/09/0177).

**The subject of the research** were areas comprising the model of the quality of life of people who over a long period of time care for a family member who suffers from some of the so called rare diseases. Researchers set as a project goal to bring new and not yet detected data about the situation of these persons in the indicated area. They worked on the premise that the long-term care for persons with various presented diseases usually means significant disadvantage in the series of monitored characteristics (values, possibilities, opportunities, facts) in comparison with persons who are not burdened with the long-term care for such a diseased family member.

*The target research group* (long-term caregivers who care for a person suffering from some of the rare diseases) has stood away from the attention of specialized workplaces so far



(when sporadic and partial researches concerned primarily persons with disability themselves – here the diseased). The presented issues closely correspond to the research boom of the last decade (in the CR and the world) focused on the research of the quality of life (for details see the summarizing publication focused on research and research results in this matter (Mareš, 2006). Research subject-matters of these researches are focused on the area of intact population and partially also population with health disability (generally the quality of life is connected with health, see researchers' generally accepted term HRQL - *health-related quality of life*). None of domestic or foreign researches has yet followed the quality of life of caregivers regarding the evaluation of their opinion and attitude spectrum to questions that comprise the immanent part of their everyday life connected with care.

If the generally accepted fact says that the care of close persons is beneficial for the health of the diseased, then in case of diseases in summary known as rare diseases this factor is absolutely unquestionable (Ješina, Magner, Poupětová, et al., 2011). It is a group of various diseases that are characterized by a relatively rare presence in population. Nevertheless, at present a few hundreds of these diseases with various prevalence are registered. Rare diseases usually occur shortly after birth when 4-5% of new-borns and infants are affected (for example some inborn developmental defects, spinal atrophy, hereditary metabolism disorders, cystic fibrosis etc.), but they can become apparent later during childhood (for example, Rett syndrome, osteogenesis imperfecta), adolescence (for example neurofibromatosis) or adulthood (e.g. Huntington disease or some forms of thyroid cancer). About 80% of rare diseases have genetic causes, nonetheless, the etiology of the disease remains unknown for most patients. In case of wrong and late diagnoses, mainly in diseased patients for whom there exists the possibility of treatment, it comes to irreversible health damage. This leads to a significant psychological trauma of not only patients, but also their families, including distrust to health-care system (Michalík, Zeman, et al., 2010). The characteristic feature of the care for a family member (usually a child) with such disease is high demands on the care that is only hardly comparable with other social events of this type. On the other hand, there also exist big differences among rare diseases regarding the seriousness of the impact on the quality of life of the diseased – and thus usually also a caregiver.

**The essence and aim of the project was to determine basal psycho-social markers defining the quality of life of persons caring for a family member with rare disease and describe phenomena characterizing the conception of understanding the term quality of life by representatives of the target group** (and compare this conception with how the term is understood by the intact population). Consequently, to discriminate different characteristics of the conception of the quality of life of persons of the target group and to prepare on their basis general methodology applicable in other researches when finding out markers connected with understanding and perception of the content of the term *quality of life* of the target group. Key changes in value and psycho-social dispositions of probands (caregivers) were determined, monitored and analysed on the basis of such realized quantitative research.

### **Study methodology**

Researchers chose quantitative methodology based on the choice of a highly representative sample of probands, questionnaire research and statistical processing of data with classification of the first and the second level and determining statistical importance of the collected data (chi-square– Pearson's coefficient).

### **Research in the group of persons caring for a child with rare disease**

The research population was chosen (beyond originally planned project content) from the basic population of persons caring for a person with a rare disease on the whole territory of

the CR. The questionnaire was distributed predominantly to persons who care for the mentioned person. Cooperation with specialized doctors was applied and these representatives of patients' organizations uniting such care-givers allowed addressing of respondents with preservation of full anonymity and the necessary level of protection of (delicate) data of respondents and possibly persons they care for.

In total 593 questionnaires were distributed and 298 returned for data procession (i.e. 50,2%). In total, the opinions were obtained from 113 persons caring for a child with cystic fibrosis, 47 persons caring for a child with Achondroplasia, 59 persons caring for a child with some of the metabolic diseases (and other 33 persons caring for a child with mucopolysaccharidosis) and finally 46 persons caring for a child with spinal muscular atrophy. This research was done in autumn 2010.

### Research with persons from control group

Measured attitude results (opinions, evaluations, data information) in the researched population of care-givers laid the foundations for conducting a similar comparative research in the group of persons who do not care for a family member with a severe disability. Whereas a high level of territorial representativeness was reached with caregivers' group, the choice method of respondents of the control group was different regarding the way of arranging and logically the researched sample far less represents opinions of the basic population. Still, the author believes that results obtained from the control population (see below) are sufficient for conducting a meaningful comparison. Participants were chosen randomly from students of the combined form of study programme at Palacky University in Olomouc. Characteristics of the basic control population sample in general features (see below) corresponded to caregivers' group regarding gender of respondents (women prevailed). Distribution of the measuring tool took place in September and October 2011.

Basic requirement on research participants was formulated this way: person who cares for a child in household (family) but at the same time does not care for any family member who has a serious disability. The choice of participants was random, app. 510 students, both males and females, were addressed, however, childless persons did not take part in the filling out. Thus, in total 305 questionnaires from control population respondents were evaluated. It is observed that the control group persons are also "caregivers", but they care for a child without disability, i.e. they are not persons who do not have any experience with the care for another person.

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics

CARING PERSONS	CONTROL GROUP
LENGTH OF CARE FOR FAMILY MEMBER	
up to 5 years: 108 persons (36%), up to 15 years: 124 persons (42%), up to 25 years: 40 persons (13%), over 25 years: 12 persons (4%). Did not respond: 14 persons (5%).	more than 10 years: 62% less than 10 years: 30% Did not respond: 8 %
THE MOST CARING PERSON IN FAMILY	
Women – 227 (76%). Men – 0 Take turns – 67 persons (22%). Did not respond – 4 persons (2%).	Women – 137 (45%). Men – 4 (2%). Take turns – 111 persons (36%). Did not respond – 53 persons (17%).

Continued Table 1

RESPONDENTS' GENDER	
197 women (66%), 96 men (32%), 5 persons (2%) did not indicate gender.	259 women (85%), 39 men (13%), 7 persons (2%) did not indicate gender.
RESPONDENTS' AGE	
up to 30 years: 35 persons (12%), up to 50 years: 224 persons (75%), up to 70 years: 35 persons (12%). Did not respond: 4 persons (1%).	up to 30 years: 55 persons (18%), up to 50 years: 231 respondents (76%), up to 70 years: 11 respondents (4%). Did not respond: 8 persons (2%).
RESPONDENTS' EDUCATION	
Primary education: 36 persons (12%) Secondary education: 173 persons (58) Higher education: 23 persons (8%) University education: 63 persons (21%) Did not respond: 3 persons (1%).	Primary education: 4 persons (1%) Secondary education: 152 persons (50%) Higher education: 30 persons (10%) University education: 114 persons (37%) Did not respond: 5 persons (2%).
EMPLOYMENT	
Full-time: 144 persons (48%), Part-time: 37 persons (12%) Without employment: 113 persons (38%) Did not respond: 4 persons (2%).	Full-time: 276 persons (90%) Part-time: 8 persons (3%) Without employment: 18 persons (6%) Did not respond: 3 persons (1%).
FAMILY STATUS	
Single: 14 persons (5%) Married: 203 persons (68%) Divorced: 33 persons (11%) Widowed: 21 persons (7%) Did not respond: 27 persons (9%)	Single: 27 persons (9%) Married: 247 persons (81%) Divorced: 23 persons (8%) Did not respond: 8 respondents (2%).

In both cases the measuring was delivered by a multi-level anonymous questionnaire comprising both its own content items and constant items, functional psychological items, control items composed of mostly structured (closed) and partially non-structured (open) form. Next, rating scales and standardized SEIQoL methodology were applied (note SEIQoL questionnaire evaluation is done in a separate study). The collected data were statistically processed with the first level classification (49 basic contingency tables) with graphic support.

#### **Analysis of the research results**

In the next part a brief summary of results in individual monitored areas has been presented. To simplify the table part the results in the item "did not respond" are not stated.

#### **Arrival and existence of stressful factors of caregivers**

In this part the answers of respondents monitoring the arrival and existence of stressful factors that are connected with (in particular) the longterm care were monitored.

**Table 2.** Arrival and existence of stressful factors affecting socio-psychological stability

Monitored factor/frequency	Very often - often		Rarely		Not at all	
	Caregiver	Control	Caregiver	Control	Caregiver	Control
Loss of feeling "I have things under control"	44 %	30 %	48 %	61 %	8 %	8 %
Arrival of depression and hopelessness	38 %	16 %	38 %	45 %	24 %	39 %
Feeling of exhaustion	65 %	54 %	28 %	41 %	7 %	5 %
Loss of the ability to enjoy free time	54 %	33 %	30 %	41 %	16 %	26 %
Loss of the ability to rejoice	34 %	18 %	42 %	45 %	24 %	36 %
Feeling of losing personal prospects	41 %	17 %	36 %	47 %	23 %	36 %

On the basis of analysis (Table 2) of the answers of the respondents in the part of the questionnaire that monitors opinions on the existence and development of negative effects or feelings as tiredness, the loss of the ability to rejoice, arrival of massive depression and hopelessness or the loss of personal life prospects the following can be stated:

In all monitored items the respondents from the caregivers' group showed statistically significantly more frequent arrival and perception of "negative" feelings and conditions in comparison with the respondents from the control group. Striking differences in "the loss of the ability to rejoice" and the feeling of "the loss of personal prospects" can be observed.

It is interesting that in case of "the feeling of exhaustion" statistically significant difference is also observed although in value "very often and often" 54% persons from the control group indicated this item in comparison with 65% of care-givers. It is obvious that this item reflects "imperfections" of the focus of quantitatively oriented researches on measuring "subjective" categories of perceiving and experiencing of respondents. It is quite doubtless that care-givers experience (objectively) incomparable situations requiring enormous psychological and physical performance – in comparison with persons from the control group. However, persons from the control group also experience difficult times – they prepare for their employment in the combined study course, i.e. they work, study – and at the same time they care for a (healthy) child. Also these persons logically experience feelings of tiredness. That is why – objectively – the measured results are significant. The care for a family member with a rare disease leads to a massive arrival of hopelessness and depression of the respondents, they experience the feeling of exhaustion or the loss of the ability to enjoy free time. The control population persons come the closest to caregivers in the feeling of exhaustion. The results of "predictive" items, i.e. the loss of the ability to rejoice and particularly the loss of personal prospects of caregivers are seen as alarming for the future psycho-somatic setting of respondents caring for a family member with a rare disease.

#### **Changes of chosen social facts during the care**

Next, extensive area mapping the perception of the given state, status of a caregiver and his/her family within selected social situations or states were monitored, also the existence of possible resilient factors counteracting stressful factors – as they were recorded above.

**Table 3.** Changes observed by the respondents in selected areas during the period of last 5/10 years

Monitored factor/frequency	Yes or more likely yes		Rarely		More likely no or no	
	Care-giver	Control	Care-giver	Control	Care-giver	Control
Increased isolation from other people	51 %	27 %	19 %	18 %	30 %	56 %
Deterioration of health	36 %	31 %	32 %	26 %	32 %	43 %
Decline in family economic situation	53 %	32 %	22 %	18 %	25 %	50 %
Deterioration of relationship among family members	15 %	41 %	22 %	21 %	63 %	15 %
Change in family social life	49 %	23 %	21 %	29 %	30 %	48 %
Feeling of enrichment from the care/situation	36 %	71 %	28 %	13 %	36 %	16 %
Feeling of pride of what I achieved	53 %	79 %	29 %	11 %	18 %	10 %

The monitored items in this part were respondents' opinions on possible changes that could have occurred during the period of caring for a diseased child regarding the economic situation and social life of caregivers and their families (Table 3). Generally it can be said that the overall majority of care-givers has noticed during the course of care (during more than 10 years) a significant decline in economic situation. Care for a seriously diseased child means not only physical and mental strain, but it also brings difficulties for economic securing of family. Possible notions of the part of the public about "allowance paradise" are false and do not reflect the real state of the issue.

It is necessary to take into account that many of rare diseases are infaust already in childhood and adolescence. This fact could have also manifested in perception of the economic level of family life. Related influence that manifests in evaluation of the economic level of family is increased economic demand (aids, care cosmetics, special diet, additional charge for health care) of long-term care during the time when the deterioration of patient's health occurs.

Since 2012 in the CR significant changes also have been observed in the social support for families caring for a family member with a serious health disability (Otevřený dopis, 2012) and consequently also for most families in the present research. Particularly speaking about single mothers (mother and diseased child or his/her sibling) it is likely to expect another deterioration of the described situation. It is confirmed by the results from the study of mothers caring for children with retarded psychological development that showed unequivocally a higher risk of emerging of socio-economic problems (Emerson, Hatton, Llewellyn, 2007).

Another item monitored within the study was the "social life of family", i.e. changes in family contacts with the outer environment. It usually includes meeting with friends, participation in culture and social events etc. Almost 50% of respondents confirmed that social contacts of their families were limited (however, it is necessary to mention that within the group of care-givers who care for example for a child with mucopolysaccharidosis this option was indicated by full 90% of care-givers!) The feeling of social exclusion and social isolation is common in caring families.

Further, it is necessary to pay attention to the item monitoring "deterioration of relationships among family members". Here quite a surprising result is observed. Only 15% of care-givers confirm deterioration of relationships among family members in the group of care-givers in comparison with 41% of persons from the control group! Negative influence of home

preparation for university studying on the quality of relationships among family members can be inferred. However, this item is considered as supplementary or controlling to items presented further in this part.

It is necessary to interpret the results from the items monitoring “feeling of enrichment from care/situation” and “feeling of pride of what the respondent has achieved” individually. Just the first of the items is sometimes presented as an “immanent” part of “faith” of care-givers whether a serious disease or health disability is concerned. It is becoming apparent that care-givers are “very realistic” when judging “benefits” of such a situation. Facing the strenuousness of such care the results of the present research overshadow these general characteristics (or rather prejudices). Care-givers are good at evaluating “benefits” and “expenses” of care... The feeling of significant enrichment was observed in persons from the control group who “have and care for a child” – a healthy one... Similarly the feeling of pride of people from the control group (almost 80%) on what they have achieved was observed. This can be related to the results of their university studying.

It is necessary to emphasize that all mentioned concerns more women who are dominant care-givers.

### **Summarizing feeling of happiness and expectations of the respondents to the future**

In the final part of the research the questions that allowed respondents to express summarizing evaluations of their situation and expectations to the future were modelled. Most caregivers feel the change in the perception of life values, their own personal growth and gained experience connected in many cases with the feeling of pride and self-confidence (Table 4). However, considerable number of the respondents rejects in connection with the care for a diseased child to talk about any “benefits”. In the area of “losses” many respondents feel total disillusion and talk about the loss of “the sense of life, the loss of everything”. It was also focused on experiencing the “feeling of happiness” in actual time.

Pregnancy usually brings a great feeling of happiness and so the more devastating is the news that the long expected child has health disability. At this moment the feeling of happiness is replaced with the feeling of hopelessness, fear and despair. The feeling of happiness returns individually to every caregiver in a different way and different time. It depends on how quickly an individual is able to cope with this fact and how strong he/she is. Someone cannot manage it at all – more exactly – in some cases it is obviously not possible to induce such feeling permanently or fully.

Person (child) suffering from any of rare diseases will have certain problems during his/her whole life and handicap. Caretaker realizes this fact very well and that is why due to concerns about life and happiness of their child with disability they themselves are not able to enjoy the feeling of happiness from life. Nevertheless 1% of respondents indicated that they feel completely unhappy. Dominant feeling for caregivers is “reserved happiness”. It was indicated by full 42,3% of the caregivers.

It is necessary to mention that for example in the group of persons who care for a child with Achondroplasia (short stature) full 83% feel very happy – on the contrary to the group who care for a child with mucopolysaccharidosis where nobody chose this option!



**Table 4.** Feeling of happiness of the respondents at present

At present I feel	Caregiver		Control	
	a. f.	r. f.	a. f.	r. f.
Absolutely happy	23	7 %	68	22 %
Very happy	64	21 %	169	52 %
A little happy	133	45 %	37	13 %
Nor this nor that	26	9 %	7	3 %
Rather unhappy	33	11 %	11	5 %
I am unhappy	15	6 %	4	2 %
Absolutely unhappy	4	1 %	2	1 %
Total	298		298	

Another summarizing item focused on the prediction of the future development (expectation) in relation to measured elements of socio-psychological stability of caregivers (Table 5). Again a 7-point scale was evaluated where value 1 denoted the possibility “I fear the future” and value 7 the possibility “I absolutely look forward to it”.

**Table 5.** Expectations of respondents to the future

Feeling of happiness of respondents at present	Caregiver		Control	
	a. f.	r. f.	a. f.	r. f.
I absolutely look forward to the future	23	8 %	35	15 %
I look forward to it moderately	60	22 %	156	48 %
I look forward to it little	39	13 %	64	23 %
Nor this nor that	20	7 %	6	1 %
I rather do not look forward to it	35	7 %	16	7 %
I do not look forward to it	21	7 %	11	4 %
I fear the future	100	36%	10	2 %

Thus, it was a combination of actual psychological temper and the expected prognosis of the future development – usually connected with the disease and in a certain way also expected demands on the future care for a diseased child. It must be remembered that a large part of diseased children suffer from a progressive disease that is in many cases (conclusively) infaust. It is possible to state that this item has clearly and simply confirmed the difference between both groups of the respondents that was obvious in previous items. Regarding socio-psychological perspective, the arrival of resignation and negative states it was caring parents who always indicated worse results by a certain amount.

Full 36% of respondents from the group of caregivers chose the option “I fear the future” in the item focused on the future expectations. In contrast to this only “mere” 2% of respondents from the control group chose this option. If the summarizing survey adding both positive and negative expectations to the future is chosen, then 43% of the respondents from the group of caregivers and 86% from the control group look forward to the future... In this item significant differences inside the group of caregivers were also observed. Again the influence of demand of the care on attitudes and judgements of caregivers was evident – see the following Table 6.

**Table 6.** Expectations to the future-care-givers group – inner division

Disease type	1 I fear it	2	3	4 neither this nor that	5	6	7 max. I look forward to it
Cystic fibrosis	<b>33,63%</b>	9,73%	11,50%	6,19%	13,27%	16,81%	7,08%
Achondroplasia	10,64%	2,13%	17,02%	8,51%	17,02%	<b>38,3%</b>	6,38%
Metabolic diseases	<b>38,98%</b>	1,69%	5,08%	5,08%	11,86%	20,34%	11,86%
Spinal muscular atrophy	<b>34,78%</b>	13,04%	8,70%	8,70%	8,70%	13,04%	10,87%
Mucopolysaccharidosis	<b>45,45%</b>	6,06%	21,21%	6,06%	15,15%	6,06%	0,00%

Modus values are presented. Modus values for diseases that are incurable or even infaust (mucopolysaccharidosis) are in the area “I fear it”. In contrast to this caregivers of a child with achondroplasia (short stature) dominantly feel as “very happy”. This example is given for its illustrative and important significance. Even though the group of caregivers who care for a child with rare disease and the control group are dominantly compared – it is appropriate to show inner diversity of the first population group. Again it confirms the influence (and demand) of the care on the quality of life of members of the given population group.

### Conclusion

Long-term care for a diseased child with a serious, incurable to infaust disease means a significant change of life situation including not only personal growth, but also social, partner, health and economic associations. Description of the whole issue exceeds limits of this text. However, it can be rightly stated that it is one of the most difficult life trials that a person can be exposed to these days. Published studies show that parents of children with serious psychomotor retardation are exposed to a higher risk of stress and consequently development of psychiatric difficulties (Emerson, McCulloch, Graham, et al., 2010). At the moment the questions about experiencing (accepting) the fact of health disability by the individual himself/herself that is naturally considered with acquired diseases at certain age are put aside.

In the present research it has been focused on the existence of states and changes that were evaluated by caregivers themselves. The fact that the described situations and states are significantly influenced by the combination of the following factors – seriousness of the disease and its consequences, expected or real length of care and expected and real demand of care applies to all the acquired data. To illustrate “social” connotations of the measured values, the research results of the control group that consisted of caregivers who care for a child without health disability or disease are also stated. The present research proved obligatory connection between the fact of the care for a child with rare disease and the quality of life of caregivers – in comparison with the life of the “common” population, here represented by the control group members.

Care for patients with a serious rare disease is demanding and places extra demands on caregivers. Naturally – in the given segment of results it is obvious that it also places extra demands on the knowledge of real conditions of the quality of life of the diseased, caregivers and also towards members of helping professions – doctors, social workers, teachers, psychologists and others. Common expenses on the rare disease (health care, social protection, losses due to unemployment of caregivers) amount to tens and hundreds millions of euro. Thus, it is essential to include measuring of the impacts of this support to the quality of life of



the diseased and caregivers. The results stated in this article are a contribution for starting the discussion in the Czech Republic.

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# IDENTIFICATION OF PECULIARITIES OF REACTIVE ANXIETY EXPERIENCED BY PROFESSIONALS OF SOCIOEDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, EMPLOYING QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

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## **Abstract**

The article deals with peculiarities of the reactive anxiety state of professionals of socioeducational activities (social pedagogues and social workers). Spielberger's and Chanin's personal anxiety scale, illustrating anxiety peculiarities experienced by these professionals, is given. Evaluating peculiarities of these professionals' reactive anxiety, methods of descriptive mathematical statistics, multidimensional statistics (factor analysis) were used, the method of qualitative research semi-structured interview, content analysis were also applied. It was found that the majority of socioeducational activity professionals experienced mild reactive anxiety, about one third of respondents felt moderate reactive anxiety and a small part, severe reactive anxiety. Such state of respondents enables to avoid big anxiety and psychosomatic disorders.

**Key words:** *anxiety, state of anxiety, reactive anxiety, professionals of socioeducational activities.*

## **Introduction**

Many people quite often experience states of stress and anxiety. It is impossible to avoid them fully. According to the Dictionary of Psychology (1993), there exists basic anxiety, which is determined by negative childhood experience in the first family; it manifests itself by an intensive feeling of insecurity, which can influence specialists' professional activities. Interpersonal and internal anxiety of the group are interrelated and can make harmful pressure on professionals' individual and team achievements. According to these authors, there are two types of anxiety: as a reactive state and as a personality's constant feature; thus, there is reactive and personal anxiety, which expressed at a high level also influences the specialist's professional activity. Thus, in spite of the fact what kind of anxiety the person experiences, if it is of higher than moderate level, the specialist's professional activities will inevitably suffer in terms of quality.

Based on the emotions differentiation theory, anxiety is a combination of several emotions (fear, interest-excitement, guilt, sadness-pain, shame, anger, etc. (The Dictionary of Psychology, 1993). Beck (2008) states that mild restlessness mobilises the person's powers for activity. Continuous anxiety can turn into the feature of a personality – restlessness (Изард, 2000, Beck, 2008). Severely experienced anxiety distorts the perception of reality: flexibility of thinking, will, conscious behaviour control weaken. Therefore, severely experienced anxiety can also perform the destroying function of the person's interaction with the environment.

The analysis and evaluation of the anxiety state is not a frequent research subject among Lithuanian researchers. School related anxiety of learners is slightly more often analysed (Aramavičiūtė, 2004; Martišauskienė, 2004; Tulickas, Zambacevičienė, 2004; Dagienė, 2006; Nasvytienė, Balnionytė, 2006; Starkuvienė, 2006; Milušauskienė, Zambacevičienė, Dapkevičienė, 2008; Kepalaitė, 2011 et al.) as well as its reasons, compared to anxiety experienced by other social groups. There are also searches for links between anxiety and depression (Germanavičius, 2006; Stanionytė, 2008; Gelumauskienė, 2009) or researches on episodic anxiety related to life quality (Balevičiūtė, 2007; Balsevičius, 2010). Researches on experiencing anxiety in professional activities are also quite rare and solitary (Alifanovienė, Vaitkevičienė, 2007; Alifanovienė, Vaitkevičienė, Lučinskaitė 2011, Kepalaitė, 2011; Loikienė, 2007; Žydžiūnaitė, Bubnys, Mažuolytė, Mikelskienė, 2009).

**Research subject:** peculiarities of reactive anxiety experienced by professionals of socioeducational activities (social pedagogues and social workers) in their professional activities.

**Research aim:** to identify peculiarities of reactive anxiety experienced by professionals of socioeducational activities (social pedagogues and social workers).

**Research objectives:**

- To establish the internal consistency coefficient of Spielberger's, Chanin's reactive anxiety scale.
- To identify levels of reactive anxiety experienced by professionals of socioeducational activities.
- To identify professional situations when reactive anxiety is experienced by surveyed professionals.

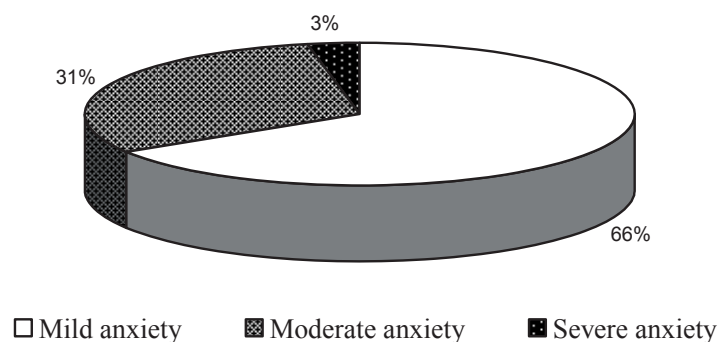
**Research methods:** a questionnaire survey, using a two-part instrument – a questionnaire: the first part contains seven questions to find out demographic data and the second, Spielberger's, Chanin's self-assessment scales with questions representing reactive anxiety. To analyse quantitative research data, statistical methods were used (descriptive mathematical statistics: frequencies (N), percentages (%), means (M), multi-dimensional statistics (factor analysis). During the qualitative in-depth semi-structured interview (according to different diagnostic areas) the situations arousing anxiety in professional activities were identified.

**Participants of the research (respondents):** the qualitative research was attended by 6 respondents, the quantitative, by 113 respondents. Respondents of both researches were social pedagogues and social workers working in different Lithuanian educational, treatment and child care institutions. There were 108 women and 5 men, the average age of the respondents was 37,7. The respondents were selected using targeted selection, this was determined by the research aim. The main selection criteria were social pedagogue's, social worker's professional qualification.

**Peculiarities of Reactive Anxiety, Experienced by Professionals of Socioeducational Activities**

The experienced state of reactive anxiety reflects the person's self-feeling at the present moment. Райгородский (1998) states that reactive anxiety manifests itself by tension,

nervousness, restlessness. It is important that severe reactive anxiety causes attention disorders, subtle coordination disorders and psychosomatic disorders.



**Figure 1.** Intensity Peculiarities of Reactive Anxiety Experienced by Surveyed Professionals

The structure of variables of reactive anxiety consists of 17 statements. Factorisation of these statements was sufficiently meaningful; this enabled to discover the structure of the surveyed phenomenon. These 17 empirical manifestations (statements) were generalised by two factor models (other variables of reactive anxiety were rejected due to too low weight of test items (L) (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Factor Analysis Data of the Reactive Anxiety Scale of Professionals of Socioeducational Activities (N=113)

Name of the factor	Initial statements	Weight of the test item, L	Item to total correlation, $r_{itt}$	KMO	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Descriptive variance of the factor, %
High mental tension at the present moment (M = 1,31)	<i>I am nervous</i>	0,767	0,73	0,85	0,88	24,79
	<i>I am excited</i>	0,746	0,71			
	<i>I am tense</i>	0,709	0,65			
	<i>I feel sore</i>	0,698	0,69			
	<i>I am very excited</i>	0,698	0,65			
	<i>I can't find a place for myself</i>	0,695	0,61			
	<i>I am too excited and feel bad</i>	0,679	0,63			
	<i>I am worried</i>	0,568	0,59			
Experiencing positive emotional state at the present moment (M = 2,40)	<i>I am pleased</i>	0,791	0,77	0,85	0,87	24,04
	<i>It is fun for me</i>	0,765	0,73			
	<i>I feel internal satisfaction</i>	0,763	0,69			
	<i>I am satisfied</i>	0,747	0,73			
	<i>I am self-confident</i>	0,731	0,68			
	<i>I feel at ease</i>	0,577	0,58			
	<i>I am calm</i>	0,507	0,51			
	<i>I don't feel tension, I am not inhibited</i>	0,462	0,43			
	<i>I fell having had a rest</i>	0,448	0,40			

The obtained data show that two factors showed up: *high mental tension at the present moment* and *experiencing the positive emotional state at the present moment*.

The statistical link of statements with factors and grouping inside them from the interpretation standpoint is theoretically meaningful. It should be noted that the obtained correlations of scores of empirical manifestations (variables/statements) with extracted factors were quite high. Descriptive power (variance) of factors fluctuates between 24,04 and 24,79 per cent. Suitability of the matrix for factor analysis is proved by *Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin* (KMO) coefficient which is quite high in this case (0,85). Internal consistency of solitary factors, evaluated using *Cronbach's alpha* coefficient, fluctuates from 0,87 to 0,88; therefore, all factors are sufficiently homogenous.

The first factor discloses that the respondents do not experience reactive anxiety at the present moment ( $M = 1,31$ ). They quite unanimously answered the statements that indicate that specialists do not experience high mental tension at the present moment. The second factor indicates that they are characterised by experiencing positive emotional state at the present moment ( $M = 2,40$ ). It is important to note here that reactive anxiety leads to personal anxiety, which indicates the personality's inclination to perceive the majority of situations as potentially threatening, which in the perspective can determine psychosomatic sicknesses or diseases, emotional instability and neurotic "explosions". Therefore, the obtained data enable to assume that experiencing positive emotions carries out the function of prevention of personal anxiety whilst the respondents experiencing these emotions should not be threatened by formation of severe personal anxiety.

### Professional Situations of Specialists of Socioeducational Activities, which Cause Anxiety

During the research it was sought to identify situations, occurring in social pedagogues' and social workers' ( $N=6$ ) professional activities, which cause anxiety. To do this, qualitative in-depth research, employing semi-structured interview was applied. Analysing situations of specialists' professional activities and events that can cause anxiety, six qualitative categories showed up (See Table 2):

- 1) Non-productive dialogue with pupils' parents and teachers
- 2) Exploitation of teachers (colleagues), poor flexibility
- 3) Anxiety due to inability to solve a problem and lack of time
- 4) Lack of professional experience and adaptation difficulties in the new working place
- 5) Naming of the social pedagogue's profession as of one that arouses anxiety
- 6) Anxiety due to the necessity to fill a large amount of documentation

**Table 2.** Situations in Professional Activities, Causing Anxiety ( $N=6$ )

Category	Subcategory	Examples of empirical statements	Number of statements
Non-productive dialogue with pupils' parents and teachers	Resistance of children's parents to provided information	"...they say their opinion, justify their version ...", "...you try for the person to give arguments, give your opinion based on facts...", "...this is the same as to speak with a television: you see the view or you hear but you can't make yourself understood....", "...parents do not acknowledge that most often problems come from the family, they think that it is the fault of the school..."	13

Continued Table 2

Non-productive dialogue with pupils' parents and teachers	Embarrassing communication with colleagues, learners' parents	<i>"...it is even more difficult to say something to a close person about their child..", "...but the conversation is very complicated..." , "...when somebody calls from some school, you know that the person calling is the one you find it difficult to communicate with ..."</i>	10
	Lack of good-natured communication of pupils' parents	<i>"...it is difficult to communicate with parents, there are parents with whom you can't speak and whom you can't visit at home,... "...it is very difficult to say something about their child, you have to select words ...", "...the biggest anxiety is caused by meetings parents...", "...they come being livid..."</i>	8
	Accusations of pupils' parents	<i>"...in the autumn I was blamed by some parents that I talked to their daughter about taking somebody's thing ...", "...having returned home, she told parents that the social pedagogue called her a thief and blamed for theft ..."</i>	3
Exploitation of teachers (colleagues), poor flexibility	Imposing of additional functions	<i>"...teachers load with many functions...", "...teachers wish that the social pedagogue were a "plug", "...some contrive to ask me to do their work..."</i>	6
	Rough colleagues' behaviour	<i>"...also communication with parents is complicated ...", "...senior teachers think that they deserve respect only due to their age despite their own rough behaviour ..."</i>	6
	Hastening to perform duties	<i>"...people are outraged, they don't understand how I could be sick for this time...", "...all hope that you will take and solve the problem in two days ..."</i>	4
Anxiety due to inability to solve a problem and lack of time	Anxiety due to inability to help	<i>"...anxiety is caused by perception that I can't help that pupil the way I'd like to...", "...it is difficult to see how the situation isn't improving ...", "...fighting with difficulties or problems seem like fight with windmills..."</i>	8
	Non-performance of work on time	<i>"...I can't do something on time...", "...I start worrying if I feel that I don't manage to do things on time ..."</i>	3
	High occupation	<i>"...I don't have time to sit down and put facts that I have in places and I am already worried... ", "...lack of time to spare individual attention to children ..."</i>	3
Lack of professional experience and adaptation difficulties in the new working place	Importance of years of service (experience)	<i>"...the beginning of work, career is the most difficult..." , "...this is how it was in the first year and this is how I lived ...", "... you have to get used to ...", "...lack of experience at work ..."</i>	4
	Changing a workplace	<i>"...finding a new job...", "...period of adaptation..."</i>	2



Continued Table 2

Naming of the social pedagogue's profession as of one that arouses anxiety	Social pedagogue's speciality as a solution of never-ending problems	<i>"...this is a profession which you can work day and night", "...to think about that, solve these problems...", "...this could be endless work..."</i>	4
	Evaluation of the profession as the one that influences increased anxiety	<i>"...making influence on increased anxiety...", "forcing to be anxious...", "...in my opinion, the social pedagogue's profession is difficult...", "...harmful for psychological and physical health".</i>	4
Anxiety due to the necessity to fill a large amount of documentation	Performance of formal works	<i>"...this doesn't mean that I don't feel anxiety if I have to draw up some plan...", "filling various documents and their expected checking arouses strong anxiety ...", "it is scary to miss something..."</i>	3

Analysing categories and their ratings, it shows up that mostly anxiety of specialists of socioeducational activities is caused by the non-productive dialogue between the pupils' parents and teachers. During the interview the respondents used to underline that communication in a broad sense (with colleagues, administration) and especially communication with pupils' parents was a particularly difficult process and aroused anxiety. The still tenacious opinion is that social pedagogues' learners come from asocial families, families which do not look after their children and are inclined to act inappropriately, etc., but specialists' practical experience shows that quite often the social pedagogue educates children who from the first glance seem to be grown in respectable families but maybe due to high parents' occupation and non-observance of fundamental values they have forgotten children and due to that children rebel in schools and sometimes do not know socially acceptable communication and behaviour. For such parents the child's visits to social skills lessons seem to degrade dignity, humiliate. They resist that, do not accept information given about the child's inappropriate behaviour. Quite many of them still do not understand what a social pedagogue is and what his/her functions are. The worst thing in this situation is that it is difficult to invite such parents to communicate and cooperate. In such cases it becomes much more difficult to help the learner and sometimes even impossible. The most complicated thing is that parents look at the specialist as at the enemy and not as an assistant. This way in the presence of the child the specialist's authority is degraded and it is likely that later it will be difficult to communicate and educate the child.

Constant communication is also named among important situations arousing anxiety. The community of the education institution wants to see the social pedagogue kindly disposed, always ready to help, nicely communicating, but learners, colleagues and parents not always come being favourably disposed. It falls to communicate with many different people, empathise with everyone's situation, there are cases when social pedagogues meet aggressive and provocative persons, but it is necessary to maintain business-like well-wishing relationships with them too, that is why such communication really arouses anxiety and tires specialists of socioeducational activities.

Colleagues' professional exploitation, insufficient flexibility, insufficient perception of social pedagogues' or employees' activities are also named as factors causing anxiety. It is likely that some namely do not want to understand this. Quite often in conflict situations between pupils and teachers it happens that in the situation both the learner and the teacher are not right. Then it becomes really complicated for professionals of socioeducational activities to follow professional ethics and solve social problems.

Due to the existing sufficiently liberal content, functions, regulation of professional roles of social pedagogues (Social Pedagogues' Qualification Requirements, 2001, Regulations of Provision of Social Pedagogical Support, 2004, Description of the Order of Provision of Social Pedagogical Support, 2011) in the documents of the Ministry of Science and Education, attribution of additional functions for social pedagogues is a quite frequently encountered problem. The community of educational institutions (subject teachers, form tutors, administration representatives) quite often thinks that the social pedagogue, who has no lessons, can substitute for them any time and solve all social-educational situations.

### Conclusions

1. Factor analysis of the data of anxiety experienced by socioeducational activity specialists disclosed that internal consistency coefficient of Spielberger's, Chanin's reactive anxiety scale was high; therefore, it can be stated that the instrument employed enabled to collect reliable data about social pedagogues' and social workers' emotional state.
2. Research data disclose that during the research the majority of respondents experienced mild reactive anxiety. Therefore, it can be stated that the research procedure did not cause anxiety and tension for the majority of respondents. Severe level of reactive anxiety was experienced by a very small part of respondents; during the research they were nervous, restless.
3. Analysing interview data, it was found that the situations that aroused anxiety to professionals in their professional activities were as follows: non-productive, often adverse dialogue of social pedagogues or social workers and teachers, parents, administration; lack of communication; embarrassing social situations of learners and their families and wideness of social pedagogues' activity content and functions. These are the most often named situations arousing the state of anxiety, which hinder specialists' productive work.

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# EXPRESSION OF PROSTITUTION IN THE CONTEXT OF CONSUMER SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

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## **Abstract**

In this article the author analyzes the expression of the prostitution phenomenon in the context of the development of consumer society, evaluating the situation of Lithuania in 1990-2010. As prostitution is explained in various theoretical contexts, the distinct adepts of the theoretical perspectives, preserving the inner logic of arguments, represent very diverse explanations of the phenomenon of the prostitution. This article introduces the sociological discourse of the phenomenon of the prostitution; the methodological approach is supported by the theoretical insights of Davis (1994), Giddens (2005), Rubavičius (2010), Pruskus (2010), Norkus (2008). The historical evaluation of the phenomenon of the prostitution and the analysis of the development of the legal basis, which discloses the social-legal construct of the phenomenon of the prostitution in the process of the society, socio-cultural and economical development, the entrenchment arguments of the consumer society in justice are also represented in the article.

**Key words:** *prostitution, trafficking in human beings, procurement, consumer society.*

## **Introduction**

The phenomenon of the prostitution is comprehensible and interpreted, with references to very diverse attitudes in today's postmodern society. The whole set of theoretical, ideological perspectives could be distinguished, which represent the peculiar attitude towards this phenomenon – moralistic perspective, the perspective of the “social worker”, Marxist, functionalist, “labelling”, feminist and various liberalistic variations of the attitude. The adepts of these different theoretical perspectives, in preserving the logic of inner arguments, represent very distinct analysis of the phenomenon of the prostitution. Naturally, every theoretical perspective stands for the one or the other social class, which has own interests and actively propagates them.

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However, for the effective working of the public administration, without the variety of the opinions – as one of the fundamental features of the democratic society, the parting of the dominant opinion of the society which would enable the institutions to embrace the policy is necessary. Actually, the exploration of any social phenomenon, defiant to the main features of society's state of thereof period, may be very metaphysical and inaccurate. It is necessary to notice two important dates, which signify the fundamental changes of great groups of the society, in the context of the present theme. In consonance, the Western capitalist societies from the 7-8 decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century experience the systematic change, which essence is – *the time of commodification of information, the human body and genetic matter* (Rubavičius, 2010). During the time of this period, there were detected the inexhaustible layers of resources in the human body and psyche, which enable the new spring of capital accumulation; the commodification graduate into the range of human body and its “inner” life. The body (alive, dead or frozen), the parts of the body, the components of the organs of the body became valuable commodities of marketplace. The demand of human body in a product market was formed in the countries that accumulated great material resources. Other important date for the formation of the society – 1989. During those years, the Eastern and Western European countries, where the rapid realization of neoliberal economical, social and cultural reform began which was quite controversial, struggle free from the occupation of Soviets (Norkus, 2008). The communist political and economical elite remain in power in the part of the countries of this region (e.g. Lithuania), while taken the helm of free-market reforms started over to build up the political corrupt systems of oligarchic type, which drastically weakened the social leash, enhanced the social disjuncture, and repudiated the society from the administration of the country. By the way, other elite (conservative or liberal) that replaced communistic elite continue to operate that faulty system. The dominant ideology of the individuals of these countries – the imperative of the capacity to sell oneself in the market – the benchmark of the education program, which is solidified in the education system, is being put on the clothing of the personal freedom and free choice. The rapid entrenchment of the ideology of the usage and consumer-oriented ideology enabled to form a new type consumer society during the decade where the usage became the “natural” remedy of the establishment of social organization, social relations and identity. The significance of the usage freedom is undeniable in these societies, while disappearing of the sense of the truth, the ethical evaluation of the remedies, which secure the usage, is rejected as not relevant (Bauman, 2011). Remembering that one of the aims of the reconstruction of the neoliberal society was to emancipate the market and not only it from the supervision of the nation, propagating the idea of the “minimal” nation. Numerous economically, socially, politically, ideologically naïve, weak and defenseless social strata of society that are willing largely to use now and in any means, confronted with the shortage of the resources. The merger of “the hare” and “the wolf” intervened in the united Europe. For the ability to use, the countries of Eastern and Western Europe started to pay by the bodies of young citizens. One of the forms of such a payment – is a widespread phenomenon of prostitution, embryonic forms of which existed in the countries of the Soviet regime.

**Aim of the research:** to reveal the expression of the phenomenon of the prostitution in the consumer society in the context of development in Lithuania, the legal basis of regulation of prostitution in justice.

**Methodology:** it is possible to separate series of theoretical, ideological perspectives, which represent the distinctive attitude towards the phenomenon of the prostitution - moralistic perspective, the perspective of the “social worker”, Marxist, functionalist, “labeling”, feminist and various liberalistic variations of attitude. The adepts of these different theoretical perspectives, in preserving the logic of inner arguments, represent very distinct analysis of the phenomenon of the prostitution. Naturally, every theoretical perspective stands for the one or

the other social class, which has their own interests and actively propagates them. The author in this article introduces the sociological discourse of the phenomenon of the prostitution; those methodological approaches are supported by the theoretical providence of Davis (1994), Giddens (2005), Rubavičius (2010), Pruskus (2010), Norkus (2008). The historical evaluation of the phenomenon of the prostitution and the analysis of the development of the legal basis, which disclose the social-legal construct of the phenomenon of the prostitution in the process of society, socio-cultural and economical development, the entrenchment arguments of the consumer society in justice, also is represented in the article utilizing the methods of *literature survey, the analysis of statistics and the analysis of legal documents*.

### **The phenomenon of the prostitution and its evaluation in the society**

The sexual services for the financial remuneration in all civilizations, which had the token money probably, were valid in the form of prostitution (Marshall, 1998). Nevertheless, the great civilizations of East, Antiquity and West adversely assessed that practice and as often as not prosecuted by law the prostitution, which at all times was changing its forms widely existed in various countries, in their distinct social layers. The prostitution was accounted of being “social evil” and “the feature of the degradation of the society”. The philosophers, the religion and national institutions, and society groups were contending against this phenomenon, but it remains. Usually several attitudes can be detected, which assess the prostitution in the society. Some groups apparently resent, outlining their disgust, trying to convince themselves and others that this phenomenon is uncommon and foreign for the society that if people want people could quickly remove it; that permanent moral imperatives exist and it means that because of these deviations or confusions of sexual attractions people’s attitude towards the sexual life should not change. Others state that the human nature and historical experience ensure the immortality of the prostitution. Both these attitudes say little when researching the phenomenon of the prostitution: the derogation of the problem and making it absolute are not prospective methods of the research. It is obvious that misunderstanding of this unusual form of the sexuality, inability to relate it with the valid forms of sexual life, one would not understand the natural sexuality. The containment, restriction, subjection individually with the social need concurrent with the will, of the sexual attraction, which spurts with the aim to prolong the family, is one of the leading aims of the education, which the society ought to solve. The society is vitally concerned to stop the growth of the sexual attraction, while individual will not achieve the particular standard of social maturity (Davis, 1994).

It seems as the attitude towards the prostitution is ambivalent: on the one hand, nobody succeeds to forget that this is nasty, terrible and risky; on the other hand, it seems as if this phenomenon is attractive and at heart it is needed to overcome the inside envy for those, who are indulging in the services, which the prostitution provides.

By publishing the works of Malinowski (1945) in sociology, the attitude entrenched that one or another public institution exists as long as it makes one or another function, which is beneficial for the society. Davis introduced the functional theory, which analyses prostitution as a particular safety-valve, which helps to preserve other institution – family, which is concerned with sexual relations (Davis, 1994). This functional approach with particular limitations for the author of this article appeared as acceptable and according to it this analysis of the phenomenon is accomplished in the modern-day society of Lithuania.

The definition of the phenomenon of the prostitution (Lat. prostitute – to solicit publicly) in the sociological literature yet is not finally formed, though the concept is being used since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the literature (Giddens, 2005). The prostitution is definable as sexual intercourse or offer of the body to gratify the sensuality for the material remuneration, in the sociology dictionary (Leonavičius, 1993). This is quite inexact definition, because the

act of prostitution is not only the sexual response, the purpose of which is the receiving of material remuneration. The big part of the society is involved into the process of receiving the remuneration, and especially women. Even the family, which is the most respectable sexual institution, is reasoned by the principle of interchanging: when women by betraying their sexual advantages achieve the wanted economical and social position. The practice of the erotic stimulation on purpose to make a profit has penetrated into the everyday life, but this is not called prostitution. Maybe the essence of this phenomenon could be precisely defined by one fundamental addition – the sexual intercourse with the prostitute does not have such a thing, which is called the spiritual basis of the sexual intercourse – emotion. Consequently, the definition could be slightly complemented. *The prostitution – is scruffy, remunerative sexual intercourses, which are indifferent emotionally.* This definition of the prostitution slightly differs from the author's definition from the newest Lithuanian study about the phenomenon of the prostitution, which sounds like that: the prostitution is the offering of the sexual services for an unfamiliar (and sometimes totally unacceptable) partner for the remuneration without any responsibilities (Pruskus, 2010). The right should be left for the readers to evaluate these definitions. The attitude towards the prostitution actually is universal – the majority of the societies more or less strictly are condemning it. But the hustling is not treated as the criminal offence in the many countries of European traditions, among them Lithuania. The law articles are diverted against the souteneurs and other organizers of this illegal business. Maybe one of the reasons of this phenomenon is that the changes of sexual environment in Lithuania are extremely quickly happening. The Soviet regime gummed up the imperatives of sexual morality of the Victorian times of Western Europe: the sexuality was carefully unrevealed; it was condemned by the conjugal family, who divided it for the serious work of procreation. Not a word about sex. The law on the basis – is legal and multiplying couple. The couple rises as a model, rations, holds the truth, preserves the right to speak by veiling the principle of the confidence. The only accepted place, but utilitarian and prolific place of sexuality in the social place, as in the every house – is the parents' room. What disobeys the principle of the extension of the family and does not adapt to its demands, has neither place, nor right to exist. It was so. Today the mass culture stimulates the importance of sexual demands and values. However, the fulfillment of these demands is quite complicated for the unmarried and for some married individuals.

The institution of prostitution is removing this emerging public pressure. Another supporting reason for this phenomenon could be the fact that public possibility to control sexual expression relates it to marriage and procreation of children is very poor. Moreover, the institutions which declare moral authority, affix some of the men with celibacy, associate sex with love and the procreation of children and this creates difficulties for the part of the public (far broader and active) which desires sexual variety and has a desire for slightly more "different" sexual needs, which needs new, more provocative environment and fast and relatively cheap sexual services without the burden of responsibilities.

Prostitution is both an economical and cultural phenomenon. This activity has the same goals as most of the others – to profitably sell their services. Prostitution has always been a profitable business, so it is today, in spite of public disapproval.

In many countries, the public attitude towards prostitution is different. In addition, this approach has been changing over the centuries. Sociologists have appointed three variables that determine public attitude towards prostitutes: 1) the customers' approach towards the practice of prostitutes; 2) the usage of income from prostitution; 3) the coordination of prostitution industry with acceptable social behavior (Davis, 1994).

550 BC in ancient Greece the Athens reformer Solon suggested establishing *dicterions* (public houses) which were supposed to strengthen the social climate of Athens and protect the



families. Prostitutes were divided into three main groups: *dicteriades*, *pornai* and the *hetaerae* with no strict boundaries between these groups (Дюфур, 1999). These are the *hetaerae* names that remained until nowadays: Sappho, Aspasia, Leonia, Arkeanas, Feoris and Farina. There are also four types of prostitution inherited from the ancient Greece: lesbian, sacred, Chinese and Epicurean. The authors of these philosophical doctrines (Sappho, Socrates, Diogenes and Epicurus) defined the activities of the high-class *hetaerae*. Sappho advocated love between women, Socrates – the spiritual, Diogenes – the brutal physical and Epicurus – voluptuous. *Hetaerae* had a great influence in Athens and other Greek cities. For example Aspasia, the *dicteriade* from Megara was able to influence famous Athenian orator and commander Pericles, who was madly and deeply in love with her. Because of Aspasia the young Athenian women were not ashamed to join the *hetaerae* estate (before Aspasia prostitutes were foreigners or slaves). Aspasia dictated fashion, and styles and topics of conversations, moral decisions (Дюфур, 1999).

In China, during the Zhou dynasty (1100 – 221 BC) prostitution acquired institutional forms. During the second half of the dynasty the aristocrats kept a crowd of courtesans, musicians, actors, attendants, eunuchs, who influenced the important state decisions. During the reign of Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) the estate of prostitutes has finally been formed where there were not only the illiterate prostitutes but also subtle courtesans, who were familiar with the art of dance, music and the creation of subtle poetry. At the time, a prostitute preparation system emerged. Small girls were either purchased or just stolen and given to *ciamu* (stepmothers), were trained, and later re-sold into brothels to wealthy guardians. This system was acquired and perfected by the Japanese, whose geishas today look like well prepared social workers rather than prostitutes. Indian *devadasis* – temple dancing girls for centuries not only sang and danced, but were included in the temple prostitution. In India they were essentially the only literate women. Sexual intercourse made in the temple acquired religious ritual significance; income went to the temple.

In medieval Europe prostitution was widespread. It has not been considered as a crime. Prostitution was viewed as a necessary evil. Even the Catholic Church hierarchy often made profit from public houses. This idyll lasted until the Protestant Reformation, which emphasized personal morality and was against any extramarital sexual relations. Because of the spread of terrible venereal disease in the brothels – syphilis, the extent of prostitution declined. At the same time the church handed the battle with prostitution to the state authorities. Nevertheless, despite of the authorities' attempts, sometimes quite brutal, prostitution was not destroyed. Prostitution has not disappeared even in the recent times. Even socialist systems could not fight it. After the collapse of the socialist system, the new democracies were faced with the oldest problems.

### **Prostitution in Lithuania in 1990 -2010. The public and legal regulation development**

Illegal prostitution becomes a special kind of social tension. Prostitution is particularly difficult to control. What is the public's attitude towards prostitution in Lithuania? A sociological survey, with the question "What is your opinion about prostitution" showed that 34% of respondents think that it should be banned, 14% think that not only the prostitutes should be held responsible but also their clients, 11% of respondents think that proper education is a better solution than persecution, 18% would agree with the legalization of prostitution, and the other 18% think that it is a matter of personal interest. As it is possible to see, the opinions vary.

The main arguments that encourage public organizations and public institutions to strictly control the prostitution can be grouped as follows: 1) prostitutes tend to service many

men; 2) prostitutes turn sexual relationships into commerce thus remove the spiritual link; 3) prostitution negatively affects social climate; 4) prostitution spreads venereal disease – hepatitis, AIDS and others; 5) prostitution, as a part of organized crime, worsens the criminal situation; 6) the existence of prostitution worsens the demographical situation of the country (Davis, 1994; Brommberg, 1998; Scott, 2006; Pruskus, 2010).

Probably the most important causes of legal or illegal prostitution business are economic, because prostitution is growing rapidly in countries where women lack the jobs; this is confirmed by the migration of prostitutes from poor countries to rich. Experts from Ministry of Internal Affairs have noted some direct reasons why women become prostitutes: 15% for the “beautiful and funny life”; 15% out of curiosity; 13% because they do not want to work; 11% for the additional money income. So the reasons are not only economical. Perhaps Lombroso was right when in his classification of prostitutes enlisted “born to be prostitutes” (Ломброзо, 1998).

According to the non-governmental organizations “Praeities pėdos” (The Steps of the Past), there are two directions of women trafficking in Lithuania:

- 1) When the woman is bought and sold in Lithuania.
- 2) When the woman is sold to a foreign country.

Both of these directions are important, both require attention. Nevertheless the question arises, can a Lithuanian girl that is working abroad as a prostitute be called a victim? According to the 29 November 1985 United Nations General Assembly Declaration on “Crime and Abuse of Power Basic Principles of Justice” all these women should be considered victims, regardless of whether they have been forcibly taken away or departed voluntarily and knew what they were supposed to do. All these women were somehow deceived, even if physical or sexual abuse had not been used on them.

The directions of Lithuanian citizens’ export abroad are constantly changing. If in the time period mentioned at the beginning the main stream travelled to Israel, Greece, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, now it is Germany, Holland, England, France, Spain and other countries. This is influenced by immigration laws of some countries. In Israel and Turkey the illegal prostitutes are thrown in jail. In addition, some Middle Eastern countries try not to allow single women under the age of 30 in the country without a legitimate man to escort them, so fake marriages, sex tourism, education become increasingly popular, the goal – to enter the country legally and then engage in prostitution.

Demand for these services depends on rudimentary sexual appetite. However, the prostitute is not a primitive mean of satisfying the sexual hunger. Lust, mysterious and provocative environment have their influence. The nature of prostitution is to satisfy the “dark” side of desire. The family, which is often described as a status rather than an authority agreement, limits the diversity of human sexual satisfaction, quantity and methods. A person who pays the prostitute believes that she has to do everything that he desires.

The improvement of economical situation is unlikely to eliminate at least one of the following criteria; secret desire to be satisfied will remain. In addition, the clients of prostitutes are often those who are unable to secure a regular sexual intercourse (due to deformation of the body, blindness, deafness, etc.), soldiers, sailors, criminals, tourists, conference participants.

After the shock of extremely intense prostitution growth in Lithuanian citizens, the public began to respond and compel authorities to take action. Prevailing liberal approach of society to prostitution, slowly began to change into the “social worker” paradigm, which claims that prostitution is evil, but the women who are engaged in it are victims and public must help them to get out of this shameful situation and restore the lost dignity. In 1997 Lithuania adopted the Governmental human trafficking control and prevention program, which is periodically updated and combined for all state and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

in efforts to control this negative process. The Republic of Lithuania developed and adopted legal prostitution and human trafficking interdiction basics: a law providing for criminal liability for a person who is making money on prostitution (Art. 307 CC); for inclusion into prostitution (CC Art. 308); for child pornography (Art. 162, CC); for human trafficking (Art. 147 CC.); and the purchase or sale of a child (CC Article 157). There is an administrative responsibility for prostitution (Ministry CATL 182. Art.). A formal approach to prostitution by CATL (Administrative Code) is expressed in 182 Art. and provides penalties for engaging in prostitution from 300 to 500 Lt. The repetition of the following steps shall incur a fine from 500 to 1,000 Lt, or arrest up to 30 days (Ministry of Administrative Violations Code, 2003). In 2005 amendments to this Article was adopted and came into force which provides for liability to persons who are using prostitution services.

Many of the signs of prostitution coincide with the constituent elements of human trafficking, such as sexual exploitation or recruitment. This is why in the cases of human trafficking the crime is often reclassified as profiting from prostitution or involvement in prostitution. Looking at prostitution and related crime statistics Lithuania in 2004-2010, one can see that during this period such criminal offenses were recorded: profiting from another person's prostitution (Art. 307 CC.) – 246 cases; involvement in prostitution (CC Art. 308) – 83 cases; purchase or sale of a child (CC Article 157) – 24 cases; human trafficking (Art. 147 CC.) – 187 cases. These are very moderate numbers. Probably, it is necessary to accept the view (Nikartas et al., 2011) that the official prostitution and human trafficking crime statistics are only a tip of the iceberg; they observed only part of committed criminal offenses.

It is very hard to determine the true scope of prostitution. Not only in Lithuania, but also all over the world, the data of prostitution and human trafficking extent is sketchy, unreliable, and hardly comparable, because there is no general system of data collection on national and international scale, the problem and definition of concepts is comprehended differently, there are obvious differences in legal regulations. According to the data of Vilnius branch of International Migration Organization, the number of women who are working as prostitutes in Lithuania should be around 3000 – 10000 (Lehti, 2003; Sipavičienė, 2005). However, according to Pruskus (2010), the number of women engaging in prostitution in Lithuania is 4000 – 6000. The factors that are determining the drawbacks of exhaustiveness and objectiveness of the data are related to the specifics of the recruitment into prostitution and human trafficking crimes. These are the crimes that appear in various, usually covered up methods, and are carried out by well organized criminal groups, the victims are intimidated, physically and psychologically abused, restrained. In many cases these methods overpower the possibility, will, and ability of victims to seek help. Consequently, the official statistics are not necessarily accurate and corresponding to current state; on the other hand, it can at least be useful for orienting purposes in an attempt to understand the scope of the problem. The official numbers of human trafficking presented by twelve European countries (including Lithuania) were compared to victimologic study data. It was established that the registered and real victim ratio can be 1/10 or 1/20 (Nikartas et al., 2011). Because of such a big margin of error, it is very hard to analyze the received data. So the question of the real scope of the prostitution or human trafficking remains unanswered. It is thought, that in order to get more accurate information about these crimes, it is important to improve the cooperation between the law and order institutions and aid for the victims of these crimes providing organizations, in addition to establishing the general statistics database of the victims of prostitution and human trafficking.

#### **The development of prostitution in Klaipėda in the context of forming consumer-oriented society**

Even though the problem of uncontrolled growth of prostitution is important to the residents of the whole country, in the analysis of this phenomenon it is important to single



out the cities. The prevention and control of prostitution and human trafficking problems are fueled not only by the anonymity of city life, which weakens or eliminates the control of society, but also the new arising incentives to commit a crime in the cities. In the city, as nowhere else, the social inequality emerges; it stimulates the growth of discontent and disappointment, which further stimulates antisocialism. The people are encouraged to buy, receive, use, and have. Klaipėda, while being the biggest port and third city in the country by number of residents, in demographic, cultural, and social views is a very complex system characteristic for its distinctive tension, conflict, and insecurity sources, that are forming the specific expression of prostitution phenomenon.

The material provided in this chapter is taken from Kurmanova's (2003) unpublished report on situation of prostitution in Klaipėda, the analysis of the publications in the newspapers of the city of Klaipėda "Vakarų ekspresas" and "Klaipėda", city police commissariat, and police archives.

Klaipėda having 170 thousand residents (during two decades of independence, because of various reasons the number of residents has decreased almost by 40 thousand that is 20%) is the third city in Lithuania by the number of residents, and the biggest port. Port operations influence resident economical activeness. Klaipėda has well developed transport infrastructure. The city has highway connections to Poland, Russia, Belarus, Latvia, and Germany. Not far (25 km) the Palanga international airport is located, and modernized multifunctional unfreezing port allows to be easily reached. Because of the aforementioned conditions, the sphere of sexual services in the city of Klaipėda became well developed and structuralized. However, a more or less united prostitute community, the representatives of which could voice and fight for their interests in negotiations with city council, has not been formed in the city of Klaipėda. This was caused by inner as well as outer conditions. To inner conditions it is possible to attribute that the subgroup members of this group are not communicating with each other. For example, drug using prostitutes do not consider themselves as prostitutes. Moreover, this group is not numerous, and for it a huge mobility and change of members are common. To outer conditions it is possible to attribute the predominant negative opinion of prostitution phenomenon. Despite the open or covered up promotion of prostitution legalization in Klaipėda press, that took place for a whole decade, the society managed to keep common sense and did not change its views. It is important to state, that this view is aimed against prostitution phenomenon, but not the women that are in that situation. The active position of society, which crystallized in active proceedings of non-governmental organizations, forced local as well as national level politicians gradually create such a legislative base, which more or less forces law and order institutions not tolerate this problem. One does not need to forget that punitive legal means is just one of policy comprising principles of struggle against human trafficking and prostitution. It is understandable that existence of the phenomenon in shadows does not eliminate the problem; however, it also does not allow it to spread.

While trying to determine more effective prostitution prevention means, it is essential to, at least, in general features "draw" social demographical picture of these women. Experts think, that in Klaipėda there are from 250 to 350 women, who work as prostitutes and this group is very diverse. While researching the *ethnolinguistic* characteristics of women in prostitution situation, it is important to note, that more than a half (5-6 out of 10) prostitutes of Klaipėda are Lithuanian and the rest are Slavic. When researching this group in *educational* aspect, it is necessary to note that practically all adults have finished primary school. The major part of the group has failed to gain professional education (e.g. cooks). According to them, the main reason for their unsuccessful attempt is drug use. The minors that work as prostitutes, because of their age and unfavorable social conditions (parents abusing alcohol), do not have formal education yet. When regarding *the age and the experience in prostitution business*, it is possible

to separate several groups. The senior prostitutes (during research having 35 or more years) stated having 19-20 years of experience in prostitution business; the junior prostitutes (25-27 years old) stated, that before engaging into this sphere they have used drugs for 3-4 years and only because of money shortage to satisfy this addiction they started to provide prostitution services. The major and most active group of women providing prostitution services is from 17 to 20 years old. It should be noted that the period of life from 18 to 30 years old is one of most intense in human life; the professional education is acquired, professional skills are forming, starting a family. This period is quite consequential; during it the created foundation for life can determine the rest of the life. When a person fails in this stage, he/she can choose deviant behavior or criminal activities. There also is a small group of minors, who provide their services in port territory. Even though it is dangerous, the *souteneurs* do not avoid working with girls of this age group, because the demand for their services is substantial. If a prostitute does not have alcohol or drug addictions, she can remain in the market even after age of forty, but if she is trying to combine drug use with providing prostitution services, her career span is only 3 to 8 years. Another indicator group is – *home, family, permanent partner*. Adult prostitutes are living with permanent partners in their homes, or some of them are renting a joint apartment. If she is not using drugs, the female *souteneurs* may allow living with her. However, if the girl is minor and uses drugs or does not have permanent sexual partner, she does not have where to live. There can be several sources of such a situation: “forced out of home by parents” or “the time in foster home has come to an end and does not know what to do”. When such situation occurs, they are sleeping in random places, dens, “ditches”, that is everywhere where they do not need to pay money. Prostitutes are making deals in various places of the city: port, rest parking lots of long-distance drivers, bars, saunas, hotels, night clubs, massage parlors, even newspaper ads are used. The city territory is divided into influence zones, which are serviced by one or another group of girls. The services of prostitutes are by representatives of various social levels. The *clients* of low income prostitutes are sailors. The “most profitable” are Filipinos and Russians, because they are non-selective and generous. Another major part of clients is long-distance truck drivers. Among the clients of prostitutes a decent part is comprised of people who do not have permanent jobs, especially young men. The representatives of this category are actively participating in criminal activities. A minor part of clients is comprised by visiting businessmen and officials, in addition to young men from wealthy families. Sexual practices are most various, there is practically nothing unacceptable. *Service prices* vary greatly; from express service in night club restroom for 40 litas to spending a night for 8000 litas. The most popular asked price is 50 euro, or 70 US dollars, or 200 litas. A big part of prostitutes’ income is made by thefts from the clients. Almost half of earned amount is received by *souteneurs* or organizers of this business. The low income drug user prostitutes’ earnings usually are taken away by their partners. Men and women in Klaipėda are working as *souteneurs*. The big part of women *souteneurs* in this business is surprising.

The girls and women that are providing this service are also facing great potential to get infected by AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases, because not all clients are satisfied by sex with condoms. Among women providing sexual services, there are not many that are infected with AIDS (during research there was one); however, with knowledge that among them are a lot of intravenous drug users, it is possible to guess that statistics are not accurate. In an attempt to prevent sexually and through infected syringes transmitted diseases in 1997 in Klaipėda, the first syringe exchange center has been established, and in 2000 – a second one. They give away syringes and condoms. In these centers people, who are prepared for this work and highly motivated, are working, they can provide psychological help and, if girl wants, direct to one or another NGO, where specter of services for women is very wide. In 2003 the social and psychological help center was established in Klaipėda, which provides

complex service for women (social, psychological, medical, intermediating when managing documents, interdepartmental intermediating, intermediating when trying to reestablish relations with relatives, planned program to solve social problems and preparation for living in personal environment, intermediating when looking for work as well as employment, and further relation upholding with the client). Similar scale of services is also provided by Catholic organization "Lietuvos Caritas Klaipėdoje". In the city methadone program is also provided, which is also used by females providing prostitution services. Part of these means is ambiguous, because by exchanging syringes, giving away condoms, and providing easier obtaining of drugs, people not only protect from diseases, but also implement themselves in their activities.

### Conclusions

1. After independence from Soviet occupation (1991.03.11) the spread of prostitution was caused by these reasons: *economical* (the growth of unemployment, poverty, lack of social guaranties, the quick growth of economical inequality), *cultural values* (the consumer culture coming to power, general decrease in social well being, devolution of human values, spread of alcoholism and especially drug use), *educational* (low knowledge of market community processes, social carelessness, low enlightenment of youth and police), *negative role of informational means* (advertising, romanticizing, and idealization of prostitution), *legal* (insufficient regulation of prostitution phenomenon).
2. Even though in Lithuania, by taking into account country's historical experience and the experience of the EU countries, a decent legislative base regulating prostitution was created, which cover administrative and punitive responsibility for organizers of prostitution, the receivers of prostitution services, and providers of the services, its functionality is low. The situation may be changed only by active and constant (through non-governmental organizations, pressure to corrupted legislative system of Lithuania).
3. It is thought that the income from illegal prostitution business in Lithuania per year may reach 200 mln litas. Part of this income is commissioned to buying the protection of corrupted officers. Prostitution is becoming a business, which cannot bankrupt in market oriented society.
4. The experiences of women that are in prostitution situation in city of Klaipėda reveal, that the main reasons for their involvement into prostitution are: *economical* (poverty, privation, the wish to have a lot and now, by any means possible to become a consumer that is not separated from closest environment), *psychological* (sexual abuse experienced in childhood, the lack of love and care, formation of low self-esteem, bereavements), and *addiction* to alcohol, drugs.
5. Prostitution leads personality into social, psychological, and spiritual degradation. For this reason it is essential that governmental and non-governmental organizations would have close and focused cooperation in an attempt to neutralize the factors that promote the spread of prostitution phenomenon in consumer oriented society, and constantly form adequate legal base controlling this phenomenon.

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# LINKS BETWEEN TEACHERS' ATTACHMENT STYLE AND SOCIAL INTEREST

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## **Abstract**

Quality of teachers' and pupils' relationships is related to peculiarities of teachers' attachment and social interest. The dominating teachers' insecure attachment style was identified. Female teachers more often distinguish themselves by secure and disorientated attachment style, while male teachers more often distinguish themselves by preoccupied and dismissive attachment styles. Female teachers distinguish themselves by both high and medium social interest whilst male teachers, by medium and low social interest. The majority of teachers with secure attachment style distinguish themselves by high social interest. It is assumed that there are factors that can influence the interaction between social interest and attachment style.

**Key words:** *attachment style, social interest.*

## **Introduction**

Efficiency of learning activities considerably depends on the developed relationships between teachers and pupils. One of the factors that can influence these relationships could be teachers' attachment peculiarities because learning activities partially repeat the situation of initial attachment: the attachment between the child and the mother (Geddes, 2006; Pokaka, 2006). Similarly to the situation of initial attachment, the pupil seeks new knowledge, skills, solution of learning tasks and at the same time he/she needs support, security; i.e., the teacher turns into an intermediary between solution of learning tasks and the pupil, like previously the mother used to be an intermediary between cognition of the outer environment and the child. In the learning activity pupils and teachers interact with each other and turn into persons that are important to each other. Pupils can perceive the teacher as another subject of attachment. It has been identified that the mother's attachment style influences activation of a certain attachment system of the child (Allen, Fonagy, 2006). The mother who is securely attached activates the child's secure attachment system, whilst the mother who is insecurely attached activates the child's insecure attachment system. It is likely that the teacher's attachment style could also influence the development of secure and insecure learning environment, which activate the pupils' corresponding attachment system.



According to the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), early experiences of attachment draw up internal working models, which later influence psychosocial functioning of the adult person. Researches into adult attachment style supplement the repertoire of early attachment styles and distinguish four main types of attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, disorientated and dismissive. Every of them is characterised by anxiety due to rejection in interpersonal relationships (attachment anxiety) and discomfort due to close relationships (attachment avoidance) (Collins, 2006). Secure attachment distinguishes itself by low anxiety and avoidance, preoccupied attachment, by high anxiety and low avoidance, disorientated attachment, by high anxiety and avoidance, and dismissive attachment, by high avoidance and low anxiety (Brenann, Clark, Shaver, 1998).

Based on the parallel of attachment style of authorities of an organisation with the analogous parents' attachment style (Keller, Cacioppe, 2001), similar combinations of teachers' and parents' attachment can be found. Similarly to parents with secure attachment who combine their needs with the needs of cared children, the secure teacher differentiates pupils' needs, takes care of them and provides necessary support. It is considered that securely attached teachers demonstrate trust in pupils, understanding, express warm feelings towards them (Kennedy, 2004). Parents with preoccupied attachment who hold back their children's independence and autonomy could correspond to teachers with preoccupied attachment who can distrust of children's abilities and get involved into their worries too emotionally. In interpersonal relationships with pupils such teachers implement the need of belonging, too sensitively react to pupils' behaviour even when situation does not require doing so (Kennedy, 2004). Similarly to parents with disorientated attachment who focus more on their big anxiety and lose contact with their children, teachers with such attachment style can alienate from their pupils too much. Parents with dismissive attachment are less sensitive to their children's needs and provide them with less care; they can be similar to teachers with dismissive attachment who are inattentive to pupils' needs and provide them with less emotional support in difficult learning situations. Teachers with this attachment style are inclined to maintain a larger distance from pupils, rely on them less, and show less warmth, sensitivity and understanding (Kennedy, 2004). Hence, teachers with various attachment styles also develop different types of relationships with pupils. Thus, identification of teachers' attachment style is also important and relevant solving issues of quality of learning as well as difficulties arising in interpersonal relationships with pupils.

The attachment theory, describing mechanisms of attachment style formation and their development, developed applied researches into the role of adult attachment style in the working domain and in the field of family relationships. However, the attachment theory characterises the person's functioning only in one aspect; besides, it does not have the system of psychotherapy, which would use phenomena of attachment theory (Weber, 2003). Such theory that is close to the attachment theory but that has a developed system of psychotherapy is Adler's individual psychology.

Both attachment theory and individual psychology emphasise the role of interpersonal relationships in personality development. Such phenomena of individual psychology as feeling of community and social interest directly indicate the social nature of a person. Adler (2003) uses the concepts of feeling of community and social interest as synonyms. Other developers of individual psychology maintain that the aspect of feeling of community – social interest – expresses active, socially useful interaction with people (Ansbacher, 1999). Adler (2003) states that the possibility of feeling of community and social interest is inborn but its spread depends on environmental impacts and relationships with parents in the early childhood. The importance of such relationships is emphasised in the attachment theory as well. Feeling of community is universal and manifests itself by a constant positive attitude towards other people, unconditional

favour to others, care of others and wishes of good for them. Feeling of community and social interest name the experienced link starting from the closest people and finishing with all animate and inanimate nature. Thus, developed feeling of community and social interest correspond to the description of secure attachment. Meanwhile poorly developed feeling of community and social interest mean the person's dissociation from social environment, focus on oneself. This corresponds to the general description of insecure attachment. It is thought that feeling of community is of several levels: affective, cognitive, and behavioural. At the affective level the individual survives, experiences link with the environment, at the cognitive level the person acknowledges the necessity and inevitability of such link with the environment, whilst at the behavioural level the person behaves according to his/her feelings and thoughts, cooperating with others to achieve universal welfare (Stein, Edwards, 1993). The same three levels in the phenomenon of attachment are distinguished by the representatives of the attachment theory as well. Theoretical links of phenomena of the attachment theory with the phenomenon of social interest are most often presented at the theoretical level (Weber, 2003) but there is a lack of empirical proofs of these links. Such empirical researches would supplement researches into adult attachment by ways of psychological impact, which are not lacking in the system of psychotherapy of individual psychology.

Researches on attachment in the context of the system of education focus more on the analysis of the role of pupils' attachment for learning efficiency and for adjustment to school requirements (Geddes, 2006; Reio, Marcus, Sanders-Reio, 2010). There is a lack of such researches which would analyse links between peculiarities of teachers' attachment and social interest. Meanwhile researches on peculiarities of teachers' attachment and social interest could help consulting teachers about difficulties in relationships with pupils and colleagues, in teacher training, teachers' in-service training, improving quality of interpersonal relationships, consultancies on career guidance, analysing motives of choosing the teacher's speciality.

Thus, considering the importance of attachment style and social interest in the teacher's professional activities, the **aim** of this research is to disclose links between teachers' attachment style and social interest.

#### **Research objectives:**

1. To disclose peculiarities of teachers' and prospective teachers' attachment style.
2. To disclose peculiarities of teachers' and prospective teachers' social interest.
3. To identify links between teachers' and prospective teachers' attachment style and social interest.

**Research subject:** links between teachers' and prospective teachers' attachment style and social interest.

#### **Methodology**

**The target group.** The research was attended by 192 teachers and prospective teachers; 146 (76%) of them were female and 46 (24%), male. The target group was distributed to age groups according to age limits indicated by Gučas (1990): 100 (52%) young mature adults (between 19 and 24 years old), which included 94 (94%) females and 6(6%) males; 63 (33 %) first maturity adults (between 24 and 34), which included 37 (59%) females and 26 (41%) males; 29 (15 %) second maturity adults (between 35 and 60), which included 15 (52%) females and 14 (48%) males. The group of young mature adults consisted of prospective teachers, who study education studies and are getting ready to become teachers.

**Research methods.** This research employed the adult attachment scale (Brennan, Clark, Shaver, 1998; Šinkariova, Balsevičienė, 2010) and the social interest scale (Crandall, 1996, Kepsalaitė, 2004), adapted for usage by the psychologist.



The attachment scale consists of 36 statements, which the surveyed person has to evaluate using Likert-type scale from 1 (I completely disagree) to 5 (I completely agree).

Secure attachment style is identified if the surveyed person collects less than the mean in the avoidance scale (50,6) and in the anxiety scale (47,3). Dismissive attachment style is identified if the surveyed person collects less than the mean in the anxiety scale and more than the mean in the avoidance scale. Disorientated attachment style corresponds to more than the mean in avoidance and anxiety scales. Preoccupied attachment corresponds to more than the mean in the anxiety scale and less than the mean in the avoidance scale.

The Cronbach alfa coefficient of this scale 0,84 is sufficiently high; thus, this scale is suitable for group researches (Vaitkevičius, Saudargienė, 2006). The reliability coefficient corresponds to the Cronbach alfa coefficient 0,86 identified by the authors of the Lithuanian scale variant (Šinkariova, Balsevičienė, 2010).

The level of social interest was identified by the social interest scale (Crandal, 1991). The scale consists of 24 pairs of adjectives describing the personality. The respondent has to choose which trait out of two he/she prioritises. Cronbach alfa of this scale 0,56 is sufficient performing group researches.

Thus, key variables of this research are estimators of attachment and social interest.

Additional variables are gender, age.

Research data have been calculated employing 17.0 SPSS software. Attachment and social interest estimators and data of additional variables do not meet the requirements of normal distribution (deviation from normal distribution according to Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion  $p < 0,05$ ). Therefore, further statistical analysis was performed using the respondent-orientated strategy, applying K-means cluster analysis and nonparametric criteria – cross-tabulation. Cramer's V coefficient was applied because distribution in cross-tabulation columns is uneven.

## **Research Results and their Discussion**

### **Results of Research on Attachment Style and Discussion**

Estimators of the avoidance scale of surveyed persons of the whole sample ( $M=50,7$ ) are statistically bigger ( $p < 0,05$ ) than the ones of the anxiety scale ( $M=47,62$ ). The model of four clusters was chosen for cluster analysis. This corresponds to the theoretical grounding of the used attachment scale and to empiric surveys, carried out employing this scale. As it can be seen from Table 1, which presents centres of four clusters, four groups were drawn up according to combinations of estimators of anxiety and avoidance scales. The first group, characterised by the lowest estimators of anxiety and avoidance scales and scores that are lower than the means of these scales, can be referred to as the secure attachment group. The number of surveyed persons in this group is the smallest ( $n=13$ ; 7%). The central value of estimators of the anxiety scale of the second group of clusters is slightly higher than the mean value of this scale, whilst of avoidance scale it is slightly lower than the mean of this scale. The preoccupied attachment style corresponds to the combination of estimators of these scales; this style is represented by the largest number of surveyed persons ( $n=71$ ; 37%). The centres of the third group of clusters correspond to combinations of scales of disorientated attachment style, when estimators of both scales are higher than the means of these scales. This group is represented by one third of all surveyed persons ( $n=70$ ; 36%). The fourth cluster is represented by combinations of estimators of dismissive attachment style. The central value of the dismissive scale exceeds the mean value of this scale, whilst the central value of the anxiety scale is significantly lower than the mean of this scale and than the value of cluster centre of the avoidance scale.

**Table 1.** Cluster Centres of Estimators of the Attachment Scale

Title of scales	Values of cluster centres			
	1 cluster	2 cluster	3 cluster	4 cluster
Anxiety scale (X=50,7; SD=12,65)	18,31	48,14	60,71	37,61
Avoidance scale (X=47,62; SD=10,46)	19,85	50,51	57,09	51,82
Distribution of surveyed persons (n, %)	13 (7%)	71 (37%)	70 (36%)	38 (20%)
Attachment style	Secure	Preoccupied	Disorientated	Dismissive

Distribution of teachers according to attachment styles discloses more frequently occurring preoccupied and disorientated attachment styles. With regard to frequency, in this sample dismissive attachment style slightly lags behind. Representatives of secure attachment style occur most seldom. Such distribution of surveyed persons partially corresponds to distributions identified in researches on adult attachment styles. Surveying employees of operational enterprises, disorientated attachment style was more often identified whilst correspondingly dismissive, secure and preoccupied attachment styles occurred more seldom (Šinkariova, Balsevičienė, 2010). According to research data on attachment style, it has been identified that the majority of surveyed persons attribute themselves to securely attached (50%) and more seldom they attribute themselves to dismissive and disoriented attachment style (20% each) (Colin, 1996). Using other researches on adult attachment styles, most often secure attachment was identified and significantly more seldom, disoriented, preoccupied and dismissive attachment styles were identified (Surcinelli et al., 2010). The number of representatives of insecure attachment style in this sample is the highest (n=179, 93%), whilst the representatives of secure attachment style make up the minority (n=13, 7%). This corresponds to the above mentioned research, the results of which demonstrate more frequent insecure than secure attachment style among employees of operational enterprises (Šinkariova, Balsevičienė, 2010).

It can be assumed that teachers with insecure attachment style can also encounter difficulties creating safe learning environment for their learners. Meanwhile creation of such secure learning environment contributes not only to increasing learning motivation but also to improvement of academic achievements and maturity of learners' personalities (Geddes, 2006). Although the majority of teachers with preoccupied attachment style who positively evaluate others but negatively evaluate themselves could contribute to creation of favourable learning environment. It is more likely that they would focus on relationships with learners rather than on submission of learning tasks and creation of conditions for seeking them. This could create conditions for appearance of the burnout syndrome (Strodl, Noller, 2003; Zech, Berenschot, Stroebe, 2006). Meanwhile teachers with dismissive attachment style would concentrate more on submission of learning tasks, evaluation of their performance rather than on creation of learning atmosphere and contacts with learners. They would be more concerned about the development of learners' personalities and interpersonal relationships with them and their colleagues. Due to intensively experienced anxiety teachers with disorientated attachment style could be the creators of excessively controlled atmosphere in the class who use learning innovations and creative tasks for pupils less than other teachers. They would find it more difficult to start relationships with learners and maintain them due to worse trust in others and inflexibility.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Teachers according to Attachment Style and Gender (n, %)

Gender	Attachment style				In total	p (according to Cramer's V)
	Secure	Preoccupied	Disorientated	Dismissive		
Males	3 (7%)	23 (32%)	7 (15%)	13 (28%)	46 (24 %)	0,26 p<0,005
Females	10 (7%)	48 (33%)	63 (43%)	25 (17%)	146 (76%)	
In total	13 (6%)	71 (37%)	70 (37%)	38 (20%)	145 (100%)	

The results given in Table 2 demonstrate that there are significantly more females than males with disorientated and preoccupied attachment style. Meanwhile although among males the representatives of preoccupied attachment style dominate they lag behind with regard to dismissive and disorientated attachment style. The number of secure attachment style representatives among males is the least and disorientated attachment style occurs most seldom. Such regularity of distribution of attachment style representatives according to gender is statistically significant ( $p<0,05$ ). This partially corresponds to researches which have identified that females are characterised by a more frequent preoccupied attachment than males (Foster, Kernis, Goldman, 2007) although Bowlby (1973) states that both males and females have equal possibilities to form secure and insecure attachment regardless of gender.

**Table 3.** Distribution of Teachers according to Attachment Style and Age (n, %)

Age	Attachment style				In total	p (according to Cramer's V)
	Secure	Preoccupied	Disorientated	Dismissive		
Young adults	10 (10%)	40 (40%)	37 (37%)	13 (13%)	100 (52%)	0,17 p>0,05
First maturity	3 (5%)	22 (35%)	23 (37%)	15 (24%)	63 (33%)	
Second maturity	0 (0%)	9 (30%)	10 (35%)	10 (35%)	29 (15%)	
In total	13 (6%)	71 (37%)	70 (37%)	38 (20%)	145 (100%)	

As it can be seen in Table 3, the biggest number of representatives of secure attachment style is among young adults and the number of such adults who can be attributed to dismissive attachment style is the least. Meanwhile the majority of first maturity representatives can be attributed to preoccupied and disorientated attachment style groups. Representatives of second maturity are equally distributed in insecure attachment style groups, none of them falls under the secure attachment group. With regard to this sample such distribution is not statistically significant ( $p>0,05$ ) but partially it corresponds to researches which had identified that older people more often than younger are characterised by dismissive attachment style (Magai et al., 2000). These authors state that older people more rarely than younger people are characterised by secure attachment style. In other researches it has been identified that older people more often had dismissive attachment style than younger surveyed people (Diehl et al., 1998). Distribution of representatives of this sample partially corresponds to researches which disclose higher numbers of representatives of disorientated attachment style among younger people than among older people.

Thus, peculiarities of attachment styles with regard to age are quite contradictory and

only partially correspond or contradict to the distribution of attachment styles of this sample according to age.

### Results of the Research on Social Interest and their Discussion

Cluster analysis of estimators of social interest disclosed three clusters (see Table 4). The scores of the cluster centre correspond to high, low and medium estimator of the social interest scale. According to clusters teachers distributed unevenly. The majority of them fell under the group of medium score of social interest (47%) and under the group with highly expressed social interest (38%). The least part of surveyed persons is characterised by low social interest (15%).

**Table 4.** Cluster Centres of Estimators of the Social Interest Scale

Title	Scores of the cluster centre		
	1 cluster	2 cluster	3 cluster
Social interest (M=7,2; SD=2,73)	10,12	6,18	3,03
Distribution of surveyed persons (n, %)	73 (38%)	90 (47%)	29 (15%)
Level of social interest	High	Medium	Low

Thus, manifestation of social interest of this sample of teachers is desirable to their professional activities. It discloses bigger orientation of these teachers and prospective teachers to interaction with others than concentration on themselves.

As it can be seen from Table 5, there are less representatives of high social interest among males than among females. Among males representatives of medium social interest dominate. Meanwhile females distinguish themselves by high social interest, the minority of them, like in male group, belong to manifestation of low social interest.

**Table 5.** Distribution of Teachers according to the Social Interest Group and Gender (n, %)

Gender	Social interest group			In total	P (according to Cramer's V)
	High	Medium	Low		
Males	6 (13%)	28 (61%)	12 (26 %)	46 (24%)	0,3 p < 0,001
Females	67 (46%)	62 (42%)	17 (12%)	146 (76%)	
In total	73 (38%)	90 (47%)	29 (15%)	192 (100%)	

Females are also characterised by moderately expressed social interest. This distribution is statistically significant ( $p < 0,001$ ). Certain researches on social interest confirm the assumption that females should distinguish themselves by higher social interest than males because they are more orientated to relationships, are more emotional, emphatic (Kaplan, 1991). The latter conclusions are confirmed by the results of this research. Other researches, on the contrary, state that the gender factor is not important for social interest (Crandall, 1991) because the basis is the statement about universality of social interest, its independence of gender and age.

Distribution of representatives of social interest with regard to age is not statistically significant ( $p > 0,05$ ). Although other researches had demonstrated links between teachers' social interest and age: with age the manifestation of social interest increases (Kepalaitė, 2004).

### Links between Attachment Style and Social Interest

Analysing distribution of representatives of attachment style and social interest (see Table 6), it can be noticed that the bigger share of representatives of secure attachment style are characterised by high social interest, the remaining are evenly characterised by both medium and low social interest.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Teachers according to Attachment Style and the Social Interest Group (n, %)

Social interest	Attachment style				In total	p (according to Cramer's V)
	Secure	Preoccupied	Disorientated	Dismissive		
High	7 (54%)	21 (30%)	34 (49%)	11 (29%)	73 (38 %)	0,24 p = 0,073
Medium	3 (23%)	38 (54%)	30 (43%)	19 (50%)	90 (47%)	
Low	3 (23%)	12 (17%)	6 (9%)	8 (21%)	29 (15%)	
In total	13 (7%)	71 (37%)	70 (37%)	38 (20%)	145 (100%)	

Meanwhile only one third of both preoccupied and dismissive attachment style teachers are characterised by high social interest. Their medium social interest is more expressed. Medium social interest dominates among disorientated attachment style teachers. Such distribution is close to the limit of statistical significance ( $p = 0,073$ ).

A very weak conversely proportional link between estimators of social interest and attachment avoidance was identified ( $r = -0,11$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ) as well as absence of link between estimators of social interest and attachment anxiety ( $r = 0,02$ ;  $p > 0,05$ ).

Such peculiarities of links between social interest and attachment could be explained by the fact that social interest measures positive and active attitude towards people in general whilst attachment styles more characterise quality of relationships with important people. Therefore, the number of teachers with high social interest is significantly less than of representatives of secure attachment. Meanwhile not necessarily all teachers with secure attachment can transfer favourable attitude in close relationships to relationships with other people. Besides, high social interest can be also characteristic to teachers with other attachment styles, who implement general positive attitude with regard to other people not necessarily in relations with important people and vice versa. Based on that, an assumption can be made about the role of other factors influencing interaction of social interest and attachment style too. Search for such factors could be the subject of further researches.

### Conclusions

1. Cluster analysis distinguished four groups of teachers according to estimators of attachment styles. This corresponds to the theoretical attachment model of the used scale and to empirical researches. The dominating insecure attachment teachers' group (preoccupied, disoriented and dismissive attachment) and significantly smaller secure attachment teachers' group were identified. It was disclosed that females dominate among secure attachment style teachers. Female teachers are also characterised by disorientated attachment style. Male teachers are characterised by preoccupied and dismissive attachment styles and make up a minority in the secure attachment group.
2. According to manifestation of social interest three teachers' groups were drawn up. The majority of teachers are characterised by medium manifestation of social interest.



The majority of female teachers distinguish themselves by high and medium, and the majority of males, by medium and low social interest. Manifestation of social interest by age groups did not disclose any substantial regularities.

3. No significant links between teachers' attachment style and social interest were identified but the tendency was disclosed: representatives of secure attachment more often distinguish themselves by high social interest than representatives of other attachment groups. Among representatives of other attachment groups moderately expressed social interest dominates.

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# SELF-REALIZATION OF TEACHER: PERSONAL MEANING AND DIRECTION

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## **Abstract**

On the basis of the study the problem of self-realization as a special type of activity taking into account the personal meaning of different types of teachers is revealed in the article. These results ascertained that the majority of modern Belarusian teachers do not possess the characteristics that contribute to their self-realization sufficiently. Relatively low rates were found in such important characteristics as internal locus of control, spontaneity, subjective well-being, positive temporal transpection, the value of development and self-realization, which makes it difficult to include teachers in self-realization activity. In the article also the typology of teachers according to the personal sense of self-realization, which can serve as a basis for finding ways to optimize self-realization of educators, to identify the necessary conditions for the development of their self-realization activity has been identified.

**Key words:** *representation of the features of modern teacher; self-realization of teacher; personal sense*

## **Introduction**

Exacerbated interest of a person in the independent search for answers to questions of the mission, of the sense of one's own life, of limits or boundlessness of the development, about borders or boundless possibilities of the manifestations, about an independent choice of spheres and means of the embodiment puts forward the research of a problem of self-realization of each person on the first place. The special relevance is given to the research of a problem of self-realization of the teacher for only that teacher for whom self-realization has deep personal meaning, can create conditions for optimization of the process of the formation of self-realization of pupils.

**Object of research:** self-realization of the teacher.

**Research objective:** identification of personal sense and orientation of self-realization of the teacher.

**Research problems:** to define the features of modern teachers in respect of the representation of the characteristics promoting their self-realization; to reveal the nature of

interrelation between the features of representation of self-realizational characteristics of teachers and an orientation of their self-realization (typology of teachers).

**Research methods.** The solution of problems was carried out by means of a complex of complementary methods: methods of the theoretical analysis, psychodiagnostic methods (testing, questioning, the content analysis, conversation, value orientations, a technique of the research of self-image “Who am I” (Kuhn, McPartland, 2006), “Test on self-actualization” (SUT) (Gozman, Kroz, Latinskaya, 1995), “Diagnostics of self-updating of the personality” (DSUP).

**Subjects of research:** In the article the data of the empirical researches executed by the author during 2011-2012 are generalized. Total number of respondents made 643 persons – teachers of schools of the Grodno area and Grodno (Republic of Belarus)

**Relevance of the research.** The concept of modernization of education, actively being carried out in modern Belarus, dictates new requirements to the identity of the teacher, as to a key figure of converting activity in education. Now significant innovations in the sphere of the organization, the contents and technology of pedagogical education do not provide that level of personal and professional readiness of the teacher for creativity, taking of non-standard decisions, interaction with pupils, manifestation of an initiative, active involvement in activity which would correspond to the process of updating of target, substantial and procedural characteristics of education.

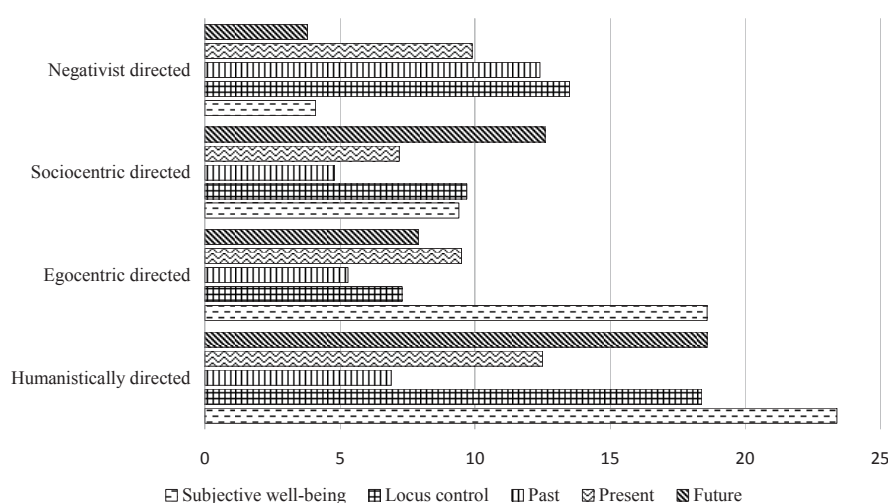
Self-realization is proclaimed today as one of purposes of the Belarusian education and, respectively, one of the most relevant problems of pedagogics. At the same time in the conditions of the reform of comprehensive school and system of pedagogical education in many documents declaring self-realization of the teacher as the purpose of pedagogical education, as a factor of ensuring self-development of pupils, the essence and structure of self-realization of the teacher are not defined, the methodology, the theory and technology of development of self-realization of the teacher at various stages of professional education are not located.

As the literature analysis showed, now science has rather wide range of definitions of the concept “self-realization”. Consequently, for example, Slobodchikov (1995) understands an essential form of life of the person as self-realization. Derkach & Sayko (2010) define self-realization as a process constantly reproduced on all the distance of ontogeny, presented together with self-development as a binary position-opposition of two parties of complete process of development. Galazhinsky (2002) argues that self-realization is an immanent, invariant feature of a person as an open psychological system. However at distinctions in definition of an essence of self-realization by a number of authors some important common features are looked through. On the one hand, it is admitted that self-realization is a certain property appreciably inherent in the person, on the other hand, it is noted that self-realization is a prerogative of the adult person (Slobodchikov and Isayev, 2000). Thus (Egorycheva, 2005) in the present article *self-realization* is understood as the activity specially organized by the subject whose purpose is the embodiment of his/her subjectively felt mission.

As a whole it is possible to note that in a psychological-pedagogical science sufficient theoretical and empirical material concerning characteristics of the personality in the process of self-realization, levels, criteria, determinants of self-realization, conditions making it active has been accumulated. However, now the systematically presented picture of stage-by-stage expansion of self-realization and all the constructs forming it is absent in the development of the teacher. The most problematic question still is about how the life of an adult person should be organized for self-realization to turn from the potential possibility that everyone has to the reality for the maximum possible number of people, these questions extremely actualize the problem of personal sense and orientation of self-realization of the teacher.

**Research methodology.** Fundamental regulations on unity of consciousness and activity, on mentality development in activity (Vygotsky, 1987; Leontyev, 2004; Rubenstein, 2004; etc.), a subject approach (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1980; Ananyev, 2001; Rubenstein, 2004; etc.) served as the methodological basis. The great influence was rendered by fundamental regulations on self-development as internal activity of the person (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1980; Slobodchikov, 2000; Rubenstein 2004), the theory of subject self-implementation (Derkach, Sayko, 2010).

**Analysis of data of research.** For the purpose of clarification of a level of development of the characteristics promoting self-realization of teachers, on the basis of schools of the Grodno area in 2011-2012 complex research was carried out. The research showed that the majority of modern Belarusian teachers do not possess sufficiently developed characteristics promoting self-realization (Figure 1). Only a third of the respondents are characterized by rather high orientation on development, aspiration to do something important for people, the lowest orientation to hedonism. For 16,7% of teachers it is complicated from the point of view of self-realization in activity, as activity itself is related to the assistance to other person, creation of the condition for his/her development. Moreover, only 20,8% of teachers have high level of the formation of purposefulness, i.e. in many respects the relation to oneself and to others of the majority of them is unstable, has a situational character that is critical for the position of a teacher. 50% of teachers – owners of a low level of development of a reflection, 25% out of them – of the level which was conditionally called by the author: “the reflection is rejected”. Only 58,3% revealed the mature type of reflection. Only 37,5% of the teachers possess high level of spontaneity. Readiness to assume responsibility for events of one’s own life, feeling of submission to control of events is minimal. 41,4% of teachers accept themselves and others, which makes them more self-assured, free from fear of committing a mistake, leads to the formation of readiness to assume responsibility for the acts. About 48,3% of the respondents are inclined to accuse circumstances and people round about for failures, and attribute successes to themselves. 12,9% of teachers because of insufficient value relation to themselves are ready to be guided by opinion of people around and, as a result, to transfer them responsibility for their life. Temporary transpection in many respects reflects these feelings: higher indicators were revealed in relation to the past, lower – to the present and very low – in relation to the future. Only 36,6% of the teachers have indicators of subjective wellbeing of high and very high level. Subjective wellbeing of 50% of the teachers is below average, 16,7% see their life as gloomy. Moreover, the owners of such level as depression – feeling of extreme trouble – are more than a quarter of the interrogated teachers. Probably, the need to rigidly prove their importance and value to people around, to whom the person does not feel sufficient respect, trust and acceptance and the position when the person, even at his/her own will, puts others mainly on the first place in comparison with himself/herself, causes feeling of one’s own trouble.



**Figure 1.** Interrelation of types of an orientation with separate characteristics of teachers in the process of self-realization of personality

Research showed that the majority of modern Belarusian teachers (58%) understand self-realization as the ability to realize oneself in something. In their opinion, self-realization is the most complete disclosure of abilities, talents, potentialities and possibilities of the person, carried out by a way of his/her inclusion to social structures. About one third of the interrogated teachers emphasized that self-realization is a result of education of the personality. In the center of this point of view there is the belief in individual experience of the person, in his/her ability to self-disclosure, in the possibility to reveal unique and inimitable essence in oneself, in the determination of the direction and means of personal growth. Other respondents relate self-realization to practical implementation of person's inclinations, abilities, talents and traits of character through one or another sphere of social activity with advantage for themselves, community and society as a whole.

Teachers know about self-realization, but understand it rather narrowly. The activity specially organized by the subject, the purpose of which is the embodiment of his/her subjectively felt mission, is reduced by them to appreciably inherent property of a person and the productive moment of its development. Self-realization cannot be connected only with property and result. Such understanding contradicts a social situation and the status of the teacher. One of the features of self-realization of the teacher is its deep personal meaning. Only such teacher can promote self-realization of pupils, creation of conditions for optimization of the process of its formation. Self-realization is a special type of activity. On the one hand, it has all general characteristics of activity, and on the other hand – the peculiar features characterizing its motivational, target, subject orientation on the performer himself/herself.

At the same time, the carried-out research allowed to allocate five conditional types in all the respondents (Figure 2).

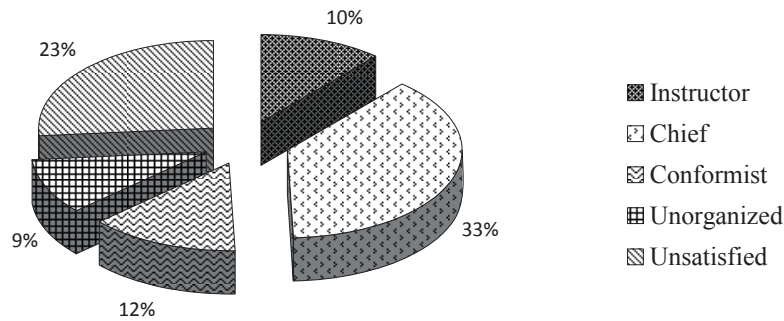


Figure 2. Typological features of self-realization of teachers

Type 1 – “**Instructor**”. The main value for such teachers is the personality: the specific person and the concrete society consisting from concrete “selves”, instead of from abstract “others”. The positive relation of the person to oneself and other people is expressed in acceptance oneself as a whole as a personality, in acceptance others as they are. Their main goal – to embody oneself in activity. The major quality – creativity. This type of teachers is characterized by high level of social wellbeing, orientation to the supreme values and examples, including self-realization as specially organized one’s own activity the purpose of which is the embodiment of the subjectively felt mission. “Instructor” is the initiative teacher offering new forms of work with school students, their parents, the public, experimenting. Motto of its activity: “Together we are force”. He/she considers specifics of different age categories of pupils and their needs. Quite often he/she makes the programs of training, in his/her own way builds a technique of teaching and out-of-class work. He/she is widely-read, sociable, and intelligent. He/she is interesting to audience as a source of new information and the interpreter of the important phenomena of science, technology, literature, public life. “Instructors” systematically and purposefully are engaged in self-education which is focused on professional and their personal development. According to “Instructor”, dominating influence on readiness for self-realization is rendered by work on oneself, knowledge of specifics of the profession and satisfaction with it (Figure 3).

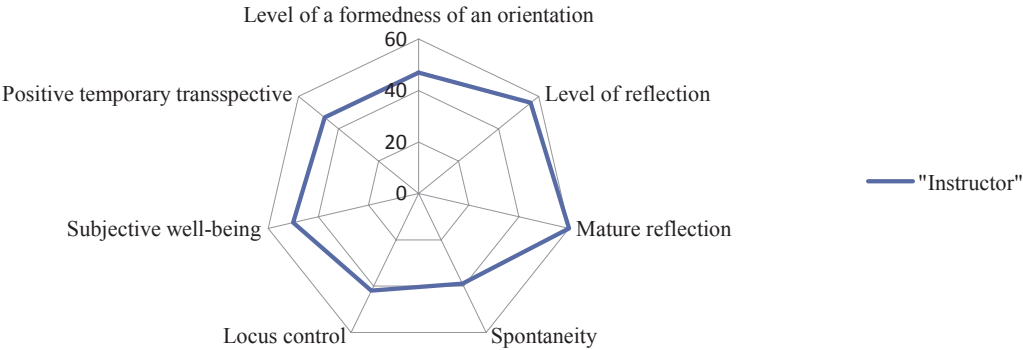


Figure 3. Self-realizational characteristic of teachers at an optimum level (the Instructor type; in %)



Type 2 – “**Chief**” is mainly focused on preservation and consolidation of his/her professional prestige. The main value for the teacher is he/she himself/herself, his/her thoughts, judgments, interests, activity, and results of his/her work. The teacher aspires to the recognition of his/her big rights, in comparison with others, his/her special value by the society. By the status in school community is the most “qualified” category of teachers “Chief” is the erudite teacher, involved in work, well knowing the subject. It is possible to imagine him/her both giving a lesson, and lecturing in any audience. This is the teacher focused on different types of organizational activity, related to training of the pupils, skillfully carrying out communication with parents of pupils, with the public. Concentration on the professional consolidation – very strong motivating justification of all activity of “Professional”. Focus on oneself defines a picture of their behavior as a whole. They try to reach results at any cost, are aimed only at the status. Pupils respect them and are afraid of them at the same time. Characteristic feature of “Chief” – high self-discipline. 37,4% out of them declare that they independently organize the activity on the embodiment of their mission.

Type 3 – “**Conformist**”. The main feature of teachers of this type is that they do not accept themselves. Positive attitude towards others is characteristic to them. However, it is specific: comparing oneself with other teachers, the representative of this type steadily finds something positive in them and lack of it or something negative in oneself; in relation to oneself it causes disappointment, irritation, in relation to others – envy, offense, piety. As a rule, such teacher either does not trust himself/herself, does not appreciate himself/herself, aspires to correspond to expectations of people around, or negative attitude towards oneself is so strong that the teacher often takes the position reflected in the name of an accentuation (in order not to be rejected he/she is ready for any acts and even humiliations). The main motto – to work by rules. It results in aiming of self-realization at compliance to external requirements. “Conformists” consider that material well-being renders crucial importance on self-realization. In this group of teachers situational influences of the circle of parents, friends, and neighbors are strong. Change of the relation to specially organized own activity directed on embodiment of their subjectively felt mission for representatives of this group is defined by change of the life situation itself.

“**Unorganized**” (type 4) – having exclusively positive attitude towards self-realization, realizing that in higher education institution they missed a lot of things for this purpose. However practical activities on the organization of this kind of activity in “Unorganized” are absent. They explain it as follows: 1/3 of them complain about inability to distribute time, on the personal disorganization, about 20% indicate load of family problems, 8% argue that they missed too many things in higher education institution. There is one more obstacle, it is named by almost of the one third of the “Unorganized” – unpreparedness for self-realization. It is possible to conclude that motives of self-realization of these teachers are not created as a result of their lowered resilience to difficulties arising earlier and existing now. The motto of the teacher of this type – “no matter where to work if only not to work”. They are inclined to profession change; consider that to teach in school is necessary only those who want to study. Training and education are considered by them as two independent processes. In the “Unorganized” orientation to self-realization in a profession weakens in the course of time. After this there is a narrowing of types of leisure: more and more time is given to the house, watching TV, simply resting, discussion with friends of everyday problems. It brings to intellectual as a whole and professional in particular impoverishment of the personality of the “Unorganized”.

The teacher accepts neither himself/herself, nor others; he/she does not see anything positive both in himself/herself, and in others. In case of negative attitude to oneself, others seem even more disgusting, than he/she is. It is the essence of “**Unsatisfied**” (type 5). There

were 23% of them among the interrogated teachers. Well-known self-isolation with colleagues because of lack of common interests is characteristic to them. For the majority of them fellow workers are people of little interest. They try to hide the conflicts arising with pupils from the management. “Unsatisfied” do not want to receive and do not wait for the help from school administration. They developed the attitude on basic absence of conflicts of the process of education. It means notorious capitulation against complex problems of the development of the identity of the pupils. The aspiration to protect oneself from the possible conflicts in relationship with school students leads to strict restriction of the sphere of their communication to a lesson framework only. Their motto – “nothing matters to me”. Teachers of the considered group are adjusted on change of the profession. They do not find in themselves forces for overcoming of arising difficulties. They are aimed at “rest”. At the same time they see sources of difficulties in the essence of the profession itself and school students and consequently do not blame themselves, are inclined to self-justification. They consider professional choice as the failure of life.

### Conclusions

The complex research carried out by the author allows drawing some conclusions. *First*, studying of a level of development of the characteristics promoting self-realization of teachers showed that the majority of modern Belarusian teachers do not possess them sufficiently. In 1/3 of the teachers the types of an orientation complicating the process of self-realization were revealed, in more than 2/3 – low level of the formation of purposefulness, only 57% of the teachers are the owners of mature type of reflection, but only in 8,6% high level of its formation is revealed. Rather low indicators are revealed according to such important characteristics as an internal locus of control, spontaneity, subjective wellbeing, positive temporary transpection, value of development and self-realization that testifies about insufficient development of self-identification and makes the inclusion of teachers in self-realization activity inconvenient.

*Secondly*, the typology of teachers depending on a level of development of characteristics of the activity specially organized by them directed on the embodiment of their subjectively felt mission is revealed. The presented typology can become a basis for the search of ways of optimization of self-realization of teachers, the bases for identification of necessary conditions of development of their self-realization activity, because estimating actions of teachers and referring to “samples”, it is possible to create the criteria of self-realization of the teacher, their valuable relation to specially organized own activity directed on the embodiment of own mission.

*Thirdly*, the received results extremely exacerbate the question on the need of the creation of special conditions for optimization of self-realization as a special type of activity taking into account different personal sense of various types of teachers.

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# PERSONAL – SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGHER SCHOOL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION

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## **Abstract**

The article deals with the problem of motivation of studying and professional activities at the university that is urgent for the student's age and the modern psychology. The motivation of studying and professional development is determined by an invariant set of personal properties that reflects self-relation as an integral quality of the individual. The influence of these properties (self-esteem, self-interest, self-confidence, self-acceptance, auto sympathy, self-understanding, expectation for the positive attitude of others) is mediated with the estimate value of training of the future specialist on the level of studying motivation.

The necessity of purposeful work on the development of future specialists' motivation of studying and professional activities is shown.

**Keywords:** *personal-semantic factors of motivation, studying and professional motivation, meaningful characteristics of motivation, the terms of motivation development.*

## **Introduction**

The problem of studying motivation of students is one of the most important among the psychological and educational ones. Despite the fact that the motives are the leading ones in the motivational structure of students that is related to self-determination and self-improvement, a conscious pursuit of self-actualization is formed, life position is defined, self-esteem is stabilized. However, as to the results of research (Бадмаева, 2004) the studying is often formal for the majority of contemporary students from the former Soviet Union area. It is focused not on learning new knowledge but the successful passing of term's exams and getting degree.

It is known that the effectiveness of motivation largely depends on the ratio of its effective and procedural aspects, i.e. how a goal is given, the necessary result of work meets the procedural moment of motivation.

Procedural motivation is understood as the interest in the process of activity, human need to disclose his/her potentials in the activity under the conditions of aspiration to gain

the maximum result, and in this sense the concept of procedural motivation approaches to the concept of internal motivation that involves the development of positive emotional coloring of sense of activity for person, high ability to work and psychological well-being at work.

Хекхаузен (2003) describes the main criterion of internal motivation as the content uniformity of action and its purpose. Internally motivated behavior is based on the experience and skill competence, interest in activities, regardless of external influences (rewards, reinforcements, etc.), the perception of a reason for person's actions. Internal demands for competence and self-determination constantly motivates people to strive for achieving the objectives of the optimal level (Deci, Ryan, 1985). While in the process of training activities the learners' basic dominant needs are not satisfied and all sorts of discontent, crisis, neurosis, stress can be provoked. They might be the barriers to mental and psychological adaptation and compensation and give rise to the "motivational vacuum" situation (when the old motivational settings do not work but the new ones have not yet formed (Лушин, 2000; 2003). In contrast to the existential vacuum with the feeling of the life sense loss and semantic vacuum associated with the loss of meaning of certain vital reference, motivational vacuum is related mostly to the loss of meaning of a particular activity.

Thus, if the motive occupies a significant place in the attitudes of the individual to reality, and if the whole system of motifs, expressing the attitude of the individual, is blocked, the tendency to disintegration of the whole motivational and semantic system of personality appears, which is essentially about "crisis of motive realization" (Файзуллаев, 1985).

Occurrence of such a crisis as a motivational vacuum is, in fact, inevitable because the crisis itself (in terms of dialectical logic) is an element of any development. However, the representatives of various psychological schools (Bandura, 2000; Братусь, 1988; Леонтьев, 1984; Роджерс, 2002; Чирков, 1996 etc.) are unanimous that the ability to survive the crisis constructively is an essential condition for becoming healthy and developed personality. Revaluation values and reorientation meanings is a natural process of development including motivational character. In particular, Братусь (1988) calls such things "transitional – motivational needed states" that is inherent uncertainty and non-structured desires of the subject, non-clarity and vagueness of one's intentions and plans. When one experiences such crises, the "problem of meaning" appears (Леонтьев, 1984).

**The aim of the research:** is to identify student-learning semantic determinants of motivation and study their impact on content learning and level of motivation of university students.

**Object of research** – studying the motivation of university students.

*The subject* of research is personal-semantic determinants of studying motivation of university students.

#### **The methods and organization studies**

The changes occurring in higher professional education in connection with the Ukraine's accession to the Bologna Declaration cause the need to identify new criteria in evaluating the quality of vocational training. Accordingly, an important place in education belongs to the student who strives for self-development and self-realization in the future, motivated to obtain professional knowledge, development of professional competencies.

Being carried out within post-non-classical paradigm, psychological research can permit to consider a person in socio-historical and cultural context. Thus personality is treated as a creator, the author of his/her own life and active self-determined subject with his/her own internal sense and the ability to interact with the environment that helps to reveal this

content.

Post-non-classical psychology insists on the impossibility of studying human in isolation from the context of his/her vital activity. It considers that the most urgent problems of modern psychology are vital activity, lifestyle, life strategies, objectives and purpose of life of personality.

According to the referred standards of psychological research, this study covered a wide range of problems of modern specialist training. It was based on the principles of system-synergetic approach and included the use of complex psycho diagnostic methods for the detection of the features and value-semantic relationships, personal and motivational spheres of future experts in the integrated and non-integrated educational environment.

The first-year students of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine" took part in the investigation, where the training was organized in the integrated groups (students of different social status: with disabilities, orphans, poor and ordinary students). The students of National Technical University of Ukraine "KPI" also took part in the investigation, where the training was organized in the non-integrated groups.

This empirical study aims at identifying the kinds of motives for studying, the dominance of types of motivation in educational activity, personal characteristics and self-relation of students.

Being in the particular value environment the personality of student is determined. In view of the fact the present study was carried out in various educational environments – integrated and non-integrated. They are considered as the models of the value environment.

**Extent of the research:** The investigation involved 436 students including 136 students with disabilities, 155 students without disabilities from the integrated group and 145 non-disabled students from the non-integrated groups.

The study of motivation of educational activity of students (Якунин, 1994) and Motivation of study in higher school (Ильин, 2000), Pending sentence version (Солнцева, 1997) and self-determination psycho-diagnostic methods were used in the investigation (Столин, Пантилеев, 1988).

The obtained results were processed with the statistical program SPSS Statistics, version 19. The methods of descriptive statistics (definition of average values, standard deviations), correlation analysis (Pearson's correlation coefficient), a comparison of the average characteristics of the samples using student T-test have been used. The study is stating the nature.

### Analysis of results

According to *Motivation for success and fear of failure* questionnaire (Reana, 1994, cited in Якунин, 1994) it was found that the vast majority of the respondents (88%) were expressively motivated to succeed. During the training the level of motivation to success is increasing, but there are no significant changes that characterize the stable personality traits.

On the analysis of the data, obtained with Ilyin's (Ильин, 2000) method (Table 1), the students with disabilities expressed the greatest desire to acquire knowledge

(GPA 7.8). That is also true to their desire to master the professional knowledge and form important professional skills (GPA 6.2), while the healthy students expressed their desire only to get a degree successfully.

Analyzing the variation of these indicators that depends on the year of studying, it was found that the majority first-year students (65%) are motivated to acquire knowledge and master the profession, while the senior ones have lost their interest. Only 36% of senior students strive for obtaining knowledge and only 22% of them strive to master the chosen profession. Students in the integrated group are characterized with the predominance of



internal motivation, especially students with disabilities. Although with every passing years of studying these data are reducing. This general trend, known in the literature as a “crisis of motivational vacuum”, indicates that the modern overall organization of the academic process and content of education do not provide students’ interest in mastering either core or non-core subjects. In some cases it is a result of incorrect choice of profession.

**Table 1.** Correlation of motivational orientation in the groups of different organization

		Year of studying	Acquiring knowledge		Mastering profession		Getting Degree	
			$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$
Integrated groups	Students with disabilities	1 <sup>st</sup> year	8.8	2.1	8.2	2.3	5.8	1.9
		4, 5 – year	7.9	2.4	7.1	2.5	6.3	2.1
	healthy students	1 <sup>st</sup> year	7.6	2.6	6.8	1.9	6.9	1.3
		4, 5 – year	6.1	2.2	5.7	1.8	6.1	2.8
Non-integrated groups		1 <sup>st</sup> year	6.6	1.8	4.7	2.1	7.8	1.7
		4, 5 – year	5.4	2.1	3.9	2.1	8.1	1.8

$\bar{X}$  – average value;  $S_x$  – standard deviation.

The study of motivational orientation of the individual on *Pending sentence* method (data in Table 2) involved identifying the nature of stimuli associated with the dominant components of the motivational sphere. This study showed that students of all groups who recognize the importance and necessity of training mainly recognize the right choice of speciality.

The main motivation for students is personal development, interest, desire to become a qualified specialist, but they do not oppose all sorts of incentives. However, students enrolled in the integrated group are more aware of the importance and necessity of education and also express a need for new knowledge. Especially the need in novelty of students with disabilities is expressed. Regarding the latter, somewhat alarming figure is a perspective that may indicate a lack of confidence in themselves and their future.

Generally students’ training perspectives are expected as the possibility of self-development, self-realization, and expansion of outlook, success, autonomy and independence. The importance and usefulness of studies significantly correlated ( $r=0.61$ ) with the prospect of novelty. Thus the importance and usefulness of information are combined with curiosity, enthusiasm, interest, and sometimes with mystery and romance. As to the evaluation of situational adaptation of students with disabilities and healthy students the first ones are more persistent in achieving their goals (4.6), try to do better than others what they have to do unlike healthy students (2.7). That is quite indirectly related to getting success. Average values are significantly different at a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ .

Considering the motivation of students in a dynamic perspective certain peculiarities have also been revealed. Within the first year of training all students are mainly supported by self-satisfaction, increased self-esteem, awareness of the necessity, and good reinforcement with praise. The indicators of this are expressions of motivation support as the “goals”, “hard work”, “persistence”, “lack of obstacles”. The significance of the “praise” is not reduced within the next years of training. And as a means of support and motivation the holidays, gifts and even money are outlined.

**Table 2.** Correlation of components of motivation sphere in the groups of different organization

		Importance of studying		Perspectives		Encouragement		Novelty	
		$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$	$\bar{X}$	$S_x$
Integrated groups	Students with disabilities	3.5	0.1	2.3	0.2	3.4	1.4	3.5	1.5
	Ordinary students	3.2	0.1	2.8	0.3	3.8	0.9	2.2	0.7
Non-integrated groups		3.1	0.2	2.4	0.4	3.7	1.1	1.8	0.6

$\bar{X}$  – average value;  $S_x$  – standard deviation.

Analyzing the most typical ways of maintaining motivation for students using the possibility of action frustrated and other negative psychogenic factors some intergroup differences have been revealed that in some way correlated with indicators of situational adaptation.

The first year of training is remarkable with artificial goal-setting, combined with high rates of life goals and a positive attitude to the future of students. That is assessed by students as not sufficiently defined, but good and bright, and life goals are happiness, success, work, self-development and money. This group is characterized with a positive attitude towards peers and teachers, rejecting criticism, willingness to accept a different role and moderate search for positive incentives. The second year is also marked with an artificial goal-setting, but combined with simplification of behavior and an active search for positive incentives. The future is assessed less positively. It is assessed as excellent, good, happy, but sometimes vague and indefinite. Happiness, independence, fame, recognition and power are considered as life goals. Attitude to peers and teachers is less positive. At the undergraduate period the artificial goal-setting indicators are significantly reducing. The active search for positive incentives, taking attitudes to peers and teachers also become less positive and thus the need and value of friendship is increasing. The future is characterized as defined, good and interesting. Life goals of students have their own significance. The students want to be recognized, useful to people and have material well-being.

Some differences in the sources of anxiety of students have also been revealed, which is connected with the indicator of their own evaluation abilities using the feedback. The first year students are afraid of speaking publicly, of their own incompetence. Especially the case is for students with disabilities. They are often afraid of the future, worthlessness, aimless life. Second-year students mostly fear the lack of attention, loneliness, non-realization.

Undergraduate students fear of failure, errors, general rejection. Differences in the sources of anxiety are associated with various psychological defence mechanisms. The mechanisms of fantasy and sublimation are dominating in the first year of training, sublimation and rationalization are in the second, and displacement is in the fourth one. The high need of students with disabilities in helping from the environment is observed. It is concerned with the life tasks building and receiving feedback on the life process and its expectations.

The source of the differences and motivating factors of students with disabilities and healthy students were accentuated property of personality. The most evident difference was on the scales of schizoid (5.46) and hypochondria (4.76), resulting in some difficulties in communication and emotional sensitivity, and inadequate in relation to their health through excessive fear for it. The resulting differences were valid at  $p < 0.001$  significance level.

The motivation of individual for getting success is known to contribute to his/her productive activity. To determine the role of self-attitude (Table 3) in the formation of motivation for success and type of motivation of studying, the interrelations of these parameters have been found.

**Table 3.** The expression of self-attitude as a percentage

		Level	Year of studying	S	S <sub>I</sub>	S <sub>II</sub>	S <sub>III</sub>	S <sub>IV</sub>
Integrated groups	Students with disabilities	high	I	49	45	43	56	49
			IV,V	55	47	44	52	51
		middle	I	24	27	21	19	27
			IV,V	23	29	23	20	24
		low	I	27	28	36	25	24
			IV,V	22	24	33	28	25
	Healthy students	high	I	53	42	29	14	35
			IV,V	55	47	34	25	44
		middle	I	32	31	32	34	30
			IV,V	35	34	36	49	33
		low	I	15	27	39	54	35
			IV,V	10	19	30	26	23
Non-integrated groups		high	I	57	42	29	14	35
			IV,V	67	44	38	14	54
		middle	I	29	29	25	32	29
			IV,V	21	25	33	40	19
		low	I	14	29	46	54	36
			IV,V	12	31	29	46	27

S – global self-attitude, SI – self-esteem, SII – auto-sympathy, SIII – expectations of the positive attitude of others, SIV – self-interest

The correlation analysis shows that motivation of success is related by significant positive correlations with indicators of global self-attitude (0.35,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-esteem (0.29,  $p < 0.05$ ), expectations of a positive attitude of others (0.31,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-interest (0.34,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-confidence (0.29), self-acceptance (0.35,  $p < 0.001$ ). Motivation of professional development is related to global self-attitude (0.34,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-esteem (0.38,  $p < 0.05$ ), auto-sympathy (0.29,  $p < 0.05$ ), self-confidence (0.35,  $p < 0.05$ ), self-acceptance (0.25,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-understanding (0.29,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Thus, it can be seen that the indicators of motivation of success and professional development are correlated with self-relation of personality. As meaningful education self-relation is of great value for the subject in the development of personality in general and vocational education, in particular. The processes of self-development, self-education, self-formation are increasingly occupying with the person's growing up. Respectively a larger proportion belongs to the internal conditions through which all external causes, effects and others are operated.

From this analysis it is clear that the person's motivation for studying as the system assimilates the potential of *personality* meta-system, which is ontologically included. Genesis of the motives for studying runs not only from the need sphere, but also the personality structures, formations, processes, etc. The mechanism of formation of behavior and purely personal motives of activity is incorporated in coordination with the motivational sphere

as a system and its *personality* meta-system. Personality as a whole and the components of personality acquire the ability to perform the functions of motives that is the basis of the personality's self-determination, self-realization and self-actualization.

### Conclusions

1. Motivation of studying is characterized by a complex structure; one of the forms is the internal structure (for the process and outcome) and external (for reward, avoidance) motivation.
2. An important psychological condition for the formation of future professional is motivation related to the higher order needs of realization which become the sense building and the driving one to creative activity.
3. Motivation of studying and professional development is determined by complex invariant personal characteristics. The influence of these properties (self-esteem, self-interest, self-confidence, self-acceptance, auto-sympathy, self-understanding, expectations of a positive attitude, etc.) on the level of motivation for studying is mediated by values of future specialist's education.
4. Self-attitude is in relation to personal harassment, plans for own future and is a specific mechanism of anticipatory regulation of vital activity, has a motivational effect and provides a benchmark for changes in life. So it should be an ongoing subject of correctional work programs of psychological support for students in universities.
5. The process of development of motivation of studying and professional activities of specialists should include a part of spontaneous as well as purposeful formation that contributes towards the goal of education.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' VOCATIONAL COMPETENCE IN THE FRAME OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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## **Abstract**

One of the most important conditions of future specialist's vocational competence is a well-balanced combination of learning, scientific research and practice, which is not easy to achieve in terms of traditional education. Extracurricular activity in the form of educational-scientific-production student units (ESPSU) favours both active and creative learning of theory and practical skills formation vital for students' further vocational activity. Six-year experience of extracurricular activities in Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine" shows ESPSU participants' positive results comparing to other students in their academic achievements, professionalism and career development.

**Key words:** *professional qualifications, extracurricular activities, career development*

## **Introduction**

One of strategic directions of the Ukraine's development at the current stage is integration into world education while keeping and developing traditions of the Ukrainian higher school, reformation and development of higher education system through increasing its quality, formation of students' aspiration for knowledge and skills necessary for future vocational activity.

On the other hand, modern labour market sets for young specialists ever increasing demands. Under new economic conditions even highly extensive knowledge that students get at university cannot guarantee them successful employment unless it is supported by practical skills, experience and fundamentals of business activity. Besides employers often ask applicants to demonstrate some practical skills in their professional area, which often embarrasses the graduates.

One of the most important tasks of higher education is development of creative and cognitive students' activities. A specialist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be an intelligent and well-educated person, ready to work under changing conditions, adequately react to modern

challenges, able to independently find necessary information and competently use it in their work. Thus it is so important to foster student's aspiration for self-learning (Пасмор, 2003).

The main drawback of traditional education system is its stagnant inertness, which hinders bringing up an independently thinking person, ready to deal with difficult and unconventional life problems. Solution to such situation can be found in students' active involvement in vocational tasks in terms of extracurricular activity in order to develop their professionally important qualifications.

Extracurricular work of student, which is a vital element of vocational education, favours combination of learning, scientific research and practice, and guarantees competitiveness of future specialists at the labour market. Usually extracurricular work is divided into obligatory and voluntary.

**Compulsory extracurricular work** includes self-instruction, preparation for practical courses, seminars and lab trainings, field practice and logically follows from classroom studies. Compulsory extracurricular work favours the formation of following skills: independent accumulation of new knowledge, its application and self-control. Often such compulsory extracurricular work is called independent or unsupervised and it is one of the most important components of educational process. During self-instructions students learn about cognitive methods, get interested in creative work and try to solve learning tasks independently. Karpova (Карпова, 2008) believes that an independently working student should first of all gather factual knowledge on the subject, explore special and reference literature, analyse and interpret scientific material. Thus planning, organization and realisation of student's work in tutor's absence is an important element of educational process.

As opposed to independent work, voluntary extracurricular activity can be aimed at accumulation of extra knowledge (increase of general competence), deep and comprehensive research of particular issues (self-improvement) (Минченко, 2002), participation in scientific research or practical application of gained knowledge in terms of educational institution (Кольченко & Никулина, 2002). Voluntary extracurricular activity should help in formation and development of students' professionally important skills (Burns, 2009, Hollrah, 2010), favour their personality development (Feinerman, 2011), knowledge extension, arouse cognitive interest (Васильева, 2009). During such vocational extracurricular activity students enrich their personal experience, get an opportunity to act independently, show their individuality and ability to perform scientific research, their attitude to their future speciality changes substantially. Depending on their possibilities and other conditions students can freely choose time and duration of work.

Non-compulsory extracurricular activity (participation in scientific research, conferences, competitions, discussions, theme tours, etc.) helps to acquire vocational skills, arouses interest in scientific work.

A new modern form of vocational training was organised at the University "Ukraine" – educative-scientific-productive student units (ESPSU) that helps solve the problems of young specialists' professional establishment.

ESPSU exist in various forms depending on students' speciality:

- Bureau of translations;
- Juridical clinic
- Nutrition club
- Design studio
- Practical psychology centre
- Rehabilitation centre
- Student social service and others.

The main task of ESPSU is to give students a possibility to receive a fundamental



vocational training by getting them involved in actual professional activity. ESPSU training method effectively combines academic classes, research work and field experience, provides students with an opportunity to consolidate their theoretical knowledge, acquire practical skills, and teaches the basic principles of management and entrepreneurship. For example, working at a “translation bureau” linguistics students acquire skills of oral and written translation, “Juridical clinic” allows law students to extend their knowledge consulting retired or disabled people, students and large families. Design students plan interiors, exhibition stands, posters, office door plates and other types of indoor and outdoor advertisements. Participating in “Social service” social work students get to know the problems of poor people, provide them with actual help, and understand the specifics of their future speciality.

**Object of the research:** professional qualifications development of future specialists in terms of extracurricular activities.

**The research aim:** to analyse how extracurricular activities of students influence the formation of their professional qualities and their career development.

### **Research methodology**

*Theoretical methods.* Analytical and generalizing methods for the analysis of the literary sources associated with the research object were used.

*Empirical methods.* Qualitative research, using method of interview to assess personal changes in the result of participation was applied.

The research was conducted at the theory and practice of translation department of University “Ukraine” among students who were members of “Translation Bureau” and those who were not.

Extent of the research: “Translation Bureau” members – 35 persons, other students – 52 persons.

### **Stages of students' involvement into extracurricular activity**

Students' extracurricular work should be organized consistently, taking into account the level of their knowledge, their cognitive skills and other factors. Accordingly, tutor's interference would range from strict guidance to mere supervision (Малеева&Малеев, 2005) and then to students' self-organization.

Tutors can organise students' activities at different levels: either manage them rather rigidly and severely or give them absolute freedom and help release their creativity. There are the following levels of extracurricular activity management: control, adjustment, cooperation, monitoring and independent work. The choice of management level is defined by individual characteristics of tutors, who organise the activity, and by individual characteristics of students participating (motivation, cognitive activity, independence, etc.).

Translation department of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” offers the following stages of students' involvement into vocational extracurricular activity:

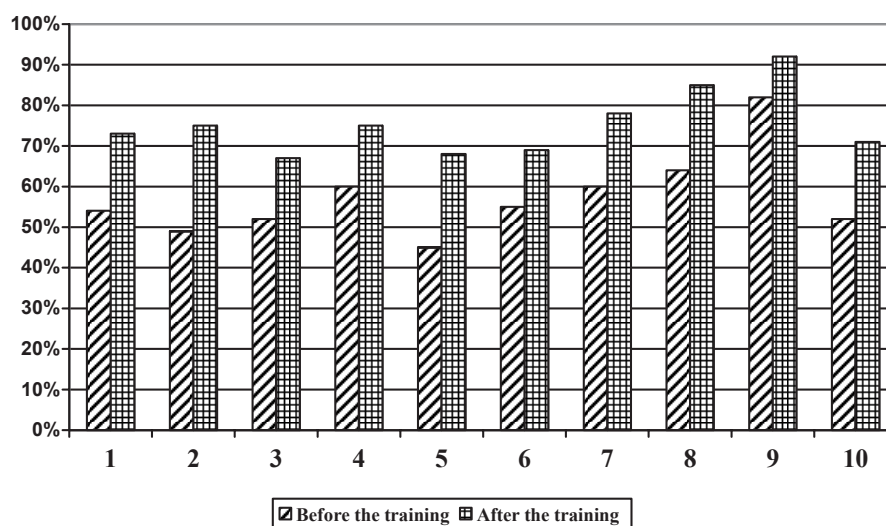
- English Speaking Club – meetings with native speakers, discussions, language contests and quizzes, watching films in their original language;
- Trainings of communication competence, teamwork, time-management;
- Written translations ordered by the university, their further revision and editing with tutor explaining rules and peculiarities of translation;
- City tours and escort of foreign guests of the University, oral translation during scientific conferences, lectures, master-classes from foreign professors
- Employment support in Career Development Centre

**First stage** – English Speaking Club. As freshmen and sophomore students are not psychologically ready to independent work yet (Федина, 2006), and extracurricular work is not included into academic plans and is not compulsory, thus some extra motivation should be created.

Students are invited to participate in English Speaking Club, which is supervised by tutor but at the same time is mostly entertaining. Club's activities include language games and exercises, quizzes and contests, viewing of foreign films and their discussion, meetings with native speakers and discussion of new books. In such relaxed atmosphere tutors had an opportunity to get to know students, learn about their interests, evaluate their potential, and identify leadership abilities.

**Second stage.** For interpreters who work in communication field, oral competence ranks second important after actually mastering the language. However, students felt unsure about getting to real work as they lacked ability to establish contact, logically and clearly express their opinions, listen and take in peers' opinions, lacked tolerance. Thus everyday and business communication and teamwork trainings were included into ESPSU program, in particular a social and psychological training was designed (Козліковська, Кольченко&Нікуліна, 2006). It included exercises on establishing and ending contact, active listening and trust establishment, conquering negative feelings and conflict solving. The training lasted 6 weeks (18 hours), with the exception of tests and questionnaires, and was conducted in English. Before and after the training students were given a self-assessment questionnaire on 10 communication skills: ability to establish (1) and end (2) the contact, express their own feelings (3) and understand other people (4), overcome psychological barriers (5) and establish trust (6), present arguments (7) and solve conflicts (8), active listening (9) and teamwork (10).

Data analysis (Figure 1) has shown that the skills, which were assessed at least developed, improved the most and vice versa the most developed skills improved the least. It was set up that the abilities to end the contact and overcome psychological barriers improved by 26% and 23% accordingly (with the average improvement of 18%). Similarly, as students believed they knew how to listen actively, this skill only improved by 10%.



**Figure 1.** Results of communication competence training for translation speciality students

**Third stage** – Translation Bureau. Professional self-improvement of students was aimed at defining further specialisation, evaluation of professionally important qualities and skills, certain steps for their development. This stage involved students from 3<sup>rd</sup> year on, who had already had sufficient theoretical basis, can adequately evaluate their abilities and define the type of translation (oral or written) they are more comfortable with.

Students, who wished to translate in writing, were given some university documentation to work on, as well as articles, lectures and presentations of foreign visitors, correspondence with foreign partners, new academic Internet resources.

Beginners were usually divided into 2 groups and translated the same texts. The results were compared and discussed under tutor's supervision. Doing written translations for the university, students feel responsibility, learn to deal with large texts, face stylistic peculiarities of various scientific, technical and journalistic writing, learned to use translation transformation and extended their vocabulary. As they gained more experience, the best students were given personal task, although still supervised by the tutor.

For example, Bureau participants were involved in a career development training conducted by Peace Corps volunteer. It consisted of 6 Power Point presentations, and each of them was given to a separate student, who first had to translate the slides and then interpret during the session. The translations of the slides were reviewed and discussed by the whole group with the tutor providing corrections.

An important experience for Bureau members was participation in European Virtual Seminar on sustainable development, where students from various European universities worked on a common project in a virtual classroom. Ecology students from Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine" university hardly spoke any English and were not used to on-line projects, thus translators had to master distant learning technologies, memorise special terms, discuss scientific issues on the forum and perform various project tasks within strict deadlines. At the same time they had to get along with ecology students they accompanied, go to the root of the project and keep to the schedule announced.

Students, who decided to improve their interpreting skills, accompanied foreign guests of the University during conferences and round table discussions, interpreted speeches and reports during seminars and open lectures, conducted tours round the city. Due to such practice students perfected their aural reception, got used to various foreign accents, learned to quickly pick out the main idea of the oral message, translate briefly not literally if needed, appear before an audience, find a way out of difficult situation.

Quality of oral translation was also openly discussed, the foreigners accompanied also commented on immediacy of translation, vocabulary, and proper behaviour of the given student.

**Professional advancement of students** (Figure 2) who participated in Bureau of translation was assessed by following parameters:

- academic performance in major courses (1);
- participation in scientific conferences (2);
- quality of written translations (3);
- vocabulary and language competence improvement (4);
- quality of oral translations (5).

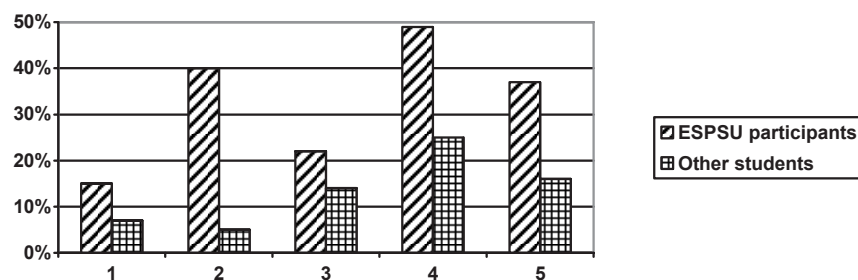


Figure 2. Professional advancement of students

**Fourth stage** – assistance of Career Development Centre. This comprehensive education would logically end with students' successful employment. The researchers' experience has shown that even the most advanced students do not know where to start looking for a job, how to write a professional resume or how to behave during a job interview. For a young specialist to persuade an employer in their professional competency, they need to thoroughly think through their strategy for various situations connected with job search, application and interview.

The main goal of Career Development Centre is to help students and university graduates plan a successful professional career and form skills necessary for it, develop their abilities and discover their talents, increase their creative potential. The Centre offers certain trainings that provide students with theoretical knowledge and form practical skills of job searching and self-presentation. Professional guidance is provided by experienced instructors.

Graduates' career achievements (Figure 3), both of those who participated in Translation Bureau and who did not, were assessed as follows:

- employment in their professional area (1);
- salary rise within 3 years (2);
- promotion within 3 years (3).

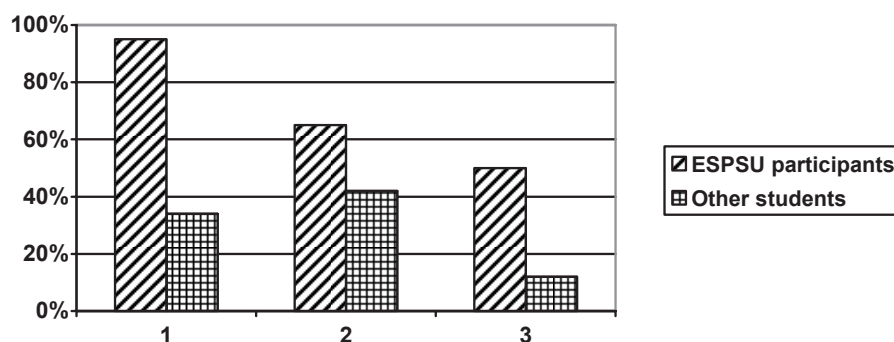


Figure 3. Graduates' career achievements

### Conclusions

As a result of students' participation in ESPSU their communication skills increased, their professional knowledge extended, they became more independent and learned to collaborate, and finally managed to find promising jobs.

Thus, in terms of education reform according to Bologna process demands, extracurricular activity of students is gaining its importance as an essential part of vocational training, which

combines academic learning, research and practice. Successful organisation of extracurricular activity has resulted in:

- wider scope of activities;
- increase in number of participants;
- students' self-reliance and independence;
- extension of students' knowledge;
- integration of extracurricular activities into department's educative, scientific and research curriculum;
- students-tutor team implementing various innovative elements into training courses.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF PRACTICAL ACTIVITY EXPERIENCE FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE AND SEVERE RETARDATION OF MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Abstract**

Modern epoch poses its own demands for special education, because provision of special education needs into inclusive environment is one of the prior courses of education policy in Latvia. The author of the research reveals discrepancy between politically stated progress and school practice in Latvia. Topicality of the research fortifies the necessity to advance pedagogical integrity of pupils with moderate and severe retardation of mental development (RMD). Research includes: analysis of education potential provision in legislation, investigation of theory regarding retardation of mental development, analysis of pedagogic process at special primary boarding school, *model of the development of practical activity experience* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD at special primary boarding school. As a result of theory analysis – *model of the development of practical activity experience* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD has been established. Empiric investigation of the *development of practical activity experience* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD has been done, using the form of quantitative methods investigation in order to examine effectiveness of the established *model of the development of practical activity experience*.

**Key words:** *special needs, pupils with moderate and severe retardation of mental development, practical activity experience*

## **Introduction**

The problem regarding educating and upbringing of children with special needs, correcting the imperfection of functional development, during last twenty years has become topical. Care for children with special needs has become of national importance. Defining directions of education policy that are included into Education development basic settings for 2007-2013 as concrete tasks, it can be concluded that provision of special education needs

into inclusive environment is one of prior courses of education policy (*Education development basic settings for years 2007-2013*, 2006) in Latvia. The recent tendency is as follows: as full as possible inclusion of pupils with moderate and severe retardation of mental development not only in school but also in the whole society, as well as participation into social environment (Nīmante 1998, 2008; Bethere, 2007; Tihomirova, 2010), but still large contradictions exist, if means, kind and process are looked through.

Research author's 13 years long work experience in pedagogic work with pupils with moderate and severe RMD reveals contradiction between politically stated progress and school practice.

For each child with special needs, special education creates potential and conditions to study at the most appropriate education establishment, according to his/her state of health, abilities and development level. In correspondence to legislation, pupils with special needs can obtain education at any education establishment. Simultaneously, they are provided by pedagogical psychological and medical corrections, as well as by readiness to work and to live in the society (All-round education law, 1999, p. 49). But uncertain is the answer to the question if each school can offer and implement potentials to obtain education for pupils with special needs according to provision of their special needs.

The author of the research has the opinion that, within modern culture situation, when a large part of pupils' parents primary needs are not provided (existence needs, safety needs), when problems of moral character appear in the society (crime, alcoholism, children abuse, children abandonment), boarding primary school must become the initial aspect of pupil's personal development, because often family cannot provide these functions qualitatively. Here, at the school, the environment exists, where the pupil lives: family and school approximated conditions. The environment of experience formation is made by surrounding objects, human resources, and mental conditions, where interaction of inner and outer environment aspects are observed (Frederickson, Cline, 2009; Fulans, 1999; Raituma, 2009; Sendžs (Senge), 1990). These aspects favour the development of practical activity experience. On basic education stage, special education programs are defined as a special kind of all-round education programs (Education law, 1998, p. 38). According to standard demands, fulfilment of *special education programs* depends on conformity to standard of *State all-round education* and to special needs of educatees (Education law, 1998, 38. p; *All-round education law*, 1999, p. 49).

In pedagogy integration, e.g. education, not only in special but also in all-round education establishments is considered to be one of social inclusive phases of the pupils with special needs. A pupil with special needs requires appropriate provision and obtaining individual education program schedule. Responsibility for fulfilment of these activities is delegated to education establishment (*All-round education law*, 1999, p. 53), that can be provided by examination of a pupil with special needs, by elaborating and introducing a successful education process into practice. It has been already proven that people with low mental abilities, if right conditions are provided and appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes are obtained, if they study appropriately, can master many achievements of the civilisation. Besides, this process is reflexive – development of new knowledge, skills and attitudes influence development of a person. It is necessary to find such approach for development of pupil's practical activity experience that obtaining of knowledge, skills and attitudes for pupils with moderate and severe RMD would turn into thrilling cognition activity process. According to scientific literature available for the author, there is no similar summarization in Latvia.

Formation of the research was promoted by necessity to advance pedagogical integrity of pupils with moderate and severe RMD. Individual work, that is inconceivable without personality uniformity *investigation within its practical activity*, help purposefully become acquainted with the pupils and their special needs. It is important to create practical activity

experience, individually for each pupil. Not disturbance, but the child himself/herself, his/her personality, his/her strong side and development potential, should be put in the centre of attention. Then pupils with moderate and severe RMD will be able to use this knowledge, skills and activities in further life activities in school environment, in purposeful activity.

**Research object:** practical activity within special primary boarding school pedagogic process.

**Aim:** to elaborate model of the development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD in primary boarding school and to examine its efficiency.

**Methods:**

- *Analysis of normative documents*, in order to stress education obtaining potential for pupils with RMD in Latvia;
- *Analysis and assessment of scientific literature, analysis of personal experience*, in order to summarize and generalize verities that regard basic matters of the research (retardation of mental development, pupil of RMD, practical activity experience);
- *Methods of processing indices*: using statistic program *SPSS* and using the following methods:
  - Cross-line tables method (*Crosstabs*);
  - Kendall's  $\tau_B$  (tau-b) correlation analysis;

**Pupils with moderate and severe retardation of mental development at special primary boarding school**

The analysed pedagogical and psychological literature, regarding the impression of retardation of mental development onto cognition activity development for pupils with retardation of mental development (Baka, Grunevalds, 1998; Florian, 2007; Friend, 2005; Liepiņa, 2008; Vīgante 2007, 2008; Рубинштейн, 1986; Vygotsky (Выготский), 1983, 2005; Анастаси, Урбина, 2007; Певзнер, Лебединская, 1979 etc.), certify that defining of retardation of mental development currently has turned into medical, psychological, pedagogical and sociologic problem.

Valuable definition for the essence of the research matter is given by the psychologist S. Liepiņa: "In Latvia, the child is considered to be *retarded child* if his/her central characteristics in psychic outlook is: stable, typical and irreversible intellectual activity disturbance, that have occurred as the result of organic cerebra activity disturbance" (Liepiņa, 2008, p. 61). RMD embraces all psyche in total. Characteristic features are insufficiency of all psychic functions and hierarchy of intellectual disturbance. In the explanation of the definition of retardation of mental development, both disturbance of intellectual activity and inadequacy of adaptive behaviour are emphasized as equally important facts (Friend, 2005). Suhareva's (Сухарева) elaborated classification helps to investigate psychological peculiarities of *oligophrenia* and is present in the basis of the statement that in the foundation of mental development there are organic disturbances of CNS, that allow to enclose these disturbances from other kinds of disturbance of intellectual activities (Сухарева, 1974).

The most important indices of retardation of mental development are intelligence quotient (IQ) and social quotient (SQ). People with RMD are characteristic of considerably lower intelligence quotient (IQ) level that range within the borders of 70 and lower. Also, adaptive behaviour disturbances that are age respective, are being joined to it, like: communication, social skills and self care (Papalia, Olds, Feldman 1998). In United Kingdom, pupils with severe RMD (*severe learning difficulties SLD*) range within IQ of 20 to 50/55 (Kushlick and Blunden, 1974), but in American literature, the term "severe" (*severe retardation*) is used for

IQ within 20/25 and 35/40, and “moderate” (*moderate retardation*) refers to those whose IQ is within 35/40 to 50/55 (Friend, 2005) or *moderate to severe cognitive disabilities*, whose IQ is up to 55 (Friend, Bursuck, 2002), therefore it is accepted in Latvia to speak about pupils with moderate and severe RMD. That justifies the use of such term *pupils with moderate and severe RMD* in the research.

*It is concluded in the research that retardation of mental development* according to descriptions issued by investigators and organisations is characterised by insufficient development of cognition activity, because the procedures of psychic process, that are in the basis of it, are deformed. The child’s social adaptation disturbances in certain environment and development periods are also deformed. That fortifies the fact that child’s with RMD chronological age does not correspond to generally accepted development level. Therefore, the following question remains to be important: how to teach them so that “they would be able to provide themselves materially, involve into the collective, and not to be embarrassment to himself/herself neither to the society” (Staris, 2000, 125).

According to Vygotsky, the highest psychic function – thinking, logic memory, language, imagination, will, inefficient self-confidence are secondary deviations that surrender to correction work, therefore, each child is to be observed *individually*, in the centre of attention there should be not the disturbances but the child himself/herself, his/her strong sides and development potential (Выготский, 2005). Pupils with moderate and severe RMD must be provided by involving into individually conscious many-stage activities within school environment. The potential of child’s with special needs personality growth or its limiting is substantially influenced by cooperation of pedagogues and physician. It is also influenced by intellect, development, adaptation and use of other tests measurements and interpretation competence that allow to provide child-centred approach.

The accent of the research is put on cognition of the aim of the present paper, because to teach a child, what he/she is not able to learn, is as unproductive as to teach what he/she already can do himself/herself (Выготский, 2005). *Activity determination* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD develops gradually; therefore, successive fulfilment of regarding activities is necessary.

### **Essence of the model of the development of practical activity experience**

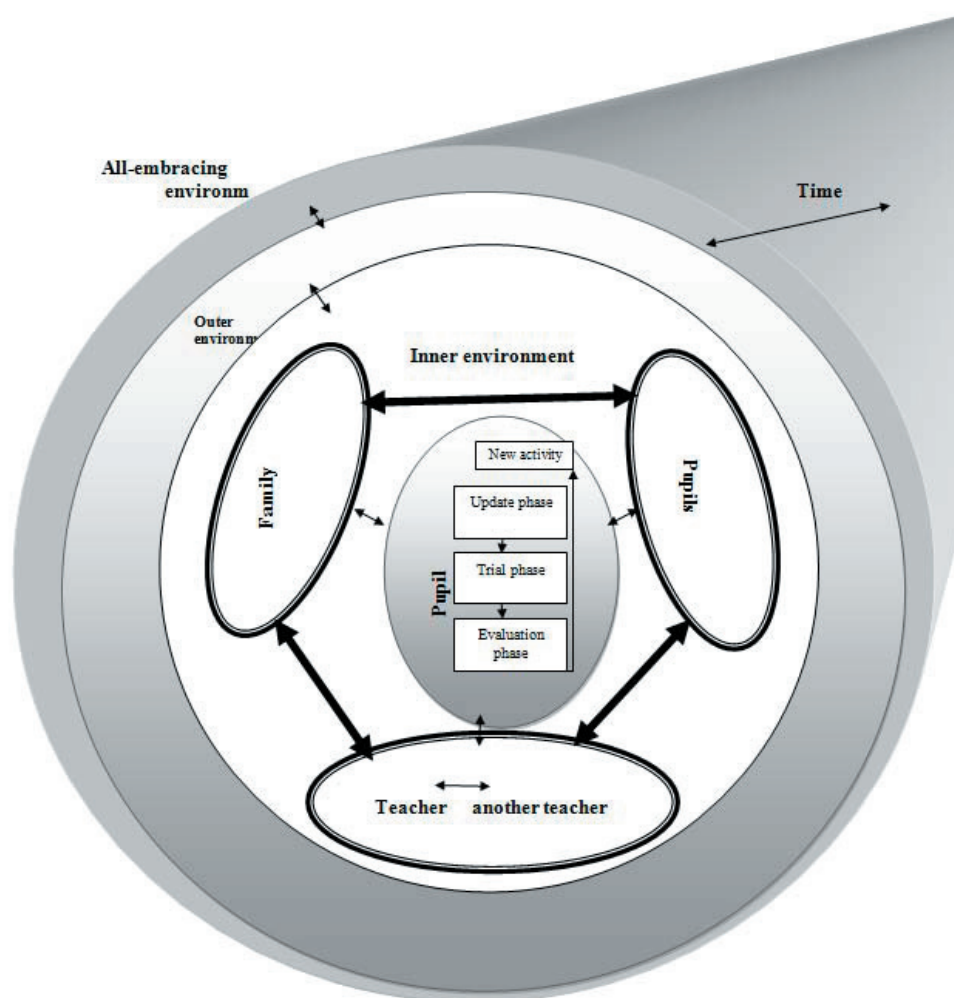
The essence of elaborated *model of the development of practical activity experience* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD, is based on human pedagogy and is implemented in constructivism approach.

*Pupil* with moderate and severe RMD is put in centre, according to his/her special needs, abilities and potentials. Involvement into individually studied *many-stage activities* is being provided. That improves the pupil’s practical work experience. *Adults’ cooperation* means work of two or more people aiming at common goal, at coordinated goal achievement means and at approximated evaluations (Špona 2001). This promotes the necessity to ascertain the knowledge, skills and attitudes that can be fulfilled by each pupil with moderate and severe RMD without help of an adult and the necessity to widen the pupil’s experience by unknown that can be achieved by these pupils without help of an adult. Analysing cooperation pupil-pupil, it is taken into account that intellect of pupil with moderate and severe RMD functions differently and there is *peculiar, passive interrelation* (Friend, 2005; Liepiņa, 2008). Therefore, stable relations between pupils are formed only within the adult attitude.

*Individual approach* is provided to a pupil, by finding exercises that regards the level of difficulty in each of three practical activity formation phases (actualisation, trial and evaluation), by respecting Vygotsky’s verity regarding developing approach and by crafty use of game activities (Слепович, 1990), that are grounded on chronological age inadequacy of the

pupil to common development level (Liepiņa, 2008), and therefore provide *positive emotional feeling*. The essence of the model is: to widen the present practical activity experience of pupil with moderate and severe RMD, by what is unknown to him/her, then make it useful, because of application within newly found activity.

Concrete conditions determine the development of practical activity experience. The development depends on pupil's with moderate and severe RMD special needs suitable inner environment, outer environment and all-embracing environment that are influenced by time and that is considered to be a model (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Model of the development of practical activity experience for pupil with moderate and severe RMD (I. Prudņikova)

*Practical activity experience model* provides involvement of pupils with moderate and severe RMD into individually studied many-phase activities, that improve practical activity experience of the pupils.

#### **Analysis of the achieved results and interpretations within evaluation of the development of practical activity experience**

Analysing verities of philosophers, pedagogues, social pedagogues and psychologists regarding the development of practical activity experience and the created tieback with the



development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD (Bēkons. 1989; Dewey, 1974; Griffin, Holford, Jarvis, 2003; Honey and Mumford, 1992; etc.) justifies that, within process of the development of practical activity experience, essentially important is cooperation of teachers and parents, that is directed towards pupil's practical concrete aim study, basing on activation of previously achieved experience of this pupil.

Fulfilled analysis of theoretical verities allow:

- To forward criteria of the development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD:
  - *Knowledge regarding practical activity,*
  - *Skill to do activity and*
  - *Attitude, while acting practically.*
- To define the essence of *practical activity experience*: “*Practical activity for pupils with moderate and severe RMD consists of several successive experience phases that provide individual motive fulfilment of pupils with moderate and severe RMD, as the result of which activating of new knowledge, skills and attitudes has happened. Practical activity experience is a part of every day life of pupils with moderate and severe RMD. There are three phases in its structure: activating, trial and evaluating*”. Within activating phase (*the lowest level*) the pupil's practical efficacy initial level is stated. Then the trial phase follows (*middle level*), when watching, trial, consideration and correction of practical activity occurs. The next is evaluation phase (*highest phase*), when knowledge, skills and attitudes are evaluated in order to find their application into new activity.

Development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD is considered within teaching subject called *Housekeeping and technologies*. Development occurs in three phases: activation phase, trial phase and evaluation phase, using the principle “from simple to complicated” that explains the conception of obtaining quantitative indices. That conforms with the example of Special Education program for pupils with severe RMD or several severe development disorders (*program code 21015911*), where in the content of the education it is stated that elaboration, fulfilment and evaluation of individual plan is a team work that demands regular cooperation of specialists and pupil's parents (legal representatives), therefore the evaluation is done by:

- Teacher;
- Another teacher (assistant of the teacher);
- Pupil's parent (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Conception of quantitative investigation indices collection (I. Prudņikova)

Evaluator	Initial evaluation Activating phase	Interposition	First evaluation Activating phase	Initial evaluation Trial phase	Interposition	Secon evaluation Evaluating phase	Initial evaluation Evaluating phase	Interposition	Third evaluation Evaluating phase
Teacher	○	z	○	○	z	○	○	z	○
Another teacher	○	z	○	○	z	○	○	z	○
Pupil's parent	○	z	○	○	z	○	○	z	○

O – time of fulfilment of quantitative evaluation;

Z – intermediate stage, when activity of the development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD is fulfilled.

The determination of the level of practical activity experience was done in September of 2006 and May of 2007, in September of 2008 and May of 2009, in September of 2010 and May of 2011.

The research was done using **method of co-partnership activity investigation** (Elden, Levin, 1991; Whyte, 1991), because it focuses on the development of practical activity experience of pupils with moderate and severe RMD at special boarding primary school where the process develops windingly and that depicts that there is continuous practice progress and personal and professional knowledge development (Zuber – Skerit, 1995; Mārtinsone (sast.), 2011). Performers and participants of the research cooperated for a long time during the research. That was determined by the need to solve problems of practical nature.

Basing on scheme created within **combining of quantitative research indices** (see Table 1), obtaining and treatment of quantitative indices has been done. Basing on elaborated criteria of the development of practical activity experience and indices for pupils with moderate and severe RMD, the teacher's evaluation, another teacher's evaluation and the parent's evaluation are summarized.

Changes of levels of pupil's parent, teacher and another teacher practical activity experience development in activation, trial and evaluation phases are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Practical activity experience development levels (I. Prudņikova)

Indices	Evaluator	Has not obtainal		Fultils under guidance of teacher		Partially obtained, needs help, control		Obtained, but needs help		Obtained	
		Number of pupils in beginning	Number of pupils in end	Number of pupils in beginning	Number of pupils in end	Number of pupils in beginning	Number of pupils in end	Number of pupils in beginning	Number of pupils in end	Number of pupils in beginning	Number of pupils in end
<i>Understanding of equipment, layout, food in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	4	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	1
	Teacher	4	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	0
	Another teacher	4	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	0
<i>Cleaning food preparation skills in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
	Teacher	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
	Another teacher	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
<i>Conscious, personally significant motive of practical activity in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	2
	Teacher	4	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
	Another teacher	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4

Continued Table 2

<i>Understanding of equipment, layout, food in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	2	0	1
	Teacher	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	3	0	0
	Another teacher	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	2
<i>Cleaning, food preparation skills in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	3	1	1
	Teacher	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	1	2
	Another teacher	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	2	1	2
<i>Conscious, personally significant motive of practical activity in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	1	0	1	1	3	0	0	3	0	1
	Teacher	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	3	0	1
	Another teacher	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	2
<i>Understanding of equipment, layout, food in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	2	3
	Teacher	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	3
	Another teacher	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	3
<i>Cleaning, food preparation skills in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	4
	Teacher	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	3
	Another teacher	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	2	4
<i>Conscious, personally significant motive of practical activity in Housekeeping within activation phase</i>	Pupil's parent	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	3
	Teacher	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	1	3
	Another teacher	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	1	3

Quantitative treatment of indices has been fulfilled (Geske, Grünfelds, 2006), using statistics program SPSS 17.

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables method** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *two* features: between initial evaluation in activating phase and the first evaluation in activating phase.

The following results are obtained, analysing the coherences of the evaluation of pupil's parent, teacher, another teacher:

**1. In pupil's parent's evaluation,** essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) or maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) changes are present between two research parts (initial evaluation level in activation phase and the first evaluation level in activation phase) within activation phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.046$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.038$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.000$ .

**2. In teacher's evaluation,** there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level within activation phase and the first evaluation level within activation phase) within activation phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.038$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.050$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.046$ .

**3. In another teacher's evaluation,** there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level within activation phase and the first evaluation level within activation phase) within activation phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.050$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.038$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.050$ .

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_B$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *two* features: between initial evaluation in trial phase and the first evaluation in trial phase.

The following results are obtained, analysing the coherences of the evaluation of pupil's parent, teacher, another teacher:

**4. In pupil's parent's evaluation,** essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) or maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) changes are present between two research parts (initial evaluation level in trial phase and the second evaluation level in trial phase) within trial phase, regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.015$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.009$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.006$ .

**5. In teacher's evaluation,** there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) or maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level within trial phase and the second evaluation level within trial phase) within activation trial, regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.027$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.026$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.000$ .

**6. In another teacher's evaluation,** there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level within trial phase and the second evaluation level within trial phase) within trial phase, regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.021$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.026$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.026$ .

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *two* features: between initial evaluation in evaluating phase and the third evaluation in evaluating phase.

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *two* features:

**7. In pupil's parent's evaluation**, there are no essential ( $p \geq 0.05$ ) or there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level in evaluating phase and the third evaluation level in evaluating phase) within evaluating phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.544$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.394$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.034$ .

**8. In teacher's evaluation** there are no essential ( $p \geq 0.05$ ) or there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level in evaluating phase and the third evaluation level in evaluating phase) within evaluating phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.067$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.632$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.034$ .

**9. In another teacher's evaluation** there are no essential ( $p \geq 0.05$ ) or there are essential ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) changes between two research parts (initial evaluation level in evaluating phase and the third evaluation level in evaluating phase) within evaluating phase regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.067$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.056$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.013$ .

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *three* features: within first part (initial evaluations levels within activation phase), second part (initial evaluations levels in trial phase) and third part (initial evaluations levels within evaluating phase);

The following methods are used:

**Cross-line tables** (*Crosstabs*), in order to obtain information regarding the research group:

**Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) correlation analysis**, in order to determine statistically important changes between *two* features:

**10. In pupil's parent's evaluation**, there are maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) changes between three research parts for pupils with moderate and severe RMD regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.000$ .

**11. In teacher's evaluation**, there are maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) changes between three research parts for pupils with moderate and severe RMD regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.000$ .

**12. In another teacher's evaluation,** there are maximally essential ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) changes between three research parts for pupils with moderate and severe RMD regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Skill to perform activity* –  $p = 0.000$ ;

*Attitude while acting practically* –  $p = 0.000$ .

Thus, ASSESSMENT OF ALL RESPONDENTS:

There are maximally essential ( $p = 0.000$ ) changes IN EVALUATION OF ALL RESPONDENTS regarding:

*Systematized knowledge about practical activity,*

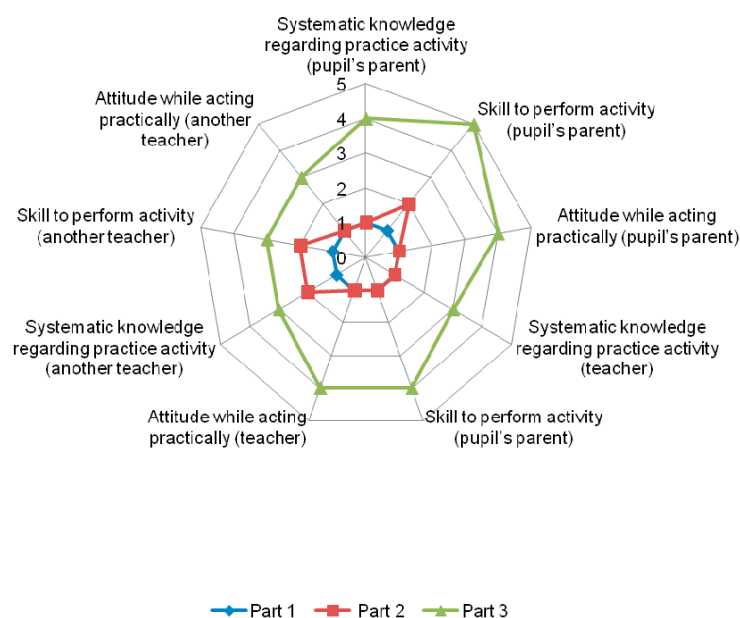
*Skill to perform activity,*

*Attitude while acting practically,* for pupils with moderate and severe RMD in the beginning of the research (Part 1), middle (Part 2) and in the end (Part 3) (significance is under 0.05).

Fulfilled correlation quotient calculations (Kendall's  $\tau_b$  (tau-b) method), certifies that after intense, considered and reflexive practical activity, there appear maximally essential changes in all the measurements in school subject *Household and technologies* at *Household* theme within the lessons.

For better visibility and perception of research results, dimensional pictures are used (Vorobjovs, 2002) (see Figure 2).

### Pupil's (Aina) practical activity experience development levels



**Figure 2.** Pupil's (Aina) levels of the development of practical activity experience within evaluation of the pupil's parent, teacher and another teacher

In Figure 2, evaluation changes can be observed in the evaluation of pupil's parent, teacher and another teacher between part 1 (initial evaluation level within activation phase), part 2 (initial evaluation levels in trial phase) and part 3 (initial evaluation levels within evaluating phase) for pupils with moderate and severe RMD, while estimating:



- Knowledge regarding practical activity,
- Skill to perform activity
- Attitude while acting practically,

That is depicted for each pupil separately within attached diagrams (*in the example Aina (name is changed)* levels of the development of practical activity experience).

### Conclusions

- The analysis of pedagogic process at special boarding primary school, education potential guarantee in legislation allow to formulate the necessity for the change of attitude in pedagogy and of the society towards the people with special needs, strengthening the care not only for guarantee of assistance, but also for guarantee of practical activity learning.
- According to descriptions issued by investigators and organizations, *retardation of mental development* is characterized as insufficient development of cognition activity, because progress of psychic process is deformed, that is in the basis of cognition activity, as well as disturbance of child's social adaptation in certain environment and displacement of development periods. That allows to conclude that chronological age of child with retardation of mental development does not conform to generally approved development level.
- Analysing activity theories in the research, it can be concluded that, into experience establishment for pupils with moderate and severe RMD, the level what pupil has reached within previous experience should be taken into account, but mainly the nearest development potentials are to be established.
- The model of the development of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD systematizes knowledge regarding practical activity, develops skill to perform activity and to express attitude when participating in lessons in school subject *Household and technologies* with *Household* theme, that is provided in following organized cooperation: pupil – teacher, parent – teacher, parent – child. It is stimulated by pedagogic means that keeps positive emotional feeling and actualizes previously obtained experience.
- Totally, in evaluation of all the respondents: evaluation indices of pupil's parent, teacher and another teacher have changed with positive dynamics within research process, that certifies the growth of the development of practical activity experience of pupils with moderate and severe RMD that were involved into research.
- The main result of the research that testify regarding essential changes within longer period of time: There is maximally essential difference in all the parts of the research within the first initial evaluation, second initial evaluation and third initial evaluation, estimating knowledge regarding practical activity, skill to act, attitude of pupils with moderate and severe RMD while acting in practice. That means that in the evaluations of all the respondents: **indices of the evaluation of pupil's parent, teacher and another teacher have changed within research process with positive dynamics that certify regarding growth of practical activity experience for pupils with moderate and severe RMD** and testify that the model of the development of practical activity experience **is effective**.

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# SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY: ROLE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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## **Abstract**

The article focuses on the issue of self-actualization in children and adolescents with intellectual disability. It demonstrates the importance of fostering a positive personality potential to enhance self-actualization capacity. The article discusses the role of the close and broad social environment in supporting successful activities of mentally challenged children and adolescents. It stresses the need to design custom activity-based environments to ensure self-actualization of the mentally handicapped. It provides data from several empirical studies covered by the same approach.

**Key words:** *intellectual disability, mental handicap, self-actualization, self-efficacy, sociocultural approach, rehabilitation environment.*

## **Introduction**

The problem of self-actualization of individuals with health disabilities is in very early stages of study. As for self-actualization of mentally handicapped individuals, there are far more questions than answers. According to Russia's Census Bureau, as of January 1, 2011, there were over 160,000 mentally handicapped children of high-school age in Russia. What happens to them after they leave school? What will define the success of their self-actualization? Looking at self-actualization in terms of the development of life skills and social competence, the author believes the study of this phenomenon in people with intellectual disabilities to be important and potentially beneficial.

**The Object of the Research** Establishment of self-actualization in children with intellectual disabilities

### **The Aims of the Research**

- Theoretical substantiation of the issue
- Identification of mentally handicapped adolescents' perceptions regarding their own

success in various areas of life, measures of wellbeing and desirable professional activities in the future

- Feasibility study of expert evaluations of potential self-actualization in mentally handicapped adolescents

### Methods and Organization of the Research

The study was conducted in several steps. In the first step, perceptions of mentally handicapped high-school students regarding the areas of their success (N = 20) were identified. Then criteria of wellbeing for the same category of respondents – high school students and graduates of a special education school (N = 120) were reviewed. In the third step, it was focused on evaluating the feasibility of desirable professional self-fulfillment in young people with varying degree of intellectual disability, ranging from moderate to minor (N = 23).

In all cases, custom questionnaires and one-on-one sessions with testers were used. In addition, in the third step the *Orientir* on-the-spot vocational guidance technique was applied. The study covered a total of 153 individuals.

### Theoretical Background

The aspirations of self-fulfillment (or self-actualization) as defined by Maslow, 1982) reflect the human need to become the best person he or she can possibly become on the basis of available potential. Self-actualization can be understood as a product of the human desire to achieve success in an activity he or she believes significant, and constitutes an activity/function-based aspect of life (Klochko, Galazhinsky, 1999) – in other words, the principal condition for a person's self-actualization is an activity that results in his or her subjective satisfaction with the activity pertaining to significant areas of interests or relationships. In this manner, self-actualization helps improve the quality of life and considerably reduce the risk of adverse impact of challenging life circumstances, such as those related to health disabilities.

The content and forms of self-actualization are defined by both external factors and individual personality features and capabilities. Kudinov (2007) has proposed several conditions that define self-actualization, including psychoenvironmental, psychophysiological, pedagogical and social. Korostyleva (2005) believes that “unlocking the self-development potential is achieved both through an individual's own efforts and joint activities (“co-action”) with other people (close and remote relations), society and the world as a whole. She stresses that a person can achieve self-actualization as a unique wholesome individual only through meeting others (Selezneva, 2007).

Emergence of a child's ability to perceive one's own capabilities suggests that he/she is capable of self-appraisal (Stolin, 1983). A positive assessment of one's own capabilities becomes the basis for self-acceptance (Sergienko, 2008) and self-trust. A prerequisite for self-trust is a specific attitude toward one's own subjectivity as a value and regarding one's own future actions as safe (Skripkina, 2000). In addition, it is critical that successful actions be recognized and approved by people the person considers important. Moreover, it is not just the judgment but the expectations of the group – parents, teachers, micro- and macro-social environments (Vygotsky, 2000) – that to a large extent define the pattern and content of personal self-actualization.

The theory of “self-efficacy” (Bandura, 2000) postulates a person's conviction that he or she can demonstrate successful behavior in a challenging situation as a basis of self-actualization. The theory of self-efficacy is closely related to Seligman's theory of “learned helplessness” (Seligman, 2006).

A lack of faith in the efficacy of one's own actions may be one of the reasons for dysfunctional behavior when self-actualization assumes asocial or antisocial aspects.

Whether a certain individual can be successful in a given situation depends not only on his or her competency but on a large number of other factors. What is important, among other things, is not so much the objective outcome itself as its interpretation and expectations of success, i.e., a positive result of one's actions. Bandura (2000) used the concept of self-efficacy to systematically design approaches to treating personality disorders, mostly focusing on improving people's ability to recognize and make the best use of their capabilities. In doing so, he placed particular emphasis on the notion that even very modest capabilities, if properly employed, can enable a person to achieve significant success. Subsequent research convincingly demonstrated that low self-efficacy may be a serious impediment to the development of a person's social competence and commitment, and Bandura's ideas, when translated from clinical therapy to the area of social behavior regulation, have proven quite productive.

As shown above, self-actualization in a child is driven by an outlook for the future (vision) determined by the micro-social and macro-social environments. This vision reflects the child's psychophysical features. It materializes in the actual tasks of learning and gaining sociocultural experience correlated to the child's age and level of development. Experiencing one's own efficacy sets the stage for developing an adequate positive self-appraisal/self-esteem. Growing up in an environment inaccessible in terms of the level of challenges the child is faced with or imposing a vision that is not aligned with his or her needs and capabilities creates significant obstacles in his or her experience of self-efficacy, which ultimately blocks or distorts the child's ability to self-actualize.

A child with intellectual disability requires a sociocultural milieu that takes account of the "unique path" and applies "alternative methods" and "alternative tools" (Vygotsky, 2000) in social and cognitive development. Rehabilitation/habilitation of mentally challenged children should be based on the inclusion of their need for accessible communication and everyday tasks they face, and their potential incorporation in productive activities (Shcherbakova, Shemanov, 2010; Shcherbakova, 2010). It is necessary to design an optimal environment, a living space promoting the sense of self-worth and confidence in the mentally handicapped.

Such design should take into consideration private attitudes and behavior of "normal" people toward the mentally handicapped. Analyses of some studies of this topic (Cloerkes, 1980, cited in Zuber, Weis, Koch, 2006) have concluded that attitudes of "normal" people toward people with mental disabilities vary from explicitly positive to generally negative. These studies reveal a very consistent "hierarchy of popularity" of various disability categories. Handicapped people that better than others fit the social standards of the "able" (e.g., people suffering from intervertebral disc damage or asthma) are ranked the highest, while disabled people who, in the majority's opinion, cannot follow regulations, such as the mentally ill or intellectually challenged, rank at the bottom. In the author's opinion, this has to do with the perception that for the mentally disabled, standard grades of social success are difficult to achieve, and society currently does not see any other self-actualization criteria.

The lack of positive self-actualization criteria makes it difficult to create a family environment promoting the sense of self-worth in a mentally handicapped child. The family should provide such a child with a field of activity that supports his or her independence. Otherwise the mentally handicapped child – and then an adolescent and young adult – may later face conflicts with the family, substance abuse, or self-injurious or unlawful behavior (Zarubina, Indenbaum, 2009).

It is almost universally accepted that an individual's self-actualization finds its most vivid expression in creative ability. It is all the more interesting that an analysis of data gathered using the MSES questionnaire self-efficacy scale showed that the key self-efficacy components are two factors defined as everyday activities and social functioning (Middleton, Tate, Geraghty, 2003).



### Content and Results of the Research

The first step of the study focused on identifying opinions of mentally handicapped high-school students regarding the area of their success. This was a comparative study involving both mentally handicapped adolescents and their “normally developing” peers. The present custom-designed questionnaire included the question: “What can you do best?” Thirty-eight percent of general-education school students gave negative or uninformative replies, while only one of the eight-grade learning-disabled respondents replied, “I do not know”. The pattern of positive replies also varied. The greatest difference was that 95 percent of handicapped adolescents shared their work accomplishments, while only three percent of their general-school peers shared theirs (Shcherbakova, 1998). Thus, the present study shows that mentally handicapped adolescents rank their work and social/domestic skills higher than any other skills, and even minor (from the standpoint of ‘normally developed’ adolescents) achievements give them a sense of accomplishment/success. It is important that these achievements have been reported in an area that can be understood and controlled by adolescents with intellectual disability.

To study the characteristics of personality self-determination and perceptions of a desirable future in slightly handicapped teenagers, custom-designed questionnaires were also used. The questionnaire replies enabled to identify perceived measures of wellbeing critical to teachers, graduates and high-school students of special and general-education schools. The special school teachers ranked their priorities as follows: a happy private life (90%); a good job and pay (75%); absence of problems (55%); material wellbeing (50%); and having friends (35%). The wellbeing criteria ranked by the general-education school teachers were somewhat different. They also ranked a good job and pay (65%) and personal and family health (35%) as the top priorities. On the other hand, they ranked a happy private life much lower (11%). They completely ignored material wellbeing, absence of problems or having friends but instead pointed out other criteria, such as living in harmony with oneself and the world around (25%) and social stability (15%). To identify major indicators and the significance of the variance between the members of the two school systems in the assessment of these indicators, the Mann-Whitney U-criterion and the Wilcoxon W-criterion (see Table 1) was applied.

**Table 1.** Perceived Major Wellbeing Indicators

Wellbeing indicators	Respondent categories (N= 120) / Ratio of responses selected (%)					
	Special school teachers	General school teachers	Special school graduates	General school graduates	Special school students	General school students
Good job and pay	75	65	80	35	50	20
Happy private life	90	11	65	45	70	35
Material wellbeing	50		70	10	65	10
Absence of problems	55		25	15	35	30

Many of the wellbeing indicators mentioned by the special school graduates were also mentioned by special school teachers.

The high-school students’ replies demonstrated a similar pattern. The special school students generally selected the same criteria as the special school teachers.

Neither the graduates nor the high-school students of the general education schools revealed such clear similarities across the majority of responses. On the contrary, the respondents in this category named various indicators of individual nature (feeling safe, self-fulfillment, living a life without evil/anger, being surrounded by nice people, and the ability

to deal with one's own problems). It is noteworthy that these values did not coincide with the wellbeing indicators selected by the general-school teachers.

Summing up the results of this step of the study, it was found that the perceived values of special school teachers, high-school students and graduates converged and represented large, clearly identifiable categories. General education respondents revealed a more diverse range of values, and the teachers', students' and graduates' perceived values were often different. This may indicate a greater degree of independence and lower impressionability of regular school students and their better understanding of the wide range of opportunities they will have after graduation. The changes in priorities between the age groups (high-school students versus graduates) may suggest influence of personal experience on the young adults' self-determination.

The author believes that the similarity of perceived wellbeing criteria among the teachers, high-school students and graduates of the special education school indicates that the staff has worked consistently to instill certain values and visions in their students, and it is this effort that promotes self-determination in the intellectually challenged youth. It was found that neither age nor life experience had any significant impact on the perceived values by special school graduates. It is the teachers, with their first-hand knowledge of their students' individual traits, who try to instill in them a vision of the future that best fits their capabilities.

Establishment of self-determination in advanced cases of mental disability has not been sufficiently studied. It has been attempted to identify the level of aspiration and self-appraisal by young people with advanced intellectual disability in a vocational education setting. It was found that students with considerable cognitive and emotional-volitional dysfunction often exhibited inadequate professional preferences. Most of the test subjects selected "director", "cosmonaut", "Beatles singer", "commander", "manager", "teacher", etc., as desirable jobs. Some students named (or wrote in) professions they were trained in at the college, focusing on their proven ability to perform that particular activity. When answering the question, "What job could you do?", the majority of the students named only the jobs they were being trained in (or similar jobs), with only a few adding professions that were off limits to them.

Young people with pronounced mental disabilities are generally attracted to accessible trades. On the other hand, a positive attitude to their future job is inconsistent, and a high or inadequate level of aspiration sometimes comes into conflict with the growing awareness of their limited capabilities as they go through vocational training. It is often difficult for students to align their "I want" with their "I can", which causes conflict between their desires and capabilities, and resultant self-doubt. At this stage, the teacher's and psychologist's professional counsel and individual approach become particularly important.

The same objectives in a survey of high-school students with minor mental disabilities were pursued. The *Orientir* on-the-spot vocational guidance technique to identify professional ambitions and aptitude was applied. The technique includes the Orientation Questionnaire and the Job Map. The Orientation Questionnaire consists of two components, "I Want" and "I Can". The "I Want" portion is designed to identify the mentally handicapped adolescents' perceptions of desirable jobs.

The "I Can" portion demonstrates how a person rates his or her professional skills. Responses from the second portion of the questionnaire can be used to gain a better understanding of a person's occupational leanings based on past data from custom professional aptitude tests.

**Table 2.** *Orientir* Survey Results

Test sub- ject	Gen- der	Vocational aptitude or interests		Self-perceived vocational ability	
		“Subject of labor” attribute	“Nature of labor” attribute	“Subject of labor” attribute	“Nature of labor” attribute
1	F	Human-Nature Human-Word Picture	Performer	Human-Nature	Creative
2	M	Human-Human Human-Nature	Performer	Human-Machinery	Performer
3	F	Human-Word Picture	Performer	Human-Word Picture	Performer
4	M	Human-Word Picture	Creative	Human-Word Picture Human-Human	Creative
5	M	Human-Nature	Creative	Human-Machinery	Performer
6	M	Human-Nature	Creative	Human-Machinery	Performer
7	F	Human-Word Picture	Creative	Human-Word Picture	Creative

In the next step, an expert survey of the teachers working at the testees’ special school was conducted. Using the same questionnaire form, the teachers were asked to rate their students’ occupational abilities. Analysis of the teachers’ responses is given in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Teacher Survey Results

Test sub- ject	Gen- der	Math teacher		Home economics / Shop teacher	
		“Subject of labor” attribute	“Nature of labor” attribute	“Subject of labor” attribute	“Nature of labor” attribute
1	F	Human-Human	Performer	Human-Human	Performer
2	M	Human-Machinery	Performer	Human-Machinery	Performer
3	F	Human-Human	Performer	Human-Human	Performer
4	F	Human-Human	Performer	Human-Human	Performer
5	M	Human-Machinery	Performer	Human-Machinery	Performer
6	M	Human-Human	Performer	Human-Machinery	Performer
7	F	Human-Human Human-Machinery	Performer	Human-Human Human-Nature	Performer

In evaluating the “Nature of Labor” attribute, the teachers unanimously decided that performer-type professions would be the best option for all of the students, even though half of the testees had revealed abilities and interests in creative-type professions on both the “I Can” and “I Want” scales. At first glance, it may be tempting to assume that there is a mismatch between the testees’ aspirations of creative activity and their abilities. But the author is willing to assume that in this case persistent stereotypes regarding the nature and products of creative activity as associated solely with the intellectual component are being dealt with. The author intends to further investigate this phenomenon in future research.

### Conclusion

Environment designs in support of effective activities for individuals with intellectual disability should act as models to be incorporated into everyday life – i.e., the family and micro- and macro-communities – on the basis of positive motivation. Such models will promote the

positive personality potential of people with disabilities (Mahoney, Palyo, Napier, Giordano, 2008), which is impossible to achieve without cultivating their intensions and experiencing their own identity while tackling their real-life tasks relevant to their needs and capabilities at various activity levels. The need to identify new socially significant activities that enable the mentally handicapped to experience self-efficacy and support their self-actualization is specifically emphasized. It must be noted in conclusion that for many people with mental disability the need for a rehabilitation environment promoting their self-actualization is permanent.

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# STRATEGIES OF COPING WITH THE DIFFICULTIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISORDERS WHO HAVE LEFT INSTITUTIONAL CARE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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## **Abstract**

Coping with the difficulties according to the model of coping process created by Moos and Schaefer (Bagdonas (managing editor), 2007, p. 198) depends on personal features, social resources, ability to evaluate the situation. If there are no resources required, a person cannot employ suitable coping strategies. The more person's mental health is disordered the more his/her coping is directed towards emotions and less adaptive behaviour. It is also reflected in coping with the difficulties among persons with mental disorders who grew up under institutional care.

The article generalizes the researches on how persons with mental disorders who have left institutional care for children and youth cope with their difficulties, what coping strategies they use.

**Key words:** *institutional care, strategies of coping with the difficulties, young people with mental disorders.*

## **Introduction**

Coping with difficulties is interpreted by the Lithuanian scientists in different ways. Javtokas (2007) calls this concept coping with difficulties, Kutkienė (2006), Pikūnas, Palujanskienė (2005), Vaičekauskaitė (2007) – coping with problems, Suslavičius (2006), Kalpokienė, Gudaitė (2007), Suslavičius (2000) – resistance. The meaning is essentially the same because there is a common English equivalent – *coping*. *Coping* is perceived not as a result but as a process during which a person tries to cope with the difficulties he/she faces. In social sciences coping and its strategies in broad sense is an “adaptive” defence mechanism, in narrow sense is the techniques of coping with stress (Bagdonas (managing editor), 2007).

Folkman and Lazarus treat coping as cognitive and behavioural attempts that are used to

overcome, tolerate or reduce external and internal requirements, needs, and the conflict between them (Suslavičius, 2006; Pikūnas, Palujanskienė, 2005). The Lithuanian term *įveikimas* is described by Jovaiša (1993) as an activity by which difficulties are facilitated, obstacles and inner weaknesses are overcome, mistakes are eliminated.

Coping and its strategies have been described in the works of Bagdonas (managing editor) (2007), Carver, Connor – Smith (2010), Hajkova (2007), Suslavičius (2000; 2006). Kalpokienė, Gudaitė, (2004; 2007). Kutkienė (2006) investigated the peculiarities of coping strategies among teenagers, Sullivan (2002) – coping strategies of parents raising children with Down syndrome, Pikūnas, Palujanskienė (2005) – strategies of coping with stress. Similar research with people with mental disorders in scientific literature has not been encountered.

Moos and Schaefer created the model of coping process that consists of: social resources (social environment, system of education, social status, etc); personal features (individual demographical and psychological peculiarities, values and attitudes); peculiarities of stress situation; peculiarities of subjective evaluation of stress situation; coping actions (strategies) that are performed by the individual in order to adapt to an actual situation (Bagdonas (managing editor), 2007, p. 198).

Consequently, coping with the difficulties depends on personal features, social resources, ability to evaluate the situation. If there are no resources required, a person cannot employ suitable coping strategies. The more person's mental health is disordered the more his/her coping is directed towards emotions and less adaptive behaviour. It is also reflected in coping with the difficulties among persons with mental disorders who grew up under institutional care. Such a person apart from already possessed disorders characteristic to a person with developmental disorders also experiences lack of positive social factors – attention, love from close people, warmth, stability. Therefore, they react to the world and people around them differently from children growing in a family. Sinycina (2000) states that everyone wants to be noticed and accepted the way he/she is with his/her advantages and shortcomings. In contrary case young people under institutional care lose the ability to love and be loved. They early have lost relations with their biological parents and do not feel love for them, only soreness that turns to hatred and anger (Žukauskienė, Leiputė, 2002).

The results of the research by Pakalniškienė (2001), Samašonok, Gudonis (2006), Jurevičienė, Kaffemanienė (2009) have revealed that young people under institutional care (including those having mental disorders) experience many problems in communication both with peers and adults. They are characterized by rudeness, impulsiveness, inability to constructively solve conflicts. Behavioural strategies they apply are rather interfering than helping in solving tasks. Because of inability to regulate behaviour the motivations of their moral behaviour have not been formed. Young people having problems in communication are characterized either by big emotional coldness or exceptional attachment that sometimes could turn to aggression.

The development of social skills is mostly influenced by family. For children who are under institutional care the functions of social skills are taken by care institutions and also by educational institutions.

Gaining skills of independent living in care institution is a relevant problem. Children here grow in a different environment, not always have the example of values, traditions, life model. Some of them are unable to achieve complete maturity (Snieskienė, Bumblauskienė, 2005).

Persons with mental disorders in carers' families and family homes learn interpersonal relations observing the communication of carers. The model of this family becomes as an example for children under care. Šedienė, Leminskienė (2007) treat carers' family or family home as an advantage because carers have more time for communication. Thus in caring it is



attempted to correct the character of young people with mental disorders, to develop the sense of responsibility, to create the relations based on trust, to learn how to overcome learning difficulties, to care for the choice of profession. Education of young people with mental disorders in families and family homes is individualized. Here they learn personal hygiene, gain skills of household organization. In care institution young people do not sufficiently form these skills because there is lack of individual work.

**Scientific problem and the relevance of the research.** It has been aimed to find out what are the strategies of coping with the difficulties among young people living in carers' home, independently and in an institution. Persons who have left institutional care for children and youth are faced with various changes. The ones who change the institution have similar living conditions. The life of those who live in a family has more changes. However, they have carers who teach them various things necessary for life in family, they help them and give them advice. Persons who start living independently face the most difficulties. The assistance is very important for them, but they not always receive it. During the research it will be possible to find out what is the most difficult thing for young people with disabilities, what could be recommended for carers, communities of homes of social care strengthening the powers and abilities of persons with mental disability.

**The object of the research:** strategies of coping with the difficulties used by young people when they leave social care institution for children and youth.

**The aim of the research:** to investigate what strategies of coping with the difficulties are used by young people with mental disorders who have left social care institution for children and youth with disabilities.

**The methods of the research:** theoretical (analysis of scientific literature); empirical (qualitative research – partially structured interview). The questions of the interview have been created referring to the model of coping process by Moos and Schaefer (Bagdonas (managing editor), 2007, p. 198) and the abridged questionnaire COPE by Carver (Carver, 1997).

**The sample of the research** is non-probability target sampling. It has been formed according to the criteria selection. In the selection of the respondents the following criteria have been determined:

- the group of respondents consists of young people with mental disorders having moderate mental retardation;
- it is less than a year since they have left social care institution for children and youth (except a young person living independently who left the institution more than one year ago);
- young people living with carers, in social care institutions for adults and independently.

Performing qualitative research the participants were two young persons living in carers' home, four young persons (two from one social care institution for adults and two from another) – in social care institution for adults and one independently. Only one young person living independently has been chosen because so far there are no other cases.

The age of six young persons is 29 years, one young person is 26 years old. According to gender there are three females and four males. The criterion according to gender was not applied because it was considered that the respondents should be selected according to the duration of living in a new place. Three females and one male lived in social care institution (two females in one, one female and one male in another), two males lived in the carers' home, one male lived independently. The research was performed in January 2010 in two social care institutions of Šiauliai Region for persons with mental and psychical disability and in the carers' homes.

## The results of the research

### Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Firstly it has been attempted to collect information about demographical features of the young people.

Four questions have been asked: 1) "What is your name?"; 2) "How old are you?"; 3) "Where do you live now?"; 4) "Where did you live before?"

Seven young people having moderate mental disorders have been interviewed. Out of them three were female and four were male. Everyone when asked said his/her name, one also mentioned the surname.

The age of the respondents – 26 – 29 years. One young person was 26, while the others were 29 years of age. Having been asked how old they were, four correctly indicated their age. Three (two females and one male) stated they did not understand or indicated incorrect age ("I do not know", "I was 21, but now I do not know"). They are not able to identify their age.

All young people earlier lived in a boarding-house meant for children and youth having intellectual and mental disorders. All of them indicated their previous living place.

Four young people now live in boarding houses (now house of social care), two live with carers. One lives independently, has a one-room flat, works in a house of social care where he lived earlier as an assistant worker (part-time).

Having been asked about current accommodation five gave the name of the locality. Those living in the same care institution indicated only the name of the locality without mentioning the institution. Two other persons living in a care institution said that "in a ward". They relate accommodation to the room they live in. After specification of the question they answered in which institution.

### Inner personal features

It has been attempted to find out what features are characteristic to the young people, whether they are able to help the others, what emotions are dominating, whether they have friends, "a close person".

### Assistance and support

The questions have been asked in order to find out whether the young people care for anyone, help them, whether they express compassion or comfort. The following subcategories have become distinct:

**Giving emotional support** (6 statements, e.g., *I tell not to be sad; I say don't cry*).

**Giving physical support** (5 statements, e.g., *I help with household chores; In summer I arrange flowerbeds; I help with wood*).

**Giving social support** (4 statements, e.g., *I helped to lift a woman who fell down. She slipped on ice; I help one-legged Aldona – I buy products; Sometimes I help my neighbours – I buy something, I pay taxes*).

**Giving emotional support using physical contact** (2 statements, e.g., *I give a hug*).

The young people render assistance to the surrounding people. They understand that it is necessary to help other people in misfortune, if a person has difficulties and is unable to perform some actions himself/herself. They use physical contact – give a hug.

### Expression of emotions

Concerning the expression of emotions two subcategories have been distinguished:

**Expression of positive emotions** (5 statements, e.g., *I do not feel sad; I do not quarrel; I do not fight*).

**Expression of negative emotions** (5 statements, e.g., *Sometimes I am angry; I shout; Yes, I feel sad*).

Both positive and negative emotions are dominating. Some respondents feel sad and some do not. They express negative emotions by shouting and anger but do not fight. Persons with mental disorders usually are unable to constructively solve conflicts, they tend to use force. In this case the respondents do not tend to use physical violence. It is also proved by the results of the research by Pakalniškienė (2001), Samašonok, Gudonis (2006), Jurevičienė, Kaffemanienė (2009).

### **Maintaining social contacts**

In order to find out with whom the respondents communicate the most, whether they have a friend, “a close person”, the following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Having a close person, friend** (7 statements, e.g., *I talk with friends; I talk with the nurse Roma; My friend Sandra*).

**Undefined having a friend** (2 statements, e.g., *I do not know, maybe Andrius; I communicate with everyone*). The results have been presented in Figure 3.

All the respondents state that they have a close person. For some of them friends, for the others employees are closer. It is possible to state that the data presented in scientific literature (Bagdonas (Ats. red.), 2007) that persons living under institutional care more tend to communicate with adults are verified. Two young persons do not indicate exactly whether they have a friend. One of them doubts, the other states that he communicates with everyone. It shows that there is no strong social contact with a person who could be called a friend.

### **Abilities**

It has been attempted to find out what social and independent life skills are characteristic to the young people with mental disorders. The categories of abilities have been presented.

### **Objective communication in searching information and assistance**

In this category three subcategories have been distinguished:

**Active search** (6 statements, e.g., *I myself asked the principal to help to repair the flat; I ask myself if I need; I ask in a shop what I want to buy*). The statements of this category witness that some young persons are able to ask for assistance with motivation.

**Influence of close people** (3 statements, e.g., *I do not ask, the nurse asks; Romas helps, he asks*).

**Absence of the need** (1 statement, e.g., *I do not know, I did not need to ask*).

Not all the young people are able to independently ask for help, to get information. It witnesses about the lack of social skills.

### **Mobility**

In order to identify the young persons' abilities to go out to various events, to go shopping, etc., the following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Need for help in trips** (4 statements, e.g., *Romas or social worker helps; I go with the nurse*).

**Independence** (4 statements, e.g., *I go to Venta, Mažeikiai, Naujoji Akmenė, to my sister's in Vilnius; I do my shopping myself, I go to Darius, to the club, go to Venta*). The results have been presented in Figure 5.

Persons living with the carers and on their own are characterized with bigger independence. Those who live in a care institution need help. They are independent in their living space.

### Planning

The answers on how the young people plan their activity have distributed in the following subcategories:

**Work** (4 statements, e.g., *I will make food, I will clean up; Tomorrow it is a sauna day, we will need to change bedclothes*).

**Leisure time, favourite occupation** (4 statements, e.g., *I will watch TV; I will go to the recreation centre, to the rehearsal*).

**Meeting with close people** (2 statements, e.g., *I will meet with Andrius, he has the internet; Next week I will meet with Arvydas*).

**Lack of planning skills** (2 statements, e.g., *I will not do anything, I will stay here; Next week – I do not know*).

They are better at planning the activity of the following day. Although in this case there also were answers where the ability to plan is not reflected. To plan the further activity (next week) it is even more complicated. Speaking about the features of the young people with mental disorders it is pointed out (Bagdonas (Ats. red.), 2007) that it is difficult for them to plan their activity. Planning is most often related to the events of the daily rhythm.

### Household skills

In evaluating the household skills the following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Independence in performing ordinary household chores** (7 statements, e.g., *I clean the dust, wash the floor; I wash my clothes myself; I tidy up my clothes*).

**Lack of independence in performing ordinary household chores** (7 statements, e.g., *I do not know how to iron; The clothes are washed in the laundry and I do not need to iron; I help to tidy up – I clean the dust*).

**Ability to use the appliances** (7 statements, e.g., *I can use a computer, a telephone, a camera, a TV set, a microwave oven, a vacuum cleaner, to take money from the cashpoint, I know how to connect musical equipment*).

**Inability to use appliances because they do not have them** (4 statements, e.g., *Social workers switch on the TV; I do not switch on the TV set, it is not mine*).

The young persons' household skills are sufficiently formed. The attention should be paid to the last subcategory. The young persons do not know how to use certain appliances because there are not enough resources. If there were resources, there also would be conditions for the formation of necessary skills.

### Finances and planning of purchases

The skills of finances and planning of purchases have been divided into the following subcategories:

**Need for help** (6 statements, e.g., *I do not know how to count, the social worker helps me; Ginta helps me*).

**Ability** (5 statements, e.g., *I dispose of my money, I decide what I need, what I lack, and I buy it; I decide myself what to buy*).

The persons who know how to count money are able to manage finances. For them it is also easier to plan purchases when they know their value. Those who do not know how to count money need help both managing finances and planning purchases. The young people can only express the wish what they want to buy. The people who care for them have to decide whether the financial resources will be sufficient.

### Values and attitudes

The following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Favourite occupation** (7 statements, e.g., *I go in for sports to the club, watch TV, listen to music; To watch TV, to glue, to draw in the occupation room*).

**Material welfare** (6 statements, e.g., *To have a job; To live well*).

**Need for social relations** (5 statements, e.g., *People who help; To have friends*).

**Unmotivated wishes** (4 statements, e.g., *Nothing; I would like something, but I do not know what*).

**Inability to name their favourite activity** (4 statements, e.g., *I can do everything*).

**Dreams about their favourite activity** (3 statements, e.g., *I want to help the nurses but they do not let me; I would like to play computer games as earlier*).

**Motivated wish to change the life** (2 statements, e.g., *I would like to have the internet*).

**Unreasoned dreams** (1 statement, e.g., *When I grow up I want to be clever*).

For the young people it is important to get involved into their favourite activity, to maintain social contacts with close people, material welfare is important but it is not expressed in financial expression, they simply want to have home, a job, good life, which is important for most people.

### Social resources

To identify social resources six subcategories have been distinguished:

**Satisfactory situation with the flat** (7 statements, e.g., *I am satisfied with my flat, I have enough space, I have everything what I need; We put clothes to the wardrobe, this is my bed, cupboard, TV set*).

**Positive attitude of the surrounding people** (7 statements, e.g., *The neighbours behaved well, they were glad that not some drunkard moved in; Good, nobody hurt me*).

**Presence of a person who can help** (7 statements, e.g., *Rima; Social workers*).

**Presence of a person who introduces with a new place** (7 statements, e.g., *Reda; When I first came here I met the paramedic Strakšienė; social worker Vida*).

**Lack of the relations with family, other relatives** (4 statements, e.g., *I have a sister, a brother, a mother, but they do not visit me; I do not have anyone, I missed Daiva, Erika*).

**Maintaining relations with family, close people** (3 statements, e.g., *I maintain relations with my sister in Vilnius, my brother is abroad, so we do not meet; I communicate with my brother, with Arvydas, Egidijus, Darius, I talk with the nurses*).

All the respondents are satisfied with their living conditions. The attitude of the surrounding people is positive. A painful problem is when there is lack of relations with family, the workers and inhabitants of the institution where they lived earlier. Lack of the relations with family influences the quality of the whole life. It hinders the formation of values, self-value, empathy, because according to Bokhan, Galazhinsky, Mescherekova (2005), family in this case has a big importance.

### Peculiarities of the stress situation

Five subcategories have been distinguished:

**Knowing about the change of the living place** (6 statements, e.g., *Roma told me that there is a possibility to leave the boarding house. For about three years she was preparing for the news that there was a possibility to settle independently; I knew myself that I would have to leave the boarding house; I knew, the authorities told me*).

**Knowing future prospects** (4 statements, e.g., *I knew that I would live independently and then a vacant flat appeared; I knew that I would go to another boarding house*).



**Attempt to change the future** (2 statements, e.g., *I did not want to another boarding house, I asked someone to take me under care. Dainius agreed*).

**Not knowing about the change of the living place** 1 statement, e.g., *No one told me until I had to leave*).

**Not knowing future prospects** (1 statement, e.g., *I did not know, no one told me*).

Almost all the respondents knew about the change of the living place. On the one hand, it makes the situation easier, on the other hand – more complicated. It is painful for the young people to leave the institution where they spent many years, on the other hand, knowing in advance may help for easier adaptation having changed the living place. Attempt to change the future can be named as a successful category. The aim that someone will take a young person under care is achieved. The dream of everyone who grows under institutional care is to have their own home but not live in an institution. Such positive turn of life may strengthen the feeling of self-confidence and confidence in others for young people with mental disorders.

### **Peculiarities of subjective evaluation of the stress situation**

The following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Difficulties of adaptation in new environment** (5 statements, e.g., *I was crying, everything was unknown; On the first day I was sad, I did not know anything*).

**Unwillingness to leave the boarding house** (5 statements, e.g., *I was crying, I wanted to stay; I did not want very much to go to the other boarding house*).

**Negative evaluation of the situation** (4 statements, e.g., *I was sad, I wanted to live elsewhere, but no one took me*).

All the evaluations of these subcategories are related to the expression of negative emotions.

**Positive evaluation of the situation** (3 statements, e.g., *I was happy, it is good to live in my own flat*).

**Easy adaptation in a new place** (3 statements, e.g., *I had already had my holidays at Reda's* ).

**Wish to leave the boarding house** (2 statements, e.g., *I was glad that I would be able to live independently*).

**Current problems** (1 statement, e.g., *I have problems with my health*).

Those who start living with the carers and independently are glad with such changes of life. It is obvious that the emotions are different if they go to the boarding house for adults. In any case, the young persons with disabilities prefer living in a family to living in an institution.

### **Coping actions (strategies) the individual performs in order to adapt to the situation**

In order to identify the use of coping strategies these responses have been collected which the respondents answered positively, if some feature manifested sometimes, often, etc.

Three categories have been distinguished:

**Problem-oriented coping;**

**Strategies of emotion-oriented coping;**

**Less adaptive coping;**

#### **Problem-oriented coping**

The subcategories have been distinguished:

**Search for social instrumental support** (6 statements, e.g., *from Aušra, the principal of the boarding house; From social workers*).



**Concentration towards coping behaviour** (2 statements, e.g., *Yes, but there were not many problems; Sometimes*).

**Planning** (1 statement, e.g., *I was planning how to settle in the flat*).

**Active coping** (1 statement, e.g., *I was quarrelling with Romas*). The data have been presented in Figure 1.

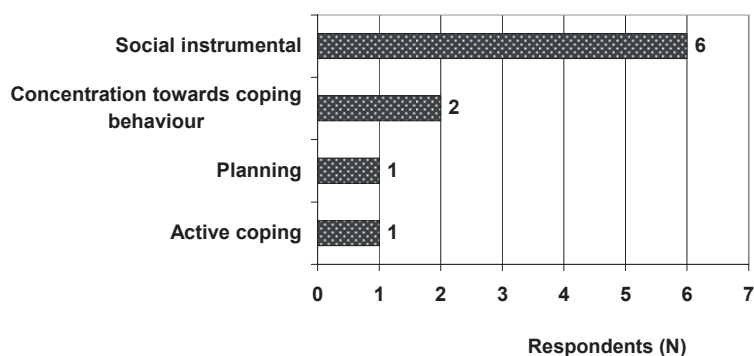


Figure 1. Problem-oriented coping

The most used strategy is search for social instrumental support. Almost all the young persons searched for advice in a difficult situation.

#### Strategies of emotion-oriented coping

The following subcategories have been distinguished:

**Search for social emotional support** (6 statements, e.g., *If I need I tell everything to Aušra, sister; The nurse consoled me*).

**Humour** (6 statements, e.g., *Sometimes I joke; I like joking*).

**Acceptance** (5 statements, e.g., *Yes; I accepted*).

**Positive reinterpretation and growth** (5 statements, e.g., *I met Romas. How good it was, he helped me*).

**Turning to religion** (2 statements, e.g., *I trust in God, but I do not go to church*).

**Negation** (1 statement, e.g., *Yes, I took on trust*). The results have been presented in Figure 2.

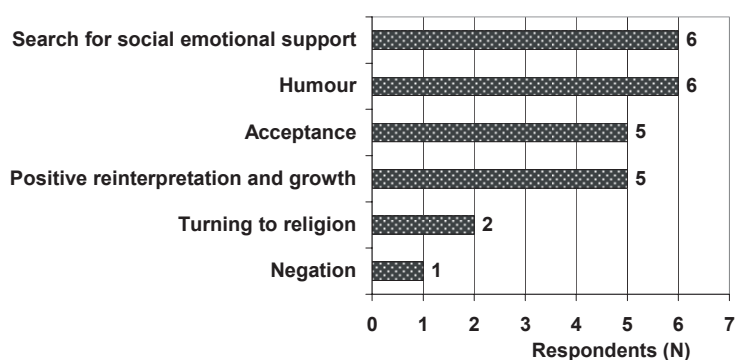


Figure 2. Strategies of emotion-oriented coping

Many emotion-oriented strategies are used. The respondents look for comfort from the surrounding people, accept the present situation, try to find something good in this situation, also like joking. Joking can be related to optimism. Optimistic person overcomes difficulties more easily. It has been accentuated by Carver, Connor – Smith (2010).

#### **Less adaptive coping**

The subcategories have been distinguished:

**Concentration on feelings and their expression** (5 statements, e.g., *I was often sad; yes; I was angry with Daiva because I needed to go to the other boarding house*).

**Change of thinking** (3 statements, e.g., *I was sleeping a lot, I had injections; I was working – I was cleaning the snow*).

**Alcohol abuse** (2 statements, e.g., *At first I was drinking, but then the workers did not let anymore*).

**Blaming oneself** (1 statement, e.g., *I am guilty a little because I did not want to go to the other boarding house*). The data have been presented in Figure 3.



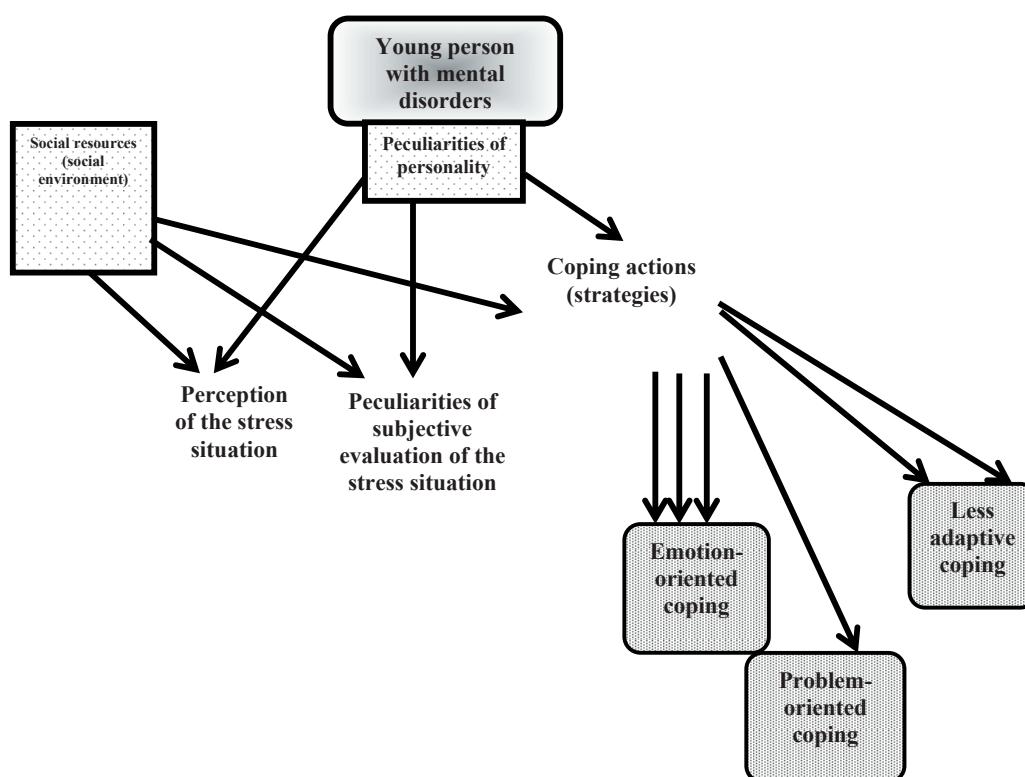
**Figure 3.** Less adaptive coping

Using less adaptive coping the young persons concentrate on negative feelings and express them. Mostly the feeling of sadness is expressed. They also change thinking by involving in other activities and not thinking about the difficulties.

The results of the researches of various authors (Kalpokienė, Gudaitė (2004), Sullivan (2002), Bokhan, Galazhinsky, Mescherekova (2005) show that persons having emotional and behavioural disorders, having experienced big stress most often choose emotion-oriented strategies and less adaptive coping. The same coping strategies dominate in the present research, too. Emotion-oriented strategies are most frequently used. Less adaptive coping is used more rarely. The young persons use problem-oriented coping the least frequently.

#### **Theoretical-hypothetical model of coping with difficulties and recommendations on its implementation**

Having analyzed the results of the research theoretical-hypothetical model of coping with difficulties for young people with mental disorders has been prepared.



**Figure 4.** Theoretical-hypothetical model of coping with difficulties for young people with mental disorders

It depends on the peculiarities of the personality of a young person with mental disorders (psychological features, abilities, values and attitudes) how he/she will understand and evaluate the situation of stress (difficulties). The more stable is a young person's mental health, positive features of character dominate, the more optimistic will be his/her attitude towards difficulties. Many-sided education of personality is important, regardless the disability. Various ways and forms should be employed to achieve it.

Equally, the understanding and evaluation of the situation depends on social resources. In case of lack of resources the situation may be evaluated inadequately. It may make the coping behaviour change. There might be situation that cannot be changed. Then the only way out is to accept it. The young people do not have any possibilities to stay in the care institution for children and youth when they become 29 years of age. They should be prepared in advance for this information so that they would not evaluate the situation as too difficult. For coping with the difficulties the support from close people, having "a close person" is very important. Close social relations condition more easier process of coping. It is very important for a young person who settled in a new place to have this kind of support. The relations with the community of the institution where a young person lived should not be broken but further developed.

Peculiarities of personality and social resources influence the choice of coping strategies. Young people with mental disorders more tend to use the strategies of emotion-oriented coping. There are cases when they are suitable, when it is not possible to choose other strategies. Less adaptive coping is also used. The choice of problem-oriented strategies is the least expressed. It shows that the young people are not sufficiently strong personalities, mental disorder also

has big influence. Changing the resources and developing the personality it should be aimed at the use of the strategies of problem-oriented coping.

### Conclusions

1. The choice of coping strategies of young people with mental disorders proves the structure of the model of coping process that it depends on the peculiarities of personality, social resources, the stress situation and the peculiarities of its evaluation.
2. From the obtained data it can be stated that the young people lack communication skills, ability to constructively solve conflicts, expression of positive emotions. There is a need to develop positive features of personality.
3. The results of the research show that the network of social relations of young people with mental disorders is heterogeneous. It is strong enough in the present living place of the young people but there are insufficient relations with the family, the people from the environment of the institution they previously lived.
4. The quality of social and independent life skills of young people with mental disorders is not sufficient, it is especially noticed among the young people who live under institutional care. It is determined by the institutional living conditions.
5. The stress situation is perceived as inevitable, having minimal possibilities of changing, dependent on social resources. The evaluation of the situation is characterized by emotional expression and the expression of less adaptive actions.
6. Young people with mental disorders overcoming difficulties less frequently use the strategies that require adaptation abilities. Emotion-oriented strategies (search for social emotional support, negation, acceptance, humour) and the strategies of less adaptive coping (concentration on feeling and their expression, concentration on coping behaviour) are dominating.
7. The peculiarities of the life quality of young people depend on the attitude of the surrounding people towards people with mental disorders, willingness to help them refusing patronage but using the aspects of active participation.

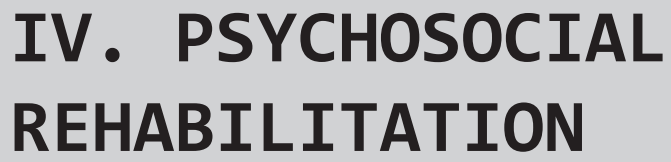
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# HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

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## **Abstract**

Vocational counselling is the first and one of the most important stages of prevocational education of pupils with SEN that has influence on successful integration into the labour market and human socialization. In the article the parameters of the ideal model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN have been analyzed. In identifying the criteria of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN it has been referred to the model of systemic analysis constructed by Le Moigne, described by Baranauskienė, Juodraitis (2008), and in which 5 approaches towards successful participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market have been singled out: approaches towards success from the aspect of structure, aims, influence of environment, development, activity. In the article the data obtained during the research of the Delphi group during which the experts from 12 different countries having scientific and practical work experience of work with pupils with SEN present their approaches towards what criteria should be followed in vocational counselling of pupils with SEN have been analyzed and systemized.

**Key words:** *pupils with SEN, vocational counselling, ideal model.*

## **Introduction**

In reports and discussions of the European institutions of the highest rank on the issues of disability, employment of people with disabilities is mentioned as one of the most relevant problems to be solved (Jozėnaitė, 2004). People with disabilities are the poorest, the least educated and the least employed part of people (King, 1993). Employers indicate a limited activity as the biggest shortcoming working with people with disabilities (Ozawa, Yaeda, 2006). People with disabilities constitute 14 per cent of all people of the employable age in the European Union. The European Commission emphasises that people with disabilities belong

to the high-risk group which is under the threat of losing job or becoming the permanent unemployed (Jozėnaitė, 2004).

The transitory period from school to work most often is a complicated process for pupils with SEN. Baranauskienė, Juodraitis (2008) point out that in the practice of vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities there exist five models having their own advantages and disadvantages: vocational inclusion, vocational competitiveness, vocational segregation, vocational training, vocational career project, however, the results of the research reveal that vocational counselling of pupils with SEN is performed insufficiently not only in schools of Lithuania but also of other European countries although the significance of these services in school is theoretically actualized. In Life Long Learning Memorandum of the European Commission (2001) it is emphasized that one of the tasks of the services of vocational information and counselling is to ensure that every person could easily and qualitatively receive information related to the possibilities of life long learning and vocational activity. As the results of the present research have revealed, in the countries of the European Union the same problems of the employment of pupils with SEN exist, a united model of vocational counselling has not been created yet, there is lack of responsibility for the implementation of the process of vocational counselling in schools.

As Rivera, Pellitteri (2007) point out, pupils with SEN have bigger problems in academic, personal, social spheres and in the sphere of choosing a profession, therefore, their needs should be appropriately considered inside the school. The authors accentuate not only the aspiration of work but also the activation of social participation in the society, involving the development of psychosocial identity, academic achievements and emotional-social sphere in the process of vocational counselling. According to the authors, prevocational training gives possibility to a pupil with SEN to expand the attitude towards disability and construct realistic aims inside the vocational structure of the society. As Indrašienė and Grinytė state (2007) “in contemporary dynamic society which is getting more and more modern maximal revelation of person’s abilities, successful adaptation to the needs of labour market, perception of the responsibility for one’s own decisions have great importance. Therefore, effective and timely vocational counselling has decisive meaning on person’s successful socialization”.

Successful adaptation to the environmental challenges as well as socialization with the context of bio-ecological system approach are followed by the development of subjective resources which influence the health condition and life quality of persons with disabilities. These resources mostly include: self-efficacy, self-evaluation, sense of control placement, sense of coherence and should be trained during the whole process of education of pupils with SEN.

**Sense of one’s own efficacy** is a subjective expectation of a given person that under certain circumstances he/she will manage to act in a specific way. Such understanding of one’s own efficacy is expressed in the conviction that one is able to achieve the expected result, that is, to perform a given activity effectively (Bandura, 1981, 1986, 1992). The level of one’s own sense of efficacy may increase or decrease the motivation to act. People with strong sense of their own efficacy choose more ambitious tasks, set higher goals for themselves, and once the action is taken, they put more effort and are more persistent than persons with weak sense of their own efficacy are. When difficulties arise, people with strong sense of their own efficacy get over them faster and still show commitment to pursue the goal. Sense of one’s own efficacy also allows people to select challenging circumstances, explore the environment, or create new situations (Schwarzer, 1997). Multiple experience of failure in many life situations makes that people with disabilities have a tendency to expect successive failure, regardless of the real possibilities and objective difficulty of the situation. People who are uncertain of their own

competences in new task situations will develop the situations in such a way that the chances of success are minimized. They will also take care of serious and credible justification for their failure and explain it with the existence of all kinds of objective obstacles. Therefore, in certain situations (potentially difficult), people with disabilities give up taking actions which could increase the chances of being successful, so that they do not bear any responsibility in the event of failure. Due to the fear of failure, they take actions which do decrease the chances of success (Doliński, Szmajke; 1994).

Disability may also implicate development of inadequate **self-evaluation**. People with the mild level of intellectual disability experience difficulty in the scope of social adjustment and cognitive skills in task situations, as a result, failures may influence self-evaluation and strengthen lack of confidence in one's own abilities. However, on the other hand, small successes and positive experiences may stimulate development of inadequate self-evaluation – an overestimated one. Many researchers unanimously agree that youth with mild intellectual disability is definitely characterized by overestimated, inadequate self-evaluation (Wyczęsany, 2006), both in the current time dimension (current self-evaluation) and in the future one (prospective self-evaluation) (Kościelak, 1989). Children and the youth with a dysfunction of the motor activity are aware of being different in relation to the fully fit children; at least owing to the impossibility of fulfilling one of the fundamental needs – the need of motion – it causes extreme emotions, sadness, depression, anxiety and leads to the lowering of self-evaluation (Arusztowicz, Bąkowski, 1989).

**Sense of control** – consists in being aware of the influence on events, fate, one's own reactions. Events, which are associated with lack of control over affairs that take place, are a powerful source of stress (Bishop, 2000). Two kinds of control are distinguished: behavioral control, that is a conviction that it is possible to influence negative effects of a situation, and cognitive control, in other words, a conviction that people have a cognitive strategy which may reduce negative effects of a stressful situation. Behavioral control provides a person with possibilities of behaving in a particular situation, whereas the cognitive control helps through the possibility of taking note of other reality aspects, or another evaluation of a situation. Persons who believe that they are able to influence stressful life events on their own can bring them under control in a better way, struggle with them more effectively. Persons who externally localize control under the influence of negative life events are subject to more diverse psychopathological disorders. Strong outer controllability increases the feeling of helplessness, is conducive to passivity and giving in easily. It seems that moderate, inner controllability is the most beneficial for human functioning – since the fact is that one does not have influence upon everything in his/her life.

People with reduced ability (with intellectual disability in particular) feature a strong sense of outer control (Kościelak, 1987) which manifests itself in the lack of trust in oneself and lack of confidence in one's own abilities, that is why, when encountered with a new task, they search support from the environment, which increases a subjective chance of success. Sense of outer control over life also leads to acquired helplessness (Seligman, 1980) which may even concern the simplest activities and through which the dependence of people with disabilities on the environment is even higher. People with disabilities quickly learn helplessness, i.e. a feeling that their personal control of reinforcements and influence on a situation is ineffective. Such an expectation leads to:

- **cognitive deficits:** a person stops understanding what is happening in a given situation and cannot predict its further course; the time of learning even simple interrelations „behavior-reinforcement“ is much lengthened;

- **motivation deficits:** lack of motivation to act and the ability to get involved; long time of getting over a failure;
- **emotional deficits:** depressive states, anxiety, feeling of permanent fatigue, hostility, lack of hope;
- **social deficits:** withdrawal from social contacts (Przełowiecka, 2010) .

**Sense of coherence** is a crucial predicate of health and life quality, both in healthy people and people with disabilities (Antonovski, 1999). It is a person's global orientation, expressing the degree in which he/she has permanent, though dynamic confidence that:

(1) stimuli from the outer and inner environment throughout life are structured, predictable and explicable – (it is a sense of comprehensibility, a cognitive variable);

(2) resources, which will allow to meet the requirements set by the environment, are available (it is a sense of resourcefulness, a cognitive-instrumental variable (manageability)). External resources, such as, e.g. support networks, authorities, God, the sacred, play an important role in here. Thanks to the sense of resourcefulness, a person does not feel as a helpless victim of events, but has a feeling that he/she is able to cope with all hardships and surprises of life.

(3) these requirements set a challenge worth effort and involvement and life makes sense (it is a feeling of meaningfulness, a motivation-emotional variable). A person, who has a high sense of meaningfulness, is willing to accept challenges and effort in order to solve problems and cope with them.

All personal resources mentioned above might be important factors in improving the particular effectiveness of vocational counselling and vocational education.

The **aim** of this article – applying the research method of the Delphi group to collect, systemize and reveal the sum total of attitudes and approaches towards the parameters of the ideal vocational model of pupils with SEN, the possibilities of its improvement and practical application expressed by the specialists (experts working in the field of the research from Sweden, Germany, Finland, Poland, Italy and Lithuania observing the experience of other countries how vocational counselling of pupils with SEN is performed).

The **object** of the research – modelling of vocational counselling of pupils having SEN.

### Research methods and sample characteristics

When working out the methodology of the Delphi group research for the project, the provisions of the Delphi group research described in works by Linstone, Turoff, (2002), Schniederjans, Hamaker, Schniederjans (2010), Buddenbaum, Novak (2001), Okoli, Pawlowski (2004), Bitinas, Rupšienė, Žydžiūnaitė (2008) and other authors were referred to.

The Delphi research was carried out in several stages:

1. During the first stage, on the ground of analysis of scientific and methodological literature, the criteria (the operational definition) have been singled out; they allowed to correctly conduct constructive and productive discussions and reflections in the Delphi group and to form the research questions based on scientific, empirical logic.
2. Aiming to collect the research data, the group of experts was given the questions.
3. During the third stage, the Delphi group research results were analysed in a qualitative mode; by employing the method of grounded theory the sub-categories have been singled out which were presented to the experts for assessment.
4. During the fourth stage, the opinion rates of experts have been identified.

As Schniederjans, Hamaker, Schniederjans (2010) state, “the Delphi method can be characterized as a procedure for structuring a group communications process to effectively allow a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with complex problems.” According to the authors, the Delphi method is a debate controlled by a moderator; it allows all the experts to express their opinions and come to the consensus. The Delphi method is the systemic point of view of the group of experts, ideally suiting for creation of the new theory or model as well as its perfection.

All the statements obtained during the discussions are singled out and grouped with regard to stated similar meanings. Then, the nomination of the singled out statements proceeds. Aiming at the objectivity of the data content, the control of the content of singling out and nomination of notional units is carried out when applying the experts’ assistance.

The research participants were asked to assess every statement expressed during the group discussion in a 5-point scale: 1 was treated as “strongly disagree” by the research participant concerning the proposed statement and it was suggested not to develop this idea anymore, 2 meant “disagree” for the expressed statement, 3 – “neither agree nor disagree”, doubts about the statement, 4 – “agree”, supported the statement and 5 – “strongly agree” and suggested developing such an idea in practice. Having obtained assessments of the statements, the mean and standard deviation are calculated; they reveal the significance of distribution of opinions.

The data groups that have been singled out are treated as theoretical constructs which become the supporting axes for the issue under investigation; they allow revealing the structure of the model (the process of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN) being dealt with and to estimate the purposefulness of the changes.

During the research, the principles of anonymousness were maintained. The research participants are treated as equal creators of new theoretical constructs, the model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN. During the research, the notion ‘research participants-experts’ has been used; it defines the acknowledged status of the research participants.

The research of the Delphi group took place in March 2012 in Sweden. The research involved experts from different countries: Lithuania (N=4), Finland (N=1), Germany (N=2), Sweden (N=2), Poland (N=2) and Italy (N=1). The research sample consisted of 4 men and 8 women having obtained higher education, 3 of them had the highest academic title of a professor. The Delphi group research was conducted by the professor, expert, coordinator of the project from Lithuania.

The Delphi sessions lasted for 12 hours: the group discussion continued for 10 hours, individual assessments of expressed statements lasted for 2 hours. In total, 397 statements have been expressed during the research; they represent 5 aspects of successful participation of individuals with disabilities in the labour market: 73 statements expressed the structural aspect, 39 expressed the aspect of aims, 88 statements represented the environmental impact, 56 statements expressed the developmental aspect and 141 statements expressed the aspect of activities for success.

The research sample for the Delphi group research consisted of 12 experts having scientific and practical work experience with pupils having special needs; these experts were employed at:

- university carrying out scientific research in the field of vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities;
- vocational school including pupils with SEN and immigrants;
- rehabilitation centre providing courses on vocational training for youth with special needs;



- national community working with autistic persons and their families;
- international contemporary institute for research of youth problems providing support to youth communities in the risk group.

The essential principle for selecting the research sample was based on the participation in the Delphi research of these persons who directly implemented project's activities, took part in the research, got acquainted with experiences of other countries in vocational counselling of pupils with SEN.

### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN**

In order to systemically generalize the process of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN analyzed in the scientific study, referring to the results of the scientific study and practical research and the experience of Le Moigne (cited in Baranauskienė, Juodraitis, 2008) theoretical model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN has been created (see Figure 1).

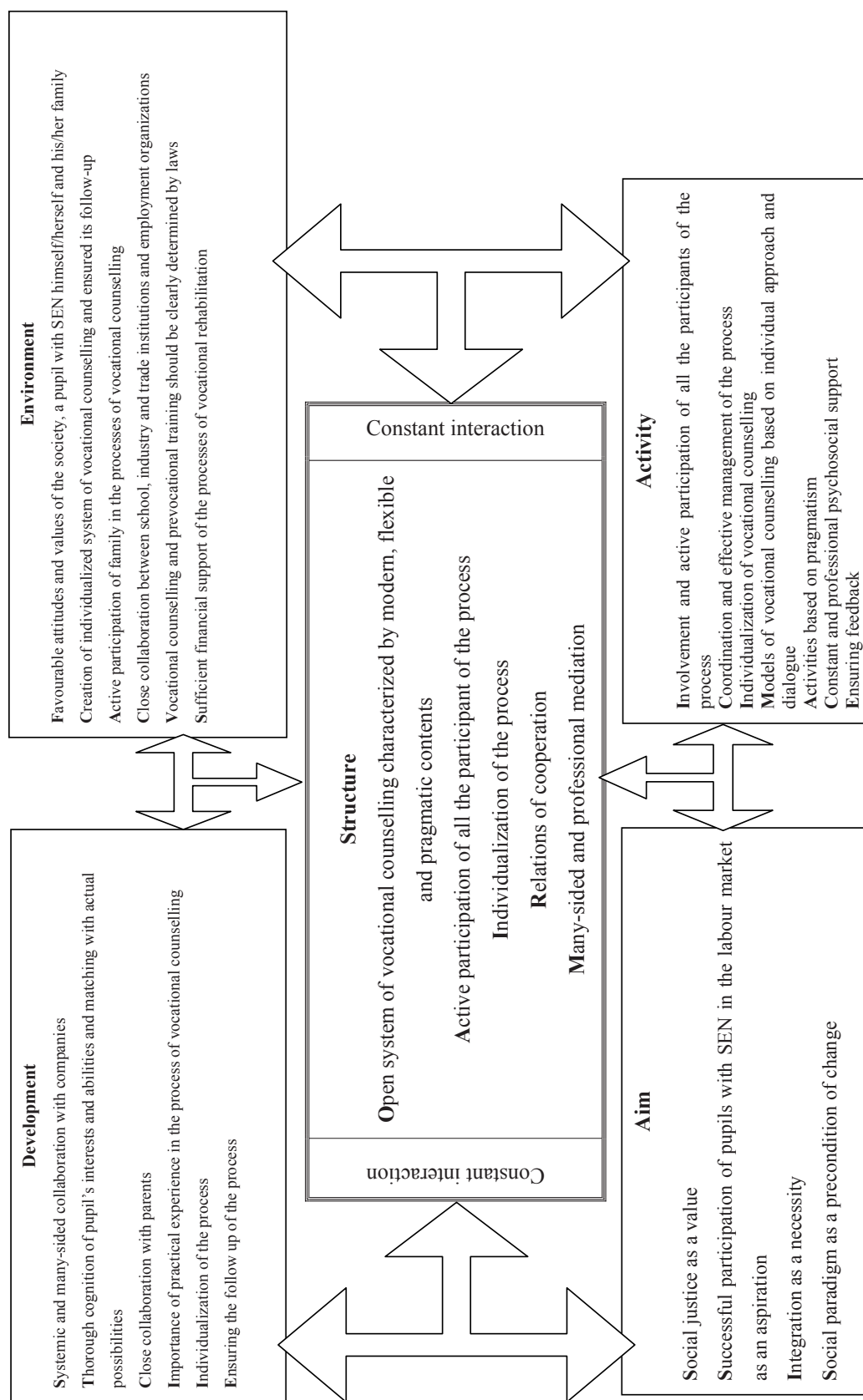
### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN from the Aspect of Development and Evolution**

**From the aspect of development** the results of the research have revealed that in every country that participated in the research there are quite many traditions that could be consolidated aiming at the ideal model of vocational counselling. During the meeting of the expert group fifty-four statements in total were received and only eleven statements are evaluated by the experts ambiguously. It is possible to state that the experts of all the countries have quite alike perception about the development of vocational counselling and the processes of its evolution in general.

In the experts' opinion the experience of the countries in developing pupils' **communicative, basic abilities**, their perception and **knowledge about the world of work** is especially significant. It is accepted as inseparable condition of the success of vocational counselling. All these statements have especially high mean of evaluation and sufficient standard deviation.

Another unanimously acknowledged condition of the success of vocational counselling – **systemic collaboration with companies both during vocational counselling and prevocational training** (the second position according to the mean of voting and the results of standard deviation). This statement is directly related to the experience of the countries organizing **obligatory internships in different companies** during vocational counselling; **creation of collaboration networks among industry and trade organizations and employment agencies**; constant and systemic **exchange of the newest information with employers and employment agencies** about the participation of pupils with SEN in the system of vocational rehabilitation.

Another important aspect of the development has become clear, the experience of which is acceptable to all the experts – active **participation of pupils with SEN in distinguishing their interests, abilities and making appropriate decisions choosing education and workplace**. This statement is directly related to the **analysis of pupils' vocational abilities**. Although the pedagogy of aptitudes is a new phenomenon for most of the countries that participated in the project, however, as the results of the experts' voting show to refer to pupil's strengths is a universally accepted tradition of vocational counselling. The analyzed statements are even enriched and complemented by the statement unanimously accepted by the experts that **vocational counselling should last as long as possible according to pupil's needs with the possibility to test oneself in practical activities**.



**Figure 1.** Model of Ideal Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN

The statement **the involvement of needed specialists in the processes of vocational counselling** is complemented by the statement emphasizing the **collaboration** of the specialists of vocational counselling **with special pedagogues**.

The experts evaluated **close relationship** of the specialists of vocational counselling **with parents and other relatives** as a very important experience. The **individualization of the process of vocational counselling** is equally important not excluding the activities according to individual plans. In the authors' opinion, it is active collaboration with parents that is one of the conditions of the individualization of the process.

The interaction between the statements **early development of work skills**, the **importance of practical experience** and **pragmatic approach towards the education of pupils with SEN** is distinct. It shows that the experts unanimously accept that vocational counselling is inseparable from practical activities. It is practical activities that allow not only testing whether a profession is suitable to a young person, but also develops his/her special and general abilities and love for work in general.

The statement systemic **follow up in vocational counselling, prevocational training and support in the situation of employment** not only reveals the experts' experience that successful vocational counselling is inseparable from the unity and perfection of the process of vocational rehabilitation but also explains the other statements – aiming at successful vocational counselling it is necessary to **effectively give assistance to pupils in their everyday activities**; in order to **involve all teachers in the activities of vocational counselling the specialists of vocational counselling organize constant meetings with them** sharing the newest information and achievements.

Generalizing the ideal model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN in the **aspect** of development and **evolution** the following statements reflecting the experts' experiences and unanimously presented as a necessary basis that influence the development of future model as essential could be distinguished:

*Development of pupils' basic, communicative abilities and their perception about the world of activity*

*Systemic and many-sided collaboration with companies*

*Creation of effective collaboration networks between the specialists of vocational counselling, representatives of industry and trade organizations and employees of employment agencies*

*Thorough cognition of pupil's interests and abilities and matching with actual possibilities allowing ensuring successful decision-taking*

*Close collaboration with parents*

*Importance of practical experience in the process of vocational counselling*

*Individualization of the process in the aspects of contents, forms and time*

*Ensuring the follow up of the process*

*Specialists' professional competence*

### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN from the Aspect of Environment**

The influence of environment is characterized by the attitudes of the society and a pupil with SEN himself/herself towards disability, the peculiarities of values, social situation. During the present research the experts evaluated the influence of the environment by eighty-eight statements, fifty-eight out of them could be considered as an unanimous attitude. The experts' opinions about thirty statements have separated.

The greatest attention during the Delphi group was shown to the aspect of attitudes and values. Analyzing twenty-six statements that have received the greatest approval from the

experts, it has been noticed that even eleven out of them have value semantics. The majority of the statements invite the society to accept the right of pupils with SEN for vocational counselling, training, later on – for social and vocational integration: **Every pupil with SEN should have the possibility for vocational training; The right for vocational training for all; Everyone should have the right for social and professional integration; Pupils with SEN should have the same chance for social and economic integration; Tolerance of the society towards pupils with SEN; Favourable attitudes towards pupils with SEN and their acceptance; Openness of the society to the groups of social exclusion; Supporting the processes of integration and inclusion of pupils with SEN.** Such abundance of the statements allows making the presuppositions that value aspect is relevant for all the partner countries of the project. Certain statements apart from declaring of the values have also complementary semantics, e.g., show the way how to achieve real support of the society towards the participation of pupils with SEN in the world of work. Cf. the statements **Social sensitiveness of education and social policy-makers towards pupils with SEN** or **Awareness of the society of the benefits of employing persons with SEN.** These ideas not only invite to accept the participation of people with disabilities in the labour market as a value but also show concrete ways how to change the attitudes of the society.

Another aspect of environment necessary for the success of vocational counselling could be named as individualized support for a person during the whole process. The environment should create conditions to meet individual needs in the sense of approaches, contents and physical sense: **Individualized system comprising vocational counselling, prevocational training, vocational training, support in the situation of employment and during the period of vocational adaptation; The personal talent must be taken into account; Sufficient individual support for finding the right profession for a student with SEN.**

Family is the closest environment of a pupil with SEN. It is natural that family support (or lack of it) is an important condition of success. This concept highlights several aspects: firstly it is important for a family to believe in the possibilities of its member who has difficulties to experience success in the labour market, to encourage and support him/her. On the other hand, a person who has experienced success in the labour market would strengthen the family not being burden to it or demonstrating his/her value in another way. Cf., **Favourable attitudes of a family raising a child with SEN towards vocational training** or **Active participation of families in the process of vocational counselling.**

In the experts' opinion, supportive environment could be created by **Close cooperation between school, industry and trade institutions and employment organizations.** These relations would create conditions for **practical probation of professions in real conditions.**

Mediation during the whole process of the integration into the labour market has manifested itself as a factor strengthening or weakening the impact of environment: **Pupils with SEN should always get support from specialists, special pedagogues; Everyday guidance of special assistants; Internships under attendance of a supervisor; Specialists' mediation in the situation of employment.** Although there were no special pedagogues among the experts, however, during the Delphi group the importance of the participation of these specialists became clear. The presupposition can be made that only good will is not enough in the aspect of environment and in other aspects – in order to render effective support special competences are needed.

In the experts' opinion favourable environment is strengthened by legal mechanisms: **Vocational counselling and prevocational training of pupils with SEN should be clearly regulated by the law; Creation of the laws for organizations and companies to obligatorily employ persons with disabilities.**

Financing with dignity in the experts' opinion is also one of the essential conditions, Cf.,

### **Sufficient financial support for the rehabilitation.**

In generalizing the model from **the aspect of environment** the following statements reflecting the experts' experiences and unanimously presented as essential for the creation of favourable and supportive environment:

*Favourable attitudes and values of the society, a pupil with SEN himself/herself and his / her family*

*Social sensitiveness of education and social policy-makers*

*Informing about the benefits for the society of working people with special needs*

*Creation of individualized system of vocational counselling and ensured its follow-up*

*Attention for pupil's abilities*

*Active participation of family in the processes of vocational counselling*

*Close collaboration between school, industry and trade institutions and employment organizations*

*Systemic support from professionals*

*Vocational counselling and prevocational training should be clearly determined by laws*

*Sufficient financial support of the processes of vocational rehabilitation*

### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN from the Aspect of Aims**

From the aspect of aims the experts presented thirty-nine statements, thirty-two out of them received high support. It means that the participants of the project have alike understanding of the aims of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN.

**From the aspect of aims** the ideas of social justice are expressed as a value: **Respect; Tolerance; Responsibility.**

Integration of pupils with SEN into the society (and into the labour market) is defined as an unquestionable condition of the civilized society, and their successful participation in the labour market is perceived as an aspiration: **Integration; After vocational counselling and vocational training a qualified job is found and preconditions for autonomous living are created; Secure own living costs in future (self-sustainability).**

In order to accelerate the ways of integration and inclusion the experts employ the ideas of social paradigm: **Motivation force; Possibility to choose a profession matching wishes and possibilities through theoretical and practical activities receiving the assistance from professionals; The principles of individualization in the processes of vocational counselling; Success in choosing a profession depends on the harmony between wishes and possibilities; To find strengths and weaknesses of pupils with SEN; To educate pupils with SEN using appropriate methods.**

The experts focus on the aims that also actively involve pupils themselves in the process of vocational counselling: **To take the consequences; Self-knowledge; Development of work as a value; Self-consolidation through work activities; To develop the competences and abilities of pupils with SEN.**

Very concrete statements reflecting concrete aims of vocational counselling are also expressed: **Application of knowledge in practical activity; Individualization of the process; Systemic mediation in the process of vocational counselling.**

Generalizing the model in the **aspect of aims** the following statements reflecting the experts' experiences and unanimously presented as essential concerning the aims of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN could be distinguished:



*Social justice as a value*

*Successful participation of pupils with SEN in the labour market as an aspiration*

*Integration as a necessity*

*Social paradigm as a precondition of change*

### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN from the Aspect of Structure**

The experts expressed their opinion about the ideal model of vocational counselling by seventy-three statements, however, the opinion about almost one-third of the statements was not unanimous. Analyzing the statements characterized by the highest mean and having necessary standard deviation it is possible to state that in the aspect of structure successful vocational counselling of pupils with SEN is conditioned by open and modern system of vocational counselling, flexible process and active and equal involvement of all the participants of the process (including pupils with SEN and their relatives).

In the experts' opinion it is pupils' active participation that is one of the preconditions of the success of the process: **To provide as much support as required; Giving pupils as many chances as possible for making their own decisions and choices; Active participation of pupils with SEN during the whole period of vocational counselling.** Pupils' active participation not only helps to achieve success but also has influence on the system itself and the process: the theory creates the practice of all people, and the shape is given by their lives (Gouldner; cit. from Bourdieu, Wacquant, 2003). On the other hand, actively participating persons with special needs may express their aims, beliefs, actions (Knorr-Cetina; cit. from Bourdieu, Wacquant, 2003) and it also has a big influence on the process. Active participation of pupils with SEN is also related to the changes in the spheres of human *value* and social relations (Baranauskienė, Juodraitis, 2008). Actively contributing to the creation of the system and the process a person with special needs increases his/her value, turns from the status of the receiver of privileges to the position of an equal participant.

Creating the structure of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN in the experts' opinion approaching the system to the conditions of the labour market is also important: **Approaching the conditions of vocational counselling to the market conditions; Practice in real workplaces; The newest knowledge on the professions and the labour market; Modern system demonstrating benefit for the society; Constant reaction towards changes in the labour market.** This concept not only gives the features of openness to the structure but also commits it to be modern, flexible and ready for various challenges of economical processes.

Open and favourable society would help the system to achieve the results as well as in the aspects analyzed above (development, environment or aims): **Positive response to the pupils with SEN; Total acceptance in the society of pupils with SEN, both in education and work environments; Favourable attitudes of employers; Acceptance of a person as a value.** It is likely that such repetition of the statements reveals the fields of tension in the model itself, therefore, much attention should be paid to the search for the answers to these questions and their implementation.

In the structure of pupils' vocational counselling the role of parents and relatives has been unambiguously expressed: **Constant support for family and its active participation; Parents should have positive views about vocational counselling.**

With their statements the experts prove that at least four other structural components are necessary in order to achieve successful vocational counselling: individual approach during



the process; developed cooperation, modern and pragmatism-oriented contents of education and specialists' responsibility.

The strongest signals have been expressed in the aspect of individual approach during the process: **The adaptation of the process to pupil's strengths and weaknesses; The process consists of self-cognition and matching of wishes and possibilities based on arguments; Practical testing of different professions; Support in developing the abilities; Vocational counselling is not restricted in time and can be repeated; Individual development and individual study plans.**

In the experts' opinion cooperation among various participants of the process of education is a necessary condition creating the model of vocational counselling: **Close cooperation of all involved people in the process of vocational counselling; Possibility for parents, employers and pupils to make decisions.**

In the aspect of contents the tendency towards modernity and pragmatism has been expressed, e.g., **Flexible and modern content of education based on pragmatism; Modern environment and purposeful education based on pragmatism.**

In the experts' opinion, specialists' responsibility and professional competence is an inseparable part of the structure: **In the team involved into the processes of vocational counselling positive attitudes and responsibility should be dominating; Professional specialists' mediation during the period of vocational counselling.** The results of the research prove that it is not enough to make a pupil more active, to develop his/her personal features, general and special abilities. Mediation covers many areas: support for a family, collaboration with teachers of profession, specialists in employment.

Generalizing the model in the **aspect of structure** the following statements reflecting the experts' experiences and unanimously presented as essential forming the structure of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN could be distinguished:

*Open system of vocational counselling characterized by modern, flexible and pragmatic contents*

*Active participation of all the participant of the process (including pupils, their parents, employers, etc.)*

*Individualization of the process*

*Relations of cooperation*

*Many-sided and professional mediation*

### **Ideal Model of Vocational Counselling of Pupils with SEN from the Aspect of Activities**

The experts indicated one hundred and forty-one statements, and only in forty-seven cases out of them the expert had unanimous opinion. The opinions have differed even in ninety-four cases. It is likely that it has been conditioned by different pedagogical, economical and social experience of the experts. It is also possible to state that forty-seven is a sufficient number to characterize the model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN.

From the aspect of **activities** the experts most actively agreed with the involvement of pupils and their relatives in the activities of vocational counselling, active interaction between specialists and employers. In their opinion, success is conditioned by involvement and active participation of all the participants of the process not excluding the coordination of the process and effective or ineffective management: **Pupils, parents, teachers, counsellors and all other needed specialists should participate in the activities of the process; Constant interaction of specialists, pupils and family members is ensured; Education enabling the choices**

**of pupils with SEN; Involvement of school principals and effective management of the process; Creation of coordination groups.**

In the experts' opinion activities unambiguously should be oriented towards a pupil, his/her individual abilities, referring to his/her strengths, developing them and using the principle "the right person, the right education, the right conditions, the right workplace": **Focus on person's abilities; Development of distinguished abilities; Self cognition matching of wishes and possibilities, testing practical activities and referring to the pedagogy of aptitudes; Distinguishing abilities identifying person's feelings, attitudes, skills, personal features, future expectations and their constant development; Constant development of basic and key qualifications depending on person's abilities.**

The consistency of the experts' thinking is also shown by the models of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN suggested by them: **Individual counselling model; Dialogue-based model of vocational counselling; Model of vocational counselling based on guidance (Lindh).**

The consistency of education from the aspect of activities should be ensured by **Development of work as a value; Increasing self-value through demonstration of abilities; Development of social behaviour; Constant development of general abilities.**

Conditions of education and pragmatic contents of education are inseparable from the activities of vocational counselling: **Constant renewal of the environment for vocational counselling; Possibilities for practical probation of professions must be created; Practical placement in real workplaces; Domination of practical probation of professions; Purposeful direction of pupils to the places of vocational probation.**

The experts indicate specialists' professional competence as an inseparable condition of educational activities: **Specialists should be trained for vocational counselling at school; Well-trained specialists representing employment agencies.**

In the activities of the process the experts emphasize the importance of feedback: **Continuous discussions about the progress with the participation of all the participants of the process; Feedback between a pupil and vocational counsellor.**

On the other hand, the statements that have not received unanimous acceptance should not be ignored either, in the authors' opinion, they are very important in the environment of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN and they state that not always only the result is valuable. The value of the process itself is not less important.

Generalizing the model in the **aspect of activities** the following statements reflecting the experts' experiences and unanimously presented as essential forming the activities of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN could be distinguished:

- Involvement and active participation of all the participants of the process*
- Coordination and effective management of the process*
- Individualization of vocational counselling*
- Models of vocational counselling based on individual approach and dialogue*
- Activities based on pragmatism*
- Constant and professional psychosocial support*
- Ensuring feedback*

### **Conclusions**

The performed systemic analysis allowed formulating the most important principles of the process of the **model of vocational counselling of pupils with SEN as an integral phenomenon:**

- Vocational counselling is inseparable from the ideas of social justice.
- Vocational counselling is a composite part of vocational rehabilitation.
- Vocational counselling is directly related to prevocational training.
- Contents and forms of vocational counselling are based on the ideas of pragmatism.
- Vocational counselling is based on active participation of pupils with SEN and their family members, purposeful support of the specialists – mediation during the whole period of vocational counselling, institutional openness and accessibility of the system of vocational counselling.
- Vocational counselling is a constantly developing system that is conditioned both by the expectations of pupils with SEN and the needs of the society.
- In the system of vocational counselling not only the results but also the process is valuable.

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# ANIMATED TREATMENT: THE METHOD OF ART THERAPY USED WITH CHILDREN HAVING COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

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## **Abstract**

This article considers the author's original technique of studying positive and negative aspects of social communication of children having selective communication problems. The art-technique presented in this article can be referred to as 'expressive projective art-therapy'. The author's specialized art-technique, utilizing self-made "finger-puppets" as the basis in a creative art-therapeutic session, are called "doll-therapeutic" sessions.

**Key words:** *projective drawing, children having selective communication problems, emotional perception, family situation, family relationship, expressive projective art-therapy ("doll-therapy"), art-technique.*

## **Introduction**

"The best way to help children is to help their parents" (Tomas A. Harris). The first years of education are known to be the most significant periods in the development of children's personality. The youngest function of mentality – speech – is formed in this period. Therefore, younger schoolchildren (aged 6 – 12) can have difficulties for different reasons, in communicative activity, verbalization of feelings and of ideas. However, they eagerly "speak" in non-verbal manners by means of visual and plastic expressions, gestures, etc. Yet Jung (1931, 1946) asserted that graphic activity (painting, drawing) is the internal need of every human being, being a kind of instinct. He assumed that the symbolical language of the fine arts was the most adequate, more exact and capacious, than the words. It is also emphasized in the works of well-known art-therapists (Goodman, 1998; Naumburg, 1966) that the most important ideas and experiences of each person, as unconscious generation, appear initially in the form of images.

The above idea is proven in numerous researches of Russian psychologists and teachers, who consider the pictures of children to be the original analogue of speech. In particular, Vygotsky (1968) called children's drawing "graphic speech". In Russia the national pedagogical (teacher training) science has long-term experience of using graphic creativity in working with children. However, various forms of art-therapeutic work appeared in Russia only some years ago.

Various art-therapeutic techniques are effective in the correction of selective communicative problems. One of them deals with self-made finger dolls and can be symbolically called "doll-therapy". It can be viewed as expressive projective art-therapy.

The advantages of this technique are simplicity and accessibility, the free choice of images, personages and ideas in the "here and now". It should be noted that dolls and stories told by their creators arise spontaneously during the session.

### **Relevance of the problem**

Professional identity of Russian art therapists

A person who works with children in the sessions is named "the art-therapist" in this article. Although, it should be noted here that the name "art-therapist" is conventional (symbolic). These professionals cannot be called "art-therapists" because they lack a specialist education. They simply try to reveal some problems in the development of personality of children, and ease their emotional state.

There are no professional educational art-therapeutic programs in Russia, and therefore there are no qualified specialists in that field. But there is a growing interest in art-therapy throughout Russia. Many psychologists, social workers and teachers of psychology learn about various art-therapeutic techniques from the published literature of foreign authors and from educational sessions held by visiting foreign art-therapists.

As psycho-physiologists affirm, it is the spontaneous drawing that activates the projection mechanism, which is very important in achieving the therapeutic effect (Bekhterev, 1910; Мухина, 1981). Creative activity (drawing, work with plaster and other materials) is known to be an important means of non-verbal communication, self-expression of deep emotional experience, problems and excitement for a child. For an art-therapist, it is a humane, non-intrusive diagnostic method of evaluating/measuring the psychical developmental peculiarities of each child.

Children in class, who are too shy and timid, even when well prepared for the lesson, may find it difficult to answer their teachers' questions. These communicative problems negatively influence their educational success.

In order to make diagnostics of the emotional state of children, Lusher's Colour Test (Lusher, 1997) is used in its simplified form, according to which, eight colors – red, yellow, blue, green, violet, brown, black and grey – chosen by the children, correspond to their emotional state during the session. The choice of material reflects the condition of emotional state of the children during the session. Sometimes children desire to touch smooth materials (silk, for example) pile or napped ones.

Eventually, it is easy for an art therapist to understand the values, interests and feelings of the children, and to see their creative and imaginative abilities. Factors such as dolls' images, sizes, prevailing colors, facial features and essence of the children's story are taken into account.

The doll's face also reveals important information to the art therapist. Each doll is the creator's self-portrait. According to Russian psychologists (Leontiev, 1972; Мухина, 1992) children see the world in two ways. They borrow a rational idea about the world from adults, but deep in their hearts they consider it to be magic and mysterious. Very often children take



fairy-tales as reality and their personages as real living-beings, which they are afraid to admit openly to adults. Sessions in art-therapy help to overcome this obstacle through self-made dolls' stories.

The art-therapeutic technique represented in the article can be applied in all cases of selective communicative problems. Although it can often be of palliative rather than of therapeutic nature, it is obvious that one or two sessions are not enough for solving such problems. Long-term systematic corrective work is required.

**Object of the research** – emotional treatment of children having communication problems in the process of projective Art Therapy.

**Aim of the research** – The authors' specialized technique, utilizing self-made "finger-puppets" as the basis in a creative art-therapeutic session.

**Hypothesis of the research** – As distinct from projective drawings, working with paper or fabric self-made dolls involves the following sensory systems: visual, audible and kinesthetic. Art-therapeutic treatment helps to establish mutual understanding and friendly relationships between children, in order to resolve different educational and communication problems.

The main idea of this art-technique is in the creation and use of finger-dolls; its aim is to develop the communicative activity of children. This article is an example of personal experience.

**Method and methodology of the research** – Description of the author's art-technique. Schoolchildren draw a doll on a small rectangular sheet of paper, glue the paper together in the form of a cylinder and put "the doll" on a finger as if a thimble. Then the art-therapist asks them to tell a story about the doll. A child, using a self-made doll and often speaking from the third person singular, reveals his/her own sufferings, problems and experiences. Indeed, a paper doll is considered to be extension of a child's hand and it activates psychological projective mechanism (Lebedeva, 1991; Medvedeva, Shyshova, 1996).

So, on the one hand, a doll is a part of a person, and can reveal different positive features, ways of behavior, etc. On the other hand, a doll serves as a psychological defense, as some kind of a curtain behind which one can hide if necessary. A doll could be made from a triangular shred of plain fabric and fixed on a finger with a rubber ring, looking as if the doll is wearing a kerchief on its head. In this case, such factors as the choice of fabric color and its quality are important for the diagnostic evaluation.

A friendly and trusting atmosphere, known to positively influence the child's psychical health, (Brett, 1996; Мухина, 1992; Poluyanov, 2000) can be easily reached during such sessions. An art-therapist working with children during the session needs a lot of imagination and tolerance. For example, to ease the inner state of a child and to help him/her verbalize, it is useful to start this method with the words: "Once upon a time, there lived a boy (girl), looking like me, who wanted to tell about..." (Brett, 1996).

The basic idea is the manufacture and manipulation of paper dolls. During the session the children draw a doll on a small rectangular sheet of paper and then stick it together in the form of a cylinder. The self-made doll, which is put on a child's finger, helps to "tell" a story using artistic images and personal imagination. In this case the paper doll, becoming the continuation of a hand, activates the psychological mechanism of projection. It can be seen in aspiration to give one's own problems to another person.

It is not difficult to observe the values and interests of the children; their relations with associates; about what and in what manner they tell their stories; whom they condemn, sympathize or admire. Each participant of the session makes his/her own paper doll and thinks up a story which he/she would like to share with others. The story, beginning with the words "Once there lived a girl (a boy, a person, etc.), similar to me..." strengthens the projection

effect and facilitates the verbalization of the participant's inner state. Not realizing it, the person identifies himself/herself with the image of his/her doll, allocating it with special features, regarded as parameters of his/her own properties.

The themes of stories can be chosen spontaneously or according to the problems, which are for correction. For example: "When I was a little girl/boy...", "When I grow up...", "I saw a dream...", "Once at school...", "My doll was so afraid...", "Once upon a time, there lived a restless boy/girl, who was always told off (criticized)..."

It is possible to play with self-made paper dolls in different ways:

- to walk on a table surface;
- to put them on like thimbles and to show them from behind a screen (curtain);
- to manipulate them in the air.

It is important that the dolls are the continuation of the child's hand.

The characters created by the children are not only their partners in the communications, but also the original form of psychological protection allowing them to hide behind the created dolls. The processes of transformation, projection and identification allow the art-therapist to obtain the important diagnostic data from within the child's private world about his/her problems, habitual ways of behavior and communication, peculiarities of their families, relationship with adults and other children of their age. The experiences embodied in the graphic productions, are accessible to perception (recognition) and analysis.

### **Participants of research**

Stories spontaneously "told" by eight-year-old twin brothers during one session using paper finger-dolls.

#### **A Lonely Doll (Dima's story)**

Once upon a time, there lived a doll on an island of the Blue Sea. It had no name. It lived alone in a two stored house made of sticks. The doll lived on the second floor.

One day, the wind from the sea blew. The house was demolished, and the doll was taken by the wind far to the sea. The water was black and terrible. Some years passed and the doll returned home. But its family didn't recognize it and they rejected it. Since then it has been alone, with no family, no parents...

#### **Father Frost and a Family (Roman's story)**

Once upon a time, there lived a boy-doll named Roma. He lived with his family. One day, Roma was staying at his grandmother's. When the boy returned home there was nobody in. The Grey Wolf had eaten his family. How did he know about it? – There were bones all around the house. The boy was very much upset and went to Father Frost to help him to return the family. Father Frost made his dream come true and the family returned. There was one more thing Roma wanted to happen – he wished there were no more wolves in the world.

### **Analysis of the results**

At first sight, the family where Dima and Roman live looks like a successful one. The boys have got responsible, careful parents and a senior sister. However, it is clear from the pictures and stories that both twin-brothers suffer from high unease, vulnerability and fear, demonstrating a need for emotional support. These features of the psychological condition of the children were clearly shown in the doll-therapeutic session. The "revelations" turned out unexpected for both adults and boys, who had not dared to speak to the parents about their experiences.

The twins' revealed problems also proved to be true at the performance of the projective test "The picture of my family" (Hulse, 1951). It is known that this technique can reveal the child's subjective evaluation of the parental family, her/his place in it and the nature of the member's interactions.

In drawing the family, **Roman** imaged two rooms with no people in them. To the question, 'Why is nobody there?' he answered that he had depicted only the corridor and the kitchen – the rooms where usually nobody lives. The lamp and the walls of the corridor were drawn, but not colored. The blue window was painted at the last moment. **Dima** drew all members of the family, except himself. Thus, the emotional conflict of both boys and their discontent with the family situation were revealed clearly in the pictures. These given facts became the basis for referral to family therapy.

**In conclusion**, the finger-doll technique allows the participants to reveal their feelings, to share their original experiences, to tell about themselves and their problems. It is clear that the child becomes more successful, feels protected and becomes sure that he/she is understood and loved.

It should be emphasized that such art-therapeutic sessions facilitate the process of school adaptation for timid, "closed" and worried children. They are effective in correcting various deviant behaviors, including rejection through selective mutism.

Description of an art-therapeutic session with children having difficulties in communication.

### General notes

This art-technique is intended for group work. The script is not planned beforehand, and is made up by the participants during the spontaneous game, using self-made thimble-like finger-dolls.

The stages of the session are:

- 1) graphic (representational) game techniques, to enter the mood for creative activity;
- 2) manufacturing of one or several thimble-like finger-dolls, made from paper and/or shreds of fabric;
- 3) planning the stories and staging an improvised performance;
- 4) discussion (the reflective analysis).

Such ordering of stages provides the art-therapeutic sessions with some directives. However, the art-therapeutic work is child centered. The art-therapeutic space includes a circle with chairs and personal workplaces (a school desk and a chair) for individual creativity.

### Materials

Pieces of fabric (shreds) in the form of an equilateral triangle (each side is about 8 cm), varied in texture, structure and colour.

Rubber rings for fixing the shreds on a finger (when fixed on a finger it resembles a human head with a kerchief on). Thick paper for drawing, pencils, felt-tip pens, paints, eraser/rubber, glue, scissors.

Each participant receives a set of 8 shreds of eight colours: blue, green, red, yellow, violet, brown, black and grey.

### The basic procedures

Instructions for participants are in italicized lettering.

1 stage. Adjustment ("warming up").

Children come to the table with the materials for drawing.

- *Take a pencil (a felt-tip pen, etc., at will), close your eyes and try to draw any lines,*

*geometrical figures and signs on a sheet of paper. Do not limit movements of your hand. Simply draw everything you like, without any restrictions* (usually, this part of work lasts up to 10 min, although, some children finish it earlier).

- *Examine your painting. If you want to finish the drawing or to explain something in words, please, do it.*
- *Take another sheet of paper and choose a pencil of a different colour, which at the moment, corresponds (meets) to your mood. Again, draw anything you like, but this time with your eyes open. Take your drawing and come to one of the participants of the group and ask him/her to finish your drawing as he/she likes.*

At this stage ask the children to draw thematic individual tasks, for example, a silent man and a talkative man, being opposites, and then to draw themselves or persons similar. Such figures, according to psychologists (Betensky, 1995), can be related to projective tests of high diagnostic potential. In particular, repeating elements and colours in all three images of the person are compared. It is easy to see, with which character (negative or positive) the child identifies himself/herself, and how he/she estimates his/her problems. In this respect, the creative work on such themes as: “Silence”, “Loneliness”, “Kindness”, etc. are of great value.

### **2 stage. Activation of communication.**

The group of the participants sits in a circle and put their works on a floor so that the rest of the group could see them. Then the children speak about the idea, the plot, the created pictures, the feelings, the mood, etc.

Taciturn children, who had refused to ask somebody to participate in the joint creativity, are usually more talkative after that stage of the session.

It is desirable to finish this stage of the session presenting the paintings to other participants of the session with kind words – wishes for memory (this direction is an educational element, for positive psychological programming. It is one more way to motivate children’s conversation).

### **3 stage. Individual work.**

At this stage each child chooses one of eight shreds of fabric. The children fix them as kerchiefs on a finger of the left hand with the help of a rubber ring.

- *Examine the amusing doll carefully, imagine its expression and think of its character. What is it like?*
- *Draw a face suitable (matching) in size to your doll, cut it out with the scissors and insert into the oval formed by the kerchief. It is possible to draw and cut out clothes for the doll if you wish.*

There are situations, when in spite of the therapist’s efforts, the children go on being persistently silent. In this case, the psychologist (art-therapist) can take a shred and make his/her own doll of a bigger size and ask children to think up an unusual face for it. The creation of the big doll’s face is a method of group work encouraging the children to communicate; it is like a photo-robot. Transference issues are not relevant here, as each child makes only a part of the doll’s face. The main task is the discussion, because the children’s problem is mutism.

Each participant of the session is to draw some variants of one and the same detail (eyes of various form and size, eyebrows, etc). Then, during the collective discussion the complete image is created. The chosen parts of the face of the big doll are attached on a piece of paper with glue. The choice of the name for the doll stimulates verbal activity of the children.

#### 4 stage. Verbalization and staging.

- *Think up a story that the doll would like to tell about itself. If other characters are necessary for this performance, it is possible to make one more or several more dolls.*
- *Address the participants of the group requesting that their dolls participate in your performance and play their roles.*

Thus, the children can choose a comfortable or suitable portion of communicative participation for themselves to experience. The self-made doll, which is put on a finger, is the original portrait (self-portrait) of the “artist”. It helps to tell a story using artistic (graphic) images and personal imagination, and to inform the rest of the group about the significant problems and experiences. In this case the paper doll becomes the continuation of a hand, what activates the mechanisms of projection and identification. Not realizing that, the child imbues the created doll with his/her own character features.

The choice of fabric color for the kerchief, some peculiarities of interaction between the children during the session, the way they express themselves, the image and the plot of the story are all diagnostic indicators of the emotional state of the children.

#### 5 stage. Final.

Again, each participant of the group is to choose a shred of fabric of any color and to fix it on a finger (the choice of the certain color can be considered as the indicator of mood and emotional state of the child at this moment).

The child can thank (if he/she wants to) all the participants of the group, share his/her own impressions with them, and ask different questions, on behalf of the doll. Children are happy to listen to kind words and hear the words of praise.

The children may be told that the dolls usually speak in special “doll” voices; therefore their own voice should be transformed beyond recognition to sound like dolls’. Such offer stimulates interest, even among the most timid participants of the session, who then willingly participate in the conversation. It may even so be helpful to speak from behind a screen (curtain, box, etc.) or to put on a mask.

#### Conclusion

Thus, various methods to encourage the children to verbalize are used at the final stage of the session. It develops necessary communicative skills, increases self-confidence and respect for other people’s feelings and experiences.

It is obvious, that for the correction of such complex and difficult problem in a child as selective communication problems, long-term art-therapeutic work is required. The author has given only one example of such sessions, which are very interesting for children and, of course, helpful in getting positive communicative experience, and in building harmonious relationships with their peer group and adults.

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# ISOMETRIC BALANCE OF FORCES OF SEPARATE MUSCLE GROUPS OF PERSONS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS DEPENDING ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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## **Abstract**

The aim of the research is to define and assess the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of persons with visual impairments and its dependence on physical activity.

In the research 38 respondents participated voluntarily: the respondents having moderate degree of acquired visual impairment (severe eye weakness) ( $n = 15$ ) and the respondents without visual impairments ( $n = 23$ ). The age of the respondents was 18 - 69 years. The research was performed in 2010-2011. The methods of the research: testing with the diagnostic equipment "Back – Check", by which the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups (flexors/extensors, lateral (left/right)) has been evaluated and survey using International Physical Activity Questionnaire, by which the level of the respondents' physical activity has been measured. The results of testing have been processed, assessed and compared with referential data with Dr. Wolff "Back – Check" software. The results have been analyzed according to individual parameters of every respondent: age, gender, weight, height.

Having performed the research it has become clear that the differences in evaluations of the isometric balance between different research groups and separate muscle groups and of the isometric balance of forces and different levels of physical activity of persons with visual impairments are not statistically significant.

**Key words:** *visual impairment, isometric force, balance of forces, physical activity.*

## **Introduction**

Health is physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual human welfare (Skurvydas, 2010). Regular physical activity positively influences all these areas (Lieberman, McHugh, 2001). Physical activity is considered as one of the conditions of individual's physical,

social and emotional welfare. It is the basis for optimal human growth and development (Krikščiūnas, 2008). During the recent 20-30 years in the world natural physical activity of people necessary for health improvement and maintaining normal physical state especially has started to decrease. In Lithuania over per 50 per cent of men and about 80 - 90 per cent of women move insufficiently (Skurvydas, 2010). The level of physical state of persons with visual impairments (both blind and visually impaired) because of insufficient physical activity is lower than that of persons without visual impairments. Such a conclusion was presented in the review of scientific researches performed by Skaggs and Hopper (1996). However, the aforementioned investigation of physical features of persons with visual impairments is limited. In this review the analysis of only 11 scientific researches performed from 1950 to 1993, in which physical features are analyzed is presented. Although in the researches the unanimous conclusion has been reached that persons having visual impairments demonstrate significantly poorer indicators of physical features, not in all researches distinct characteristics of eyesight have been presented, the results of the research are non-representative, therefore, the comparison of the results is problematic. In the opinion of Lieberman and co-authors (1999, 2001), persons with visual impairments do not have the same possibilities to participate in everyday physical activity and do not get the same psychological, social or physical benefit as persons without visual impairments. It is also proved by the data of the research on the way of life of adult people in Lithuania that show that physical activity of the inhabitants of Lithuania is encouraged passively both in social environment and in health care institutions. Only a very small part of the respondents stated that doctor (6,9%), health care specialist (1,6%), family members (24,1%) or other persons (10,2%) advised to increase physical activity (Skurvydas, 2010). Therefore, the shortcomings of management of all motor skills should be accentuated not as genetic limitation, but as a reaction towards parents' excessive care or the avoidance of physical training specialists to work with persons who need complementary assistance to orient in the environment. Persons with visual impairments have the same potential to develop motor skills and physical features as people without visual impairments do, only the lack of opportunities, faith and trainings, education leads to lagging psychomotor development and decreasing physical state. In addition, many scientists admitted that the level of physical state of physically active persons with visual impairments does not differ from persons without visual impairments (Lieberman, McHugh, 2001). Therefore, the statement that visual impairment is a factor determining the indicators of persons' physical features is unsubstantiated.

Houwen, Visscher, Lemmink and Hareman (2009) have also performed the review of 39 scientific researches analyzing the management of motor skills of children and youth with visual impairments. According to the authors, at the moment because of methodological insubstantiality of the researches evaluating identical physical features, controversial results and other important reasons, it is not possible to present final conclusions proving direct impact of one or other variables (level of eyesight, duration of visual impairment, eye disease, etc.) on physical activity of persons with visual impairments, the formation of motor skills or indicators of physical features.

The most important question is left unanswered: "Does the relation of cause-consequence exist between visual impairment, physical activity and the peculiarities of physical and functional state?"

Most often the impact of visual impairment on person's ability to keep unchanging standing body position, dynamic balance and the factors conditioning these abilities are analyzed (Giagazoglou et al., 2009; Hakkinen, Holopainen, Kautiainen, Sillanpaa, 2007; Houwen et al., 2009a, 2010; Juodžbalienė, Muckus, 2006; Lee, Scudds, 2003; Paunksnis, Kušleika, Kušleikaitė, 2005). In order to ensure the stability of balance complementary forces should come into action (Dutton, 2004). A person maintains the body in the vertical position

when forces of muscles stabilizing neck-waist-hips are in action (Dudonienė, 2010). Muscle force (ability to shrink) is shown by the level of maximal efforts a muscle can achieve under the conditions of isometric contraction (Thomson, Floyd, 2004). When the capacities of forces situated in both sides of the axis of the lever makes up unequal moments of force, symmetric parts of body are situated asymmetrically, muscles are constantly shortened or extended with regard to one another, the balance of muscle force is disordered (Dutton, 2004; Page, Frank, Lardner, 2010). The disorder of the balance of the force of these muscle groups (left/right, agonist/antagonist) may be a decisive factor hindering from keeping a vertical body position that is one of the main conditions of effective management of movements (Kendall, McCreary, Provanse, Rodgers, Romani, 2005; Skurvydas, 2010; 2011). There are no researches on how visual impairments influence the balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups in adults although it is muscle force that is the factor that gives a human a possibility to maintain vertical body position, to move, also the main reason of the most frequent complaints of physically inactive people such as various pains in the neck, back, waist is weak muscles and a disorder of the balance of the forces of muscle groups. Therefore, the question arises *how a visual impairment, a factor that restricts person's physical activity, conditions isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups? Do the indicators of isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of persons with visual impairments depend on their physical activity?*

**Object of the research** – the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of persons with visual impairments and its dependence on physical activity.

**Aim of the research** – to measure and assess the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of persons with visual impairments and its dependence on physical activity.

#### **Methodology and organization of the research**

In order to evaluate the respondents' isometric balance of the forces between agonist/antagonist, symmetric muscle groups (left/right) the method of testing has been chosen.

By testing the following is evaluated: 1) isometric force of trunk flexors, extensors and lateral trunk muscles; 2) isometric force of cervical flexors, cervical extensors and cervical lateral muscles; 3) isometric force of hip extensors, leg abductors and leg adductors.

The results have been analyzed with regard to every respondent's individual parameters: age, gender, height, weight, i.e., isometric force of muscles is evaluated according to individual body mass index.

Isometric force of muscles is evaluated following the same scheme for all the respondents: 1) one probation movement is performed; 2) test: the best result is left from the series of three movements. Every movement is maintained for 4-5 s. The rest of muscles between the movements – 60 seconds.

Diagnostic equipment "Back – Check 607/608" has been chosen as an instrument for data collection. It is an electronic instrument for the evaluation of muscle force measuring and evaluating isometric force (weight in kilograms) of muscles of back, upper and lower limbs using two evaluation sensors under stable and constant resistance in a closed kinetic chain.

Diagnostic equipment to evaluate isometric force of muscles on a computer indicating separate muscle groups with different colours has shown: 1) which muscles are the strongest, which are to be trained (weak muscles are indicated in red, average in yellow and strong in green); 2) indicating recommended isometric force of muscles according to individual body mass index it has revealed effective interaction of separate muscle groups; 3) it has revealed relative balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups that is indicated by five parameters: 1 – very bad, 2 – bad, 3 – satisfactory, 4 – good and 5 – ideal. The results of testings have been processed, assessed and compared with referential data referring to automatic calculation of Dr. Wolff "Back – Check" software.

In the research 38 respondents voluntarily participated. The first group (Group I) has been formed by target sampling. These are students of Šiauliai State College of the programme of vocational training “Masseur” meant for persons with visual disability who have acquired moderate (severe eye weakness) degree of visual impairment (the respondents’ sharpness of sight with the better seeing eye with the best correction was from 0,05 to 0,09 or field of view in angular degrees from 10 to 20°) and the members of the Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Šiauliai ( $n = 15$ ). The second group (Group II) has been formed by random sampling. These are the respondents without visual impairments ( $n = 23$ ). The age of the respondents was from 18 to 69 years ( $35,8 \pm 14,5$ ). In the groups the respondents have distributed in the following way: the age of the respondents in Group I – from 20 to 69 years ( $37,2 \pm 18,5$ ). The age of the respondents in Group II – from 18 to 56 years ( $35 \pm 11,5$ ). In this research 17 men (44,5%) and 21 women (55,3%) have been evaluated. Group I consisted of six women (40%) and nine men (60%), while Group II – of 15 women (65,2%) and eight men (34,8%). The aim to form the sample of the respondents of as different as possible age and to achieve maximal representability from the aspect of the variable of gender and equal distribution of the dispersion of different age and gender in the research groups although in a random way but has been achieved.

The level of the respondents’ physical activity has been evaluated according to International Physical Activity Questionnaire. With the regard to the respondents’ answers three levels of physical activity have been distinguished: low, average and high. The proportion of the levels of physical activity of both groups is quite close (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Proportion of the levels of physical activity between different research groups,  $n$  (%)

Level of eyesight	Respondents’ physical activity			TOTAL:
	Low	Average	High	
Respondents of Group I	9 (60)	5 (33,3)	1 (6, 7)	23
Respondents of Group II	13 (56,5)	9 (39,1)	1 (4,3)	15
TOTAL:	22 (57,9)	14 (36,8)	2 (5,3)	38 (100)

### Results of the research

In order to evaluate whether visual impairment influences the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups in adults isometric testing of separate muscle groups of persons with and without visual impairments has been performed and the balance of forces of muscle groups has been calculated (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Evaluation of isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups in Groups I and II

Muscle groups	Very bad		Bad		Satisfactory		Good		Ideal		Did not perform	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%	N	%	N
1. Group I	16	69,6	3	13	1	4,3	1	4,3	2	8,7	-	-
1. Group II	10	66,7	1	6,7	2	13,3	-	-	2	13,3	-	-
2. Group I	8	34,8	5	21,7	7	30,4	2	8,7	1	4,3	-	-
2. Group II	5	33,3	4	26,7	4	26,7	1	6,7	1	6,7	-	-

Continued Table 2

3. Group I	12	52,2	5	21,7	3	13	1	4,3	2	8,7	-	-
3. Group II	8	53,3	2	13,3	1	6,7	1	6,7	3	20,0	-	-
4. Group I	9	39,1	7	30,4	4	17,4	1	4,3	2	8,7	-	-
4. Group II	4	26,7	2	13,3	5	33,3	2	13,3	2	13,3	-	-
5. Group I	8	34,8	3	13	7	30,4	1	4,3	3	13	1	4,3
5. Group II	4	26,7	4	26,7	3	20,0	-	-	3	20,0	1	6,7
6. Group I	10	43,5	5	21,7	5	21,7	-	-	3	13	-	-
6. Group II	8	53,3	2	13,3	1	6,7	-	-	3	20,0	1	6,7
7. Group I	9	39,1	3	13	3	13	4	17,4	4	17,4	-	-
7. Group II	5	33,3	2	13,3	3	20,0	1	6,7	4	26,7	-	-

1. Balance of isometric forces of trunk muscles (extensors and flexors); 2. Balance of isometric forces of lateral trunk muscles (left and right); 3. Balance of isometric forces of cervical muscles (extensors and flexors); 4. Balance of isometric forces of cervical lateral muscles (left and right); 5. Balance of isometric forces of leg abductors; 6. Balance of isometric forces of leg adductors; 7. Balance of isometric forces of hip extensors (left and right).

The results of the research have shown that the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups in both groups is *very bad* and *bad*. The isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of just an insignificant part of the respondents has been evaluated as *ideal* and *good*.

The differences in the evaluations of the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups in the respondents of Group I and Group II are not statistically significant. The dispersion between different parameters is even.

In order to evaluate whether the disorder of the isometric balance of muscle forces is the result of the impact on the weakness of the isometric balance of muscle forces the following data have been analyzed: 1) the mean of the isometric force of separate muscle groups and the significance of the difference between evaluations between groups is calculated; 2) the relation between the respondents' present and recommended isometric force of muscles is evaluated.

The *differences in evaluations of the isometric force of separate muscle groups between the respondents of Group I and Group II* are not statistically significant (see Table 3). The relation between the level of eyesight and isometric force has not been identified.

**Table 3.** Evaluation of isometric force of separate muscle groups (arithmetical mean  $\pm$  standard deviation)

Muscle groups	I research group	II research group	p <sup>*</sup>
Trunk extensors isometric force (kg)	30,2 $\pm$ 15,5	32,6 $\pm$ 20,7	p = 0,246
Trunk flexors isometric force (kg)	35,5 $\pm$ 19,7	26,6 $\pm$ 17,2	p = 0,414
Lateral (left) trunk muscle isometric force (kg)	24,9 $\pm$ 13,3	24,8 $\pm$ 14,8	p = 0,481
Lateral (right) trunk muscle isometric force (kg)	30 $\pm$ 19,2	25,6 $\pm$ 13,5	p = 0,428
Cervical extensors isometric force (kg)	16,1 $\pm$ 6,1	13,9 $\pm$ 8,2	p = 0,589
Cervical flexors isometric force (kg)	9,8 $\pm$ 5,4	10,1 $\pm$ 7	p = 0,523
Cervical lateral (left) muscle isometric force (kg)	12,3 $\pm$ 5,8	11,6 $\pm$ 4,5	p = 0,297
Cervical lateral (right) muscle isometric force (kg)	12,7 $\pm$ 6,4	11,6 $\pm$ 4,8	p = 0,294
Leg abductors (left) isometric force (kg)	19,8 $\pm$ 9,8	21,7 $\pm$ 9,5	p = 0,774



Continued Table 3

Leg abductors (right) isometric force (kg)	18,9 ± 8,3	22 ± 9,2	p = 0,691
Leg adductors (left) isometric force (kg)	17,1 ± 10,1	17,8 ± 11	p = 0,565
Leg adductors (right) isometric force (kg)	20,3 ± 10,8	22,5 ± 11,5	p = 0,285
Hip extensors (left) isometric force (kg)	22,8 ± 16,7	24,9 ± 12,6	p = 0,632
Hip extensors (right) isometric force (kg)	24,7 ± 13,9	25,8 ± 10,9	p = 0,573

\*the meaning of p calculates the significance of the difference in the results of the evaluations of Group I and II according to  $\chi^2$  criterion ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Having evaluated the relation between present and recommended isometric force of separate muscle groups (see Table 4), poorer results of the evaluation of isometric force of trunk muscles (extensors) in Group I have been encountered. Although the differences of evaluations are not statistically significant, the relation between the variables is weak.

Other differences between the evaluations of present and recommended isometric force of separate muscle groups are not statistically significant. The relation between the evaluated variables is strong and very strong, statistically significant. Therefore, it is not possible to state that the cause of the disorders of the balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups is insufficient isometric force of muscles.

**Table 4.** Correlation of isometric force of separate muscle groups between present and recommended evaluations (r, p)

Muscle groups	I research group	II research group
Trunk extensors isometric force (kg)	r = 0,324, p = 0,238	r = 0,551**, p = 0,006
Trunk flexors isometric force (kg)	r = 0,515*, p = 0,049	r = 0,674**, p = 0,001
Lateral (left) trunk muscle isometric force (kg)	r = 0,958**, p = 0,000	r = 0,961**, p = 0,000
Lateral (right) trunk muscle isometric force (kg)	r = 0,999**, p = 0,000	r = 0,954**, p = 0,000
Cervical extensors isometric force (kg)	r = 0,952**, p = 0,000	r = 0,911**, p = 0,000
Cervical flexors isometric force (kg)	r = 0,899**, p = 0,000	r = 0,957**, p = 0,000
Cervical lateral (left) muscle isometric force (kg)	r = 0,957**, p = 0,000	r = 0,955**, p = 0,000
Cervical lateral (right) muscle isometric force (kg)	r = 0,990**, p = 0,000	r = 0,961**, p = 0,000
Leg abductors (left) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,949**, p = 0,000	r = 0,927**, p = 0,000
Leg abductors (right) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,952**, p = 0,000	r = 0,982**, p = 0,000
Leg adductors (left) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,887**, p = 0,000	r = 0,665**, p = 0,001
Leg adductors (right) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,990**, p = 0,000	r = 0,991**, p = 0,000
Hip extensors (left) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,917**, p = 0,000	r = 0,956**, p = 0,000
Hip extensors (right) isometric force (kg)	r = 0,982**, p = 0,000	r = 0,940**, p = 0,000

(r – the meaning of Pearson's correlation coefficient indicating the strength of the relation between variables, \* -  $p < 0,05$ , \*\* -  $p < 0,01$ ; p - Sig. (2-tailed) – statistic significance)

Not having verified the dependability of the relation between the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups and the weakness of isometric force it has been aimed to evaluate the dependability of the relation between the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups of persons with visual impairments and physical activity (see Table 5).



The differences between the levels of physical activity of the respondents with visual impairments and the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups are not statistically significant.

**Table 5.** Evaluation of the correlation between the balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups and different levels of physical activity among the respondents with visual impairments (r, p)

		Isometric balance of forces of trunk muscles (flexors and extensors)					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Ideal		r = 0,076, p = 0,788
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	5	-	1	1	2	9	
	Average	3	2	-	-	-	5	
	High	-	-	-	-	1	1	
	Total:	8	2	1	1	3	15	
		Isometric balance of forces of lateral trunk muscles (left and right)					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Ideal		r = 0,012, p = 0,966
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	2	3	3	-	1	9	
	Average	3	1	1	-	-	5	
	High	-	-	-	1	-	1	
	Total:	5	4	4	1	1	15	
		Isometric balance of forces of cervical muscles (flexors and extensors)					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Ideal		r = 0,076, p = 0,788
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	5	-	1	1	2	9	
	Average	3	2	-	-	-	5	
	High	-	-	-	-	1	1	
	Total:	8	2	1	1	3	15	
		Isometric balance of forces of cervical lateral muscles (left and right)					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Ideal		r = 0,070, p = 0,805
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	2	1	3	2	1	9	
	Average	2	1	2	-	-	5	
	High	-	-	-	-	1	1	
	Total:	4	2	5	2	2	15	
		Isometric balance of forces of led abductors					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Ideal	Did not perform		r = 0,154, p = 0,584
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	2	4	1	1	1	9	
	Average	1	-	2	2	-	5	
	High	1	-	-	-	-	1	
	Total:	4	4	3	3	1	15	

Continued Table 5

		Isometric balance of forces of leg adductors					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Ideal	Did not perform		r = 0,132, p = 0,639
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	6	2	-	1	-	9	
	Average	1	-	1	2	1	5	
	High	1	-	-	-	-	1	
	Total:		2	1	3	1	15	
		Isometric balance of forces of hip extensors (left and right)					Total:	r, p
		Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Ideal		r = 0,364, p = 0,182
Respondents' level of physical activity:	Low	5	1	1	1	1	9	
	Average	-	-	2	-	3	5	
	High	-	1	-	-	-	1	
	Total:	5	2	3	1	4	15	

(r – the meaning of Pearson's correlation coefficient indicating the strength of the relation between variables, \* –  $p < 0,05$ , \*\* –  $p < 0,01$ ; p – Sig. (2-tailed) – statistic significance)

### Discussion on the results of the research

In the majority of sources it is stated that the disorders of visual senses have negative influence on people's psychomotor development (Adomaitienė, 2003; Gudonis, 1998; Skaggs, Hopper, 1996; Skirius, 2007), restrict physical motor activity, cause the changes of balance and position of body segments, response to the stimuli of the environment (Juodžbalienė, Muckus, 2006), interfere with the development of muscle and coordination mechanisms necessary for the perfect development of complex movements, the shortcomings of physical development become distinct. However, not following the social factors conditioning wellness, because of immobile life style muscles may become languid, skeleton may become deformed (Gudonis, 1998; Gudonis, Ivaškienė, Zachovajevs, 2007), the following biosocial functions as the possibility to orient, move in the environment, receive or transfer information, work (Kriščiūnas, 2008) may become disturbed also in people without visual impairments. Skaggs and Hopper (1996), Lieberman and Wilson (1999), Houwen, Visscher, Lemmink and Hareman (2009; 2009a) and other scientists have been trying to solve the same dilemma.

Because the researches that evaluate how visual impairment influences the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups in adults, it has been aimed to evaluate the impact of visual impairments as the factors that restrict human physical activity on the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups and the dependability of the latter variable on physical activity.

The choice of the variables of the research (the isometric balance of forces of separate muscle groups and the level of physical activity) is based on the data that the main cause of the most frequent complaints of physically inactive people such as various pains in neck, back, waist are weak muscles and the disorder of the balance of the forces of muscle groups (Dudonienė, 2010), because when symmetrical forces situate asymmetrically fatigue and structural deformations appear (Muckus, 2006). Meanwhile, successful functioning of skeleton muscles that perform dynamic and static work allows maintaining normal length-tension dependence between agonists and antagonists, which ensures normal maintaining

of the balance of symmetric (left /right, front /back) forces in neck-trunk-waist-hip complex (Dudonienė, 2010).

The performed data of the research have proved the opinion of Lieberman and Wilson (1999), that persons with visual impairments have the same potential to develop motor skills and physical features as persons without visual impairments because the differences of the evaluations of the research between different levels of eyesight were not statistically significant. The relation between visual impairments and the isometric force of separate muscle groups, the balance of forces has not been verified. These results of the research correspond to the data of the research performed by Giagazoglou and co-authors (2009), although during the research only lower limbs were investigated. During this research isometric balance of forces of lower limbs of women with and without visual impairments was evaluated. The differences of evaluations were statistically insignificant.

Although by the performed research it has been proved that there is no relation between visual impairment and isometric balance of muscle forces, nevertheless, very bad isometric balance of separate muscle groups has been diagnosed to the majority of the respondents. Fatigue of motor system, harmonious body composition, i.e. the balance of muscle forces influencing the appearance of fatigue, pain, structural deformations etc. may be disturbed because of many reasons (Dutton, 2004; Muckus, 2006; Page et al., 2010; Skurvydas, 2010). Although it is stated that the main cause of the most frequent complaints of physically inactive people such as various pains in the neck, back, waist are weak muscles and the disorder of the balance of the forces of muscle groups, the European guidelines declare that there is not enough data about the influence of muscle force on the pains in the lower back (Sinkevičius, Varnienė, Telšinskienė, 2009).

This statement encouraged to evaluate the impact of the disorder of the isometric balance of muscle forces on the weakness of isometric muscle force and the impact of visual impairment on isometric force of separate muscle groups.

Although during the research it has been evaluated that the relation between present and recommended isometric force of separate muscle groups is strong and statistically significant ( $p < 0,01$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ), the results of the assessment of the isometric force of trunk extensors of persons with visual impairments were slightly different. Weak relation has been encountered among these muscle evaluations. These evaluation results correspond to the data of the research performed already in 1985 by Mayer and Smith that verified the relation between the weakness of the isometric force of muscles and chronic backache. The isometric force of trunk muscles (especially extensors) among persons complaining with chronic backaches was much weaker than among persons not feeling backaches. These results have shown that the weakness of muscle force is an important factor conditioning the appearance of backaches. The question “Is the disorder of the balance of muscle force the result of the impact on the weakness of the isometric muscle force?” is open for other investigations because referring to the only case it is not possible to state that the reason of the disorders of the balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups of the respondents is insufficient isometric muscle force.

Referring to the data of the performed research it is possible to disprove the relation between visual impairment and isometric muscle force. Differences in evaluations between different levels of eyesight were statistically insignificant, therefore, visual impairment does not condition isometric force. This conclusion corresponds to the data of the research performed by Hakkinen et al. (2007). During this research evaluating the maximal isometric muscle force in blind and sighted boys (age groups – 9-13 years and 15-18 years) statistically significant difference between the respondents were not encountered. The same results during this research were also received performing other static tests of physical capacity.

There are quite many researches that state that physical activity is a factor that may strongly influence the indicators of the research and that having evaluated students' physical activity the dependability between the latter variable and visual impairment has been encountered. However, according to Houwen and co-authors (2009), the relation between physical activity of persons with visual impairments and the indicators of motor skills has not been sufficiently proved. During the performed research the differences between isometric balance of the forces of separate muscle groups and different levels of physical activity have not been statistically significant. Dependability between these variables has not been encountered.

Consequently, referring to the results of the research it is possible to state that visual impairment or different level of physical activity of people with visual impairments does not have direct impact on the balance of isometric force of separate muscle groups. Therefore, the shortcomings of the management of all motor skills should be accentuated as the impact of parents' overcare, avoidance of physical training specialists to work with persons, social environment, not ergonomic positions, psychological factors and other reasons.

### Conclusions

1. Having evaluated the balance of isometric forces of separate muscle groups in the respondents of Group I and II with diagnostic equipment "Back – Check" it has been found out that in average 44,1% of the respondents, out of all performed evaluations, have very bad balance of isometric forces of muscles. The biggest disorders ( $n = 68,4\%$  – very bad balance) has been noticed evaluating the balance of isometric forces of trunk extensors and flexors. Differences in evaluations between different research groups and the balance of isometric forces of separate muscle groups are not statistically significant.
2. Differences in evaluations of isometric force of separate muscle groups between the respondents of Group I and II are not statistically significant. There is no relation between these variables.
3. Having evaluated the relation between present and recommended isometric force of separate muscle groups poorer results of the evaluation of isometric force of trunk extensors in the respondents of Group I have been obtained. Although the differences in evaluations are not statistically significant the relation between the variables is weak. Differences in evaluations of present and recommended isometric force of other muscle groups are not statistically significant. The relation between evaluated variables is strong and very strong, statistically significant ( $p < 0,01$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). Therefore, it is not possible to state that the cause of the disorders of the balance of isometric forces of separate muscle groups in the respondents is insufficient isometric muscle force.
4. Differences in evaluations of the balance of isometric forces of separate muscle groups and different levels of physical activity in persons with visual impairments are not statistically significant. There is no relation between these variables.

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