

Attachment 3

Summary of professional accomplishments

1. Full name: Beata Szabała (Mazur - maiden name, which I used till October 2005, Mazur-Szabała - in the initial period after changing the marital status)

2. Academic degrees and diplomas-including name, place and year of award and the title of doctoral dissertation:

25 June 1997 - Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Department of Pedagogy and Psychology, Master's degree in Special Pedagogy in the field of Typhlopedagogy and Oligophrenopedagogy.

14 July 2004 - Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Department of Pedagogy and Psychology, Doctoral degree in humanities in the field of Pedagogy, based on doctoral dissertation: *Family Relationships and Social Adaptation of Children with Diabetes*, written under the guidance of prof. zw. dr hab. [professor] Maria Chodkowska, reviewers: dr hab. [habilitated doctor] Władysław Dykcik, prof. [professor] UAM [Adam Mickiewicz University] and dr hab. [habilitated doctor] Zofia Palak, UMCS [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University].

3. Information on previous employment in scientific units:

1 October 1997 – 30 September 1997 - assistant (initially at the Department of Special Psychopedagogy at UMCS [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University] and after organizational changes I have continued to work at this position at the Department of Special Social Pedagogy at UMCS [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University].

1 October 2004 - up to the present date - assistant professor at Special Social Pedagogy Department at UMCS [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University].

4. Indication of achievement resulting from art.16, Act 2 of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and academic title as well as on degrees and title in the field of Art (Dz. U. 2016 r. poz. 882 ze zm. w Dz. U. z 2016 r. poz. 1311) [Journal of Laws 2016, item 882 with further amendments in Journal of Laws 2016, item 1311]:

a) title of academic achievement

Religiousness of People with Visual Disability. Structure and Background.

b) author, title of publication, year of issue, name of publisher

Szabała B., *Religiousness of People with Visual Disability. Structure and Background*. Wydawnictwo UMCS [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Publishing House], Lublin 2017, pp. 409.

The reviewer of the publication: prof. zw. dr hab. [profesor] Jadwiga Kuczyńska-Kwapisz

c) overview of the scientific objective of the above abstract and the results achieved together with the analysis of their possible use

The monograph which serves as the basis for the commencement of habilitation procedure is the result of theoretical and empirical research on the religiousness of people with visual disability, the topic of which has not been explored in many studies so far. The existing studies have touched upon only the selected aspects of religiousness of people with visual disability, such as the correlation of age with external and internal religiousness (Brennan M., 2004), religiousness as a mechanism of coping with visual disability (Brennan M. et al., 2001), religiousness as a predictor of coping strategies (Yampolsky M.A. et al., 2008), religiousness as a motivating force for the goals set by rehabilitation (Brennan M., MacMillan T., 2008), the role of extraordinary pastoral care in the promotion of the participation of people with visual disability in religious life (Lipiec D., 2011). We can observe that there is a lack of studies not only analyzing the religiousness of that group of people in terms of their religious conduct and practices, which is a significant feature of the religiousness of Poles, but also taking into account the degree of their visual disability. Therefore, the need to undertake further empirical study arises, which is aimed at deepening this subject.

The necessity to empirically determine religiousness of people with visual disability is supported by the fact that religiousness is an important factor associated with the psychological structure of a human being, and at the same time an important subsystem of personality which refers to many aspects of human functioning (Chlewiński Z., 1989-1991; Kuczkowski S., 1998; Walesa C., 1998). Many researchers e.g. Chlewiński Z. (2000), Koenig H.G. (2007), Hood, R.W. Hill, J.R. Spilka P.C. (2009), recognise religiousness as fundamental, motivational and regulatory force inevitably correlated with human functioning. This thesis results from the fact that faith in God and transcendent reality, providing that criteria of maturity is met, may be a source of human destiny and meaning of life, also for people burdened with disability. However, we must be aware of many factors and processes that refer to the religion itself, as well as to the psyche and the human nature, and also that the

correlations between religiousness and human psychological characteristics are bi-directional (Chlewiński Z., 1987; Saroglou V., 2002; Krok D., 2005-2009).

Taking into account the above criteria it is worth making the attempt of empirical study not only of the religiousness phenomenon of people with visual disability itself, but also of its complex determinants. We can find many research data devoted to different correlates of religiousness in the literature of subject, whose correlations with religiousness have been studied in general population so far. The most frequently described ones include: values (i.a. Schwartz S.H., Huismans S., 1995; Saroglou V., Delpierre V., Dernelle R., 2004; Krok D., 2010), meaning of life (i.a. Prężyna W., 1981; Holmes J.D., S.I. Hardin S.I., 2009; R.D. Duffy R.D., Sedlacek W.E., 2010), psychological needs (i.a. W. Prężyna, 1976; R. Jaworski, 1989; D. Krok, 2005), self-esteem (i.a. Hong S.M., Giannakopoulos E., 1994; Knox D. et al., 1998; Głaz S., 2006), beliefs about the world and self-efficacy (i.a. Levin J., 2001; Trzebiński J., Zięba M., 2003; Koenig H.G., 2004; Jankowska M., 2013), sense of loneliness (i.a. Pawełczyńska A., 1961, as cited in: Jaworski R., 1989; Rokach A., 1996; Lauder W., Mummery K., Sharkey S., 2006). Considering the established interrelationships, it is interesting to determine the structure of religiousness correlations of people with visual disability and psychosocial factors, as follows: values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy, sense of loneliness. Such research has not been carried out in Poland so far. Therefore, it can be assumed that the system of variables and dependencies adopted in the empirical plan is characterized by originality, and the exploration undertaken acquires the meaning in the cognitive and practical aspects.

The theoretical framework of the monograph includes the achievements in two scientific fields. One of them is special pedagogy, especially its sub discipline, i.e. pedagogy of the blind people and visually impaired, which allowed to outline the specificity of the functioning of people with this disability. The second field is psychology, in particular the psychology of religion, out of which perspective, the phenomenon of religiousness was analysed. The basis of this analysis is the concept of religiousness as a system of personal religious constructs, which was developed by Huber S. In this concept, religiousness is identified with the expression of a system of religious constructs containing all the concepts of religiousness. The significance of human religious beliefs depends on the position of religious constructs in the cognitive architecture of his personality, that is, on the level of the centrality of religiousness in human personality. The more central place in the system of personal human constructs is occupied by religious contents, the more they are related to his thinking, feeling and behaviour. This concept also proposes the thesis that although personal

religious constructs are important for the individual's experience and behaviour, they do not exclude the operation of non-religious systems. While analysing the individual level, it is claimed that the system of religious constructs is interacting with other systems, which is expressed by association of religiousness with personality features, social attitudes. It defines "the independence of the system of religious constructs from other systems with simultaneous mutual relations" (Krok D., 2009, p. 25). Taking this fact into consideration, I have included the psychosocial correlates of religiousness in this study.

The adopted model of analysis assumes that the discussed variable is the religiousness of the blind and visually impaired and sighted people, and the role of explanatory variables I have attributed to psychosocial factors in the following dimensions: values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy, sense of loneliness. Assuming the fact that the relationship between religiousness and psychosocial functioning of the respondents is complex and it is subject to modification of many factors. I have distinguished intermediate variables in the form of having / or the lack of visual disability as well as the stage of visual disability.

The aim of this research is the attempt to characterize the religiousness of blind and visually impaired people in the context of its psychosocial correlates. The introduction of a group of sighted people into the study has allowed to broaden the area of interpretation of results. Four research problems have been revealed from the set goal in the form of the following questions:

1. What kind of the religiousness do the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people represent? Are there statistically significant differences in the scope of religiousness between the groups?
2. What kind of the psychosocial functioning characterizes the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people participating in the study in terms of: values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy, sense of loneliness? Are there any statistically significant differences in the scope of psychosocial functioning between the groups?
3. Whether, and if yes, what are correlations between the religiousness of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people and their psychosocial functioning in terms of values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy, sense of loneliness?
4. Which of the psychosocial variables, concerning: values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy, a sense of loneliness, explains

the variable of religiousness of the blind and the visually impaired and the sighted people to the greatest extent?

In the case of the research problems regarding the description of the studied issues there is no need to formulate hypotheses. However, I have proposed research hypotheses for questions of a dependency nature:

3.1. There are statistically significant correlations between religiousness and the values preferred by respondents: the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted.

3.2. There are statistically significant dependence relationships between religiousness and the meaning of life of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people.

3.3. There are statistically significant correlations between religiousness and the psychological needs of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people.

3.4. There are statistically significant dependence relationships between religiousness and the self-esteem of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people.

3.5. There are statistically significant correlations between religiousness and beliefs about the world and self-efficacy of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people.

3.6. There are statistically significant dependence correlations between religiousness and the sense of loneliness of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people, who are subjects of this study.

4. The preferred values explain, to the greatest extent, the religiousness of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people.

In my own research, I have applied diagnostic survey method, which was performed using the following research tools: The Centrality of Religiosity Scale by Huber S., The Scheler Value Scale, developed by Brzozowski P., Purpose in Life Test by Crumbaugh J.C. and Maholick K.T., Needs and Aspirations Test by Stein M.I., The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale by Fitts W.H, Questionnaire of Basic Hope by Trzebinski J. and Zięba M., The Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer R. and Jerusalem M., The Loneliness Scale by Russell D., Peplau L.A. and Cutron C.E., questionnaire.

According to the conceptual assumptions of this research, I included the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted people in the study. The main criteria for the selection of the respondents was their Christian denomination and the time of at least 2 years from the diagnosis of visual disability, in the case of the people from basic groups. Additionally, due to the importance of religiousness-related factors, I regarded it as justified to introduce the additional criteria like (sex, age, education, place of residence). First, I gathered the groups of people with visual disability, i.e. blind and visually impaired ones (these are the basic groups),

which I standardized in terms of the listed criteria, and then I selected a group of sighted people (a comparative group).

In the analysis of the obtained results, I have applied inter groups comparisons in the area of religiousness and the included dimensions of psychosocial functioning and correlation-regression analysis in order to determine the psychosocial religion predictors of the respondents with and without visual disability.

In the scope of religiousness, I have established that the visually impaired persons, when compared with the sighted ones, have tendency not to participate much in religion activities and do not treat the transcendent sphere as being central and leading in life. They are described as with a significantly smaller degree of subjectively assessed probability of supernatural reality, weaker intensity of the openness attitude to various forms of transcendence and certainty towards religious content. Indeed, they more rarely establish an individual, personal dialogue with God, assigning it less importance, and they less engage in participation in services, assessing their role and sense of communion with the religious community as not so important. It also turned out that the readiness to undertake the prayer and assigning it a significant role in life significantly differs the visually impaired persons also in relation to the blind people, where the blind achieved higher results.

Based on the establishment of statistically significant differences between visually impaired and sighted people, my findings confirm that the fact of having visual disability can be important for the level of religiousness.

When analysing the psychosocial functioning of the respondents with and without visual disability, I proved that:

- the blind and the visually impaired people pay much more attention to the values that are the basis of social order and provide the grounds for moral obligations as well as legal regulations. I have noticed certain diversification between the surveyed blind persons and visually impaired ones, with higher results in the blind people group. In addition, people with visual disability tend to have a much higher preference for values related to the broadly understood truth, values defining the order and harmony of the world of people and things, and values defining the properties of the human body, especially useful in difficult conditions;
- the blind and the visually impaired people are described as persons experiencing a significantly lower meaning of life in the general aspect, they tend to see less purpose in their lives, as well as assessing themselves and their lives worse. However, the blind people, in comparison with the sighted ones, have a significantly lower sense of responsibility and freedom, and present much less positive attitude toward life and derive less joy from it. In

addition, it also turned out that the blind people are significantly different from the visually impaired ones when assessing the dimension of: affirmation of life, where the visually impaired people have reached higher results;

- the respondents with visual disability are much more oriented to satisfy pleasant experiences which are intended to provide entertainment and are described by a significantly greater tendency to be submissive and humiliating of themselves and on the other hand have a stronger tendency to seek the autonomy. I have also established that the blind persons when compared with the visually impaired and the sighted people are significantly less focused on rejecting relationships with others, as well as taking measures to ensure them;

- the visually impaired people when compared to the blind and the sighted people have a much less positive view of themselves while being a family member;

- the blind people when compared with the visually impaired and the sighted people, express a significantly higher appreciation of the properties of the world as orderly, meaningful and friendly to people;

- the persons with visual disability are more likely to experience the feeling of lack of close, personal and even intimate contact with others.

The results of the correlation-regression procedure carried out in order to determine the psychosocial predictors of religiousness indicate the important role of adopted psychosocial independent variables in determining the variability of religiousness of the blind, the visually impaired and the sighted respondents. There are common and specific features of the predictive function of specific independent variables, which is expressed in terms of the discussed variance of the dependent variable, the number of statistically significant relationships and the configuration of independent variables in regression models.

I have established that the preferred values are the most important predictor of religiousness of the respondents with and without visual disability. The largest percentage of variable variance of a dependent is discussed by a specific combination of independent variable dimensions in the visually impaired group. The carried out analysis mainly revealed a significant contribution to determining the religiousness of the people with visual disability and those without visual disability to have higher preferences of timeless religious values. The predictive role of the weaker orientation to provide themselves with pleasure was outlined, especially it was the most significant among the sighted people. It is also worth emphasizing that developing the religiousness of the sighted people, in contrast to the blind and the visually impaired ones, is subject to a significant impact of increasing assessment of decisive values concerning the order and harmony of the world of people and things. The preference

for values related to the widely understood truth, which was declared by the respondents with and without visual disability, allows to explain the nature of only two indicators of the centrality of religiousness and its overall result. However, the function assigned with these values is varied. An equally ambiguous situation concerns the values being the basis of social order and providing the grounds for moral obligations and legal regulations in the groups of the visually impaired and the sighted people, and values concerning the human organism properties which are useful in difficult conditions, among the blind and the visually impaired people. In addition, the important role of the weaker recognition of values treated as sacred and as a predictor of their religiousness by the visually impaired persons should be highlighted, as well as the role of reduced evaluation of strength and physical fitness in the sighted respondents.

I have acknowledged that the predictive function of the meaning of life in determining the variability of religiousness is reflected to the greatest extent in the visually impaired people. Both in the group with the blind respondents and in the group with the sighted ones, when it comes to one indicator of the centrality of religiousness, the predictive function of the addressed dimensions of the independent variable has not been specified. The visually impaired people find the balanced attitude towards death and suicide particularly significant, the role of which is of much higher importance than in the group of the blind persons. Quite a reverse pattern has been observed in the case of a higher conviction of the meaning of one's own life (in terms of a dimension). Interestingly, the religiousness of the blind respondents as compared to the religiousness of the visually impaired people and the sighted ones is subjected to the less satisfactory self-evaluation. Both the group of the visually impaired people and the sighted ones have attached great importance to the high level of the meaning of life in its general aspect. What can also be observed among the sighted respondents is the predictive function of possessing satisfactory life goals and the increased level of happiness and contentment, the source of which is one's own life.

The relationships captured between the dimensions of psychological needs and particular indicators as well as the general result of the centrality of religiousness point to the predictive function of the psychological needs, which is the most noticeable in the sighted people. I proved that the predictive function that would include the dimensions of the independent variable has not been created for the group with the blind respondents, when referring to two indicators of the centrality of religiousness, whereas in the group of the visually impaired respondents such a function has not been established even for one indicator. When explaining the variability of religiousness among the respondents with visual disability

and the respondents without visual disability, it appears that undertaken activity, challenges or new tasks play a more crucial role in sighted people. In the meantime, much weaker orientation towards pleasant experiences that would serve as a source of entertainment fulfills a very similar predictive function in the groups of the visually impaired and the sighted respondents, with a much lower predictive function of such experiences in the group with the blind respondents. The conducted analysis has pointed to a varied and unambiguous role of rejecting relationships with others and undertaking actions aimed at ensuring such relationships among people with and without visual disability. Only the group with visually impaired respondents has revealed that one of the religiousness predictors is a strong orientation towards oneself and gaining a feeling of security.

The research results have also demonstrated the predictive function of self-esteem which largely explains the variable of religiousness in the group with the visually impaired persons. I have established that a higher preference of positive features when it comes to following moral values has a special significance in shaping the religiousness of people with visual disability. The role of such features can be also observed among the sighted persons, however, it is lower. All the groups have been marked by a lower predictive function of lower self-worth and lower self-assessment of one's own personality as opposed to one's own body or a relationship towards other people, which has been the most noticeable in the visually impaired and the sighted people. A similar situation takes place in the case of reduced tendency towards defensiveness and presenting oneself in a favourable light. The positive assessment of one's own body, health, physical appearance and fitness as it has been declared by the blind and the sighted respondents plays an essential role in determining their religiousness. However, this role is much more important in the group with the blind people. Yet, in the case of the visually impaired and the sighted respondents there emerges a predictive function of higher sense of self-identity, especially in the field of identification and the development of the ideal self. What should also be emphasized is the role of a less positive self-image as a family member and a low intensification of positive features related to social functioning as religiousness predictors in blind people and a higher level of self-acceptance and a lower assessment of one's own behavior as religiousness predictors in sighted people.

Relationships established between the dimensions of beliefs about the world and self-efficacy and particular indicators and the general result of the centrality of religiousness reveal that these beliefs have only a predictive function which is reflected to the highest degree in blind people. The obtained results clearly point to the essential role of strong beliefs

in the sense, order and merits of the surrounding world as well as the favour of the approaching future participating in explaining the variability of all the indicators and the general result of the centrality of religiousness in the visually impaired and the sighted respondents and almost everyone among the blind respondents. A greater belief in self-efficacy when it comes to coping with problems turns out to be significant for religiousness to be shaped in the blind and the sighted respondents.

I have acknowledged that the predictive role of the sense of loneliness in determining the variability of religiousness is noticeable to a greater extent in the visually impaired people rather than in the blind and the sighted ones. Referring to two indicators of the centrality of religiousness no predictive function of the dimensional independent variable has been established in the sighted respondents. The conducted analysis have shown that a higher level of social relations and a sense of understanding have largely contributed to shaping the variability of religiousness which characterizes the visually impaired persons and the sighted ones, designating for both groups the biggest number of indicators and the general result for the centrality of religiousness. As for the blind respondents, on the other hand, such a role is played by the increased feeling of belonging to a social group, sense of community and adaptation.

Based on the established stronger relationships between the psychosocial factors and religiousness in the group with the visually impaired people as compared to the sighted ones I have acknowledged that the fact of visual disability may be relevant for religiousness when taking other variables into account.

Taking into consideration the results obtained in the regression analysis and referring to the formulated hypotheses it must emphasized that:

- 1) The hypothesis assuming the existence of the statistically significant correlations between religiousness and preferred values has been positively verified in all the groups;
- 2) The hypothesis on the existence of the statistically significant dependence relationships between religiousness and meaning of life has been proven in the group with the visually impaired respondents, however in the groups with the blind and the sighted ones it has been partly positive;
- 3) The hypothesis assuming the existence of the statistically significant correlations between religiousness and psychological needs has been positively verified in the group of the sighted respondents, however, in the group of the blind and the sighted ones it has appeared to be true only to some extent;

- 4) The hypothesis on the existence of the statistically significant dependence relationships between religiousness and self-esteem has been positively verified in all the groups;
- 5) The hypothesis assuming the existence of the statistically significant correlations between religiousness and beliefs about the world and self-efficacy has been tested positively in all the examined groups;
- 6) The hypothesis on the existence of the statistically significant dependence correlations between religiousness and sense of loneliness has been positively verified in the groups with the blind and visually impaired respondents, however, the sighted group has proven partly true;
- 7) The hypothesis assuming the greatest role of the preferred values in explaining the religiousness has proven true in all the groups.

The research conducted provides the basis for the formulation of cognitive and practical implications which may inspire to undertake further study touching upon the issues of religiousness of people with visual disability. This paper serves as an attempt to contribute to the neglected motive of the Polish special pedagogy as it is devoted to adults with visual disability, the functioning of whom has been analyzed in few research papers in comparison to the resources of literature addressing the problems of children and youth with visual disability. As part of the neglected motive we should also view the topic raised in the study, i.e. religiousness of people with visual disability.

The conducted analysis allows us to explain the phenomenon of subjectivity of people with visual disability. The findings related to the aspect of religiousness and psychosocial functioning in terms of preferred values, meaning of life, psychological needs, self-esteem, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy and sense of loneliness, clearly indicate that the respondents with visual disability are capable of upholding and developing their own subjectivity. They can behave responsibly, make choices taking into account their own and other people's needs and shape social relations based on the principle of mutuality. The regularities discovered in the studies allowed for the perception of people with visual disability not as the objects of rehabilitation but more as subjects. It is even more reasonable, referring to the theoretical and methodological as well as educational and methodological reflection, that each disabled person can and should decide about their own life in such a way that their conduct could find its justification in moral norms, ethics and worldly wisdom concerning, in particular, the improvement of human relationships. Even though disability is

a factor which hinders normal functioning but it does not preclude social satisfaction nor does it eliminate man's chances for courageous achievement of one's own goals (W. Dykcik, 2003).

The analysis provides at least partial insight into complex connections between religiousness and psychosocial functioning of people with visual disability. In accordance with the adopted research model in the monograph I have assumed that religiousness is explained by means of psychosocial variables. The obtained positive effects i.e. substantial preference of timeless religious values, the meaning of life, orientation towards being a human who sets oneself challenges, who is active and creative, man's properties in the moral and ethical sphere, beliefs in sense, order and favourable conditions of the surrounding world, self-efficacy related to coping with problems, affiliation with a social group and social connections, a sense of understanding and closeness, to name but a few, indicate the direction of potential therapeutic activities. What I regard as significant in this context are the trainings offered by many authors, including the development of meaning in life, image of one's own life situation and oneself, beliefs about the world and self-efficacy and social abilities, among other things.

It is worth noting that the issues presented in this paper enable us to look at people with visual disability from a broader perspective which assumes a holistic approach to a human being. Such an approach cannot overlook the spiritual dimension treated as an integral part of a human being. In this respect, religiousness of a person with visual disability can be viewed as strength derived from supernatural sources, arousing substantial interest due to a belief in using a prayer for therapeutic purposes, and particularly to acquire peace of mind, inner balance and well-being. This tendency outlines potential benefits connected with the use of religious aspects during rehabilitation activities.

The research undertaken in this paper draws our attention to the need of creating a new sub-discipline in pedagogy, namely religious pedagogy. The argument in favour of such an initiative is a significant output of religion studies, philosophy, sociology and religious psychology which only to a small extent has been applied to educational theories. Making the religious pedagogy a separate subject e.g. in form of the analysis of the meaning of religion for the functioning of man in different stages of life would allow us to include the religious sphere in the educational activities which, thanks to such a move, would encompass all the aspects of human functioning.

In the final part of the presented conclusions it must be stated that research shown in this paper has been executed based on Christian religion, which restricts interpretation

possibilities as to religions which are characterized both by the concept of personal God and a personal relationship with Him and at the same time inspires and encourages us to further scientific work. It is even more recommended as this research paper does not cover all the aspects of the issue related to religiousness with visual disability and its circumstances. A small number of elaborations on this topic in the field of special pedagogy appears to be an invitation to further theoretical and empirical analysis. It would be worth defining the function of religion when it comes to coping with visual disability, including religious and non-religious strategies of coping with stress, attitudes of religious communities and clergy towards people with visual disability, involvement of those people in the life of religious communities and finally specifying the role of different variables, apart from the ones already included in my own research, in explaining the variability of religiousness of people with visual disability e.g. a sense of coherence, life quality, adaptive reaction and personal resilience.

5. Presentation of other scientific achievements

Apart from the dissertation presented in habilitation procedure as an achievement within the meaning of the Act Art. 16 of March 14, 2003, as amended, my academic achievements include other works. I am the co-author of three monographs, coeditor of two joint publications, author or co-author of: six chapters in reviewed joint publications, thirteen articles in scientific journals ranked by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, eight articles in other journals and seven articles in joint publications. Since the defence of my doctoral thesis I have taken active part in nineteen scientific conferences, including nine international ones. My publications and conference speeches focus on the following respondents: coping with stress and personal and social resources of people with disability, adaptation and quality of life of children and youth with disability and chronic disease, social perception of people with disability, psychosocial aspects of functioning of parents of children with disability and chronic disease, and moral dilemmas in the context of studying.

1) Coping with stress and personal and social resources of people with disability

Experiencing disability forces a person to take remedial action in order to effectively overcome difficult problems related to it, also by using one's psychosocial resources. An overview of the literature on the subject, especially the issues in this problem area which require further research have directed my own research interests. They have resulted in the following publications:

- 1a. Mazur B. (2004) Wsparcie społeczne osób z niepełnosprawnością ruchową [Social Support for People with Physical Disability]. „Auxilium Sociale” [“Social Support”], no. 3/4, p. 148-154 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).
- 2a. Mazur B. (2005) Samoocena a wsparcie społeczne studentów z uszkodzeniem narządu ruchu [Self-esteem and Social Support for Students with Damage to the Musculoskeletal System]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 4, p. 53-63 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).
- 3a. Mazur B. (2005) Sieć wsparcie społecznego osób z niepełnosprawnością narządu ruchu [Network of Social Support for People with Musculoskeletal System Disability]. „Lubelski Rocznik Pedagogiczny” [“Lublin Pedagogical Annals”], no. 25, p. 151-162 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).
- 4a. Mazur-Szabała B. (2006) Wybrane korelaty radzenia sobie w sytuacjach trudnych przez studentów z niepełnosprawnością narządu ruchu [Selected Correlates of Coping with Difficult Situations by Students with Musculoskeletal System Disability]. „Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Paedagogia-Psychologia”, no. 19, p. 161-172 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).
- 5a. Szabała B. (2011) Radzenie sobie ze stresem przez młodzież z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym [Coping with Stress by Adolescents with Mild Mental Retardation]. W: M. Chodkowska, D. Osik-Chudowolska (ed.) Osoba z upośledzeniem umysłowym w realiach współczesnego świata [A Person with Mental Retardation in Present Day Reality]. IMPLUS Publishing House, Kraków, p. 101-114.
- 6a. Szabała B. (2012) Kompetencje społeczne studentów z niepełnosprawnością sensoryczną [Social Competence of Students with Sensory Disability]. W: Z. Palak, D. Chmich, A. Pawlak (ed.) Wielość obszarów we współczesnej pedagogice specjalnej [Multiplicity of Areas in Contemporary Special Pedagogy]. UMCS Publishing House, p. 271-280.
- 7a. Szabała B. (2012) Samoocena a kompetencje społeczne studentów z niepełnosprawnością sensoryczną [Self-esteem and Social Competence of Students with Sensory Disability]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 2, p. 64-81.
- 8a. Szabała B. (2013) Wsparcie społeczne a kompetencje społeczne młodzieży niewidomej [Social Support and Social Competence of Blind Youth]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 1, p. 54-69.
- 9a. Szabała B. (2013) Radzenie sobie w sytuacjach trudnych a kompetencje społeczne studentów z niepełnosprawnością wzrokową [Coping with Difficult Situations and Social Competence of Students with Visual Disability]. „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” [“Man – Disability – Society”], no. 1(19), p. 50-67.
- 10a. Szabała B. (2013) Samoocena a poczucie osamotnienia młodzieży z lekką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną [Self-esteem and Sense of Loneliness of Youth with Mild Intellectual Disability]. „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” [“Man – Disability – Society”], no. 3(21), p. 61-81.
- 11a. Szabała B. (2013) Wsparcie społeczne młodych dorosłych z niepełnosprawnością wzrokową [Social Support for Young Adults with Visual Disability]. W: E. Zasepa (ed.) Doświadczanie choroby i niepełnosprawności [Experiencing Disease and Disability]. APS Publishing House, Warszawa, p. 153-174.
- 12a. Szabała B. (2015) Poczucie sensu życia młodych dorosłych z niepełnosprawnością wzrokową – funkcje wsparcia społecznego [Meaning of Life in Young Adults with Visual Disability – Functions of Social Support]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 3, p. 102-120.

13a. Szabała B. (2015) Poczucie sensu życia w kontekście radzenia sobie w sytuacjach trudnych młodych dorosłych z niepełnosprawnością wzrokową [Meaning of Life in the Context of Coping with Difficult Situations Among Young Adults with Visual Disability]. „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” [“Man – Disability – Society”], no. 4(30), p. 55-72.

14a. Szabała B. (2016) Rola samooceny w kształtowaniu optymizmu osób słabowidzących [The Role of Self-esteem in Shaping Optimism of Visually Impaired]. „Forum Pedagogiczne” [“Pedagogical Forum”], no. 1, p. 149-166.

15a. Szabała B. (2017) Zasoby osobiste a niepełnosprawność sensoryczna [Personal Resources and Sensory Disability]. „Studia Edukacyjne” [“Educational Studies”], no. 43, p. 223-245.

The aim of the conducted research was, among other things, to establish the strategy of coping with difficult situations preferred by adolescents with mild intellectual disability and its resources (self-esteem). In order to determine the possible specificity connected with the fact of having a disability in the research procedure, I planned comparative analysis which included a group of adolescents without intellectual disability selected according to specific criteria (age, sex). I have established that adolescents with intellectual disability more often apply the strategy concentrated on emotions and show much bigger desire to avoid contact with the stressor (5a). Yet I have not noticed any differences in terms of real and ideal self-esteem between the youth with and without intellectual disability. Moreover, it turned out that there is a statistically significant connection between self-esteem and sense of loneliness. Higher real and ideal self-esteem of adolescents with mild intellectual disability co-occurs with lower sense of loneliness in the general aspect and lower sense of loneliness formed on the basis of abnormal relationships with peers (10a). This leads to a conclusion, that respondents with intellectual disability have sufficient experience from the community in which they live, to be able to function on an optimal level and form a positive notion of themselves. It can be assumed that the value of the indicated studies is included in the extended analysis of the presented issues.

The presented problem area also includes publications devoted to coping with stress and personal and social resources of people with physical disability. Due the fact that many works in this field have taken into consideration a comparative group, selected according to age, sex and place of residence, I was able to define the significance of occurrence of disability for the intensity of the analyzed variables. I have established, that in the face of difficulties, the people with physical disability focus on the problem and search for its solution considerably less frequently than those without physical disability and are much more often prone to avoid coping. Having verified the correlates of coping with stress in the form of self-esteem and social support I have proved that active problem solving by the

people with physical disability has a statistically significant connection with a higher sense of one's "I", whereas less frequent avoidance of confrontation with the problem co-occurs with a higher sense of confidence in social relations and a more significant assessment of the practical support received. I have also stated that avoidance by seeking contact is less frequently preferred by respondents with lower assessment of emotional support they receive (4a). In the field of the presented issues I have also drawn attention to the scope and level of psychosocial resources crucial in the process of coping with difficult situations by people with physical disability, i.e. social support and self-esteem. I have shown that, compared with the respondents without physical disability, those with physical disability give a considerably lower assessment of social support received from significant people, both in the general aspect and in terms of emotions, affirmation and help (1a). Taking into account the structural understanding of support, I have noticed that network of social support for the people with physical disability is smaller than for the people without physical disability. Respondents with disability have given a higher assessment for some significant people in the emotional and affirmative aspect, yet a lower one for almost all of them in the functional aspect (3a).

In the field of the second mentioned resource, i.e. self-esteem, I have established that the respondents with physical disability generally have a positive image of themselves. Compared with the people without physical disability, they are characterized, among other things, by a significantly higher level of self-satisfaction, acceptance, identity, assessment of their behavior, and features that constitute the particular areas of "I". I have also revealed that, surprisingly, there is no statistically significant connection between self-esteem of the people with physical disability and social support (2a). In the light of obtained results it can be concluded, that the occurrence of disability may be important for the intensity of the included variables, i.e. remedial activity, social support and self-esteem. Summing up this scope of research activity, one should emphasize adopting a positive perspective in the analysis of functioning of people with physical disability.

The presented research issues also included the aspect of coping with stress by people with visual disability and its correlates. Trying to determine the importance of occurrence of disability for the undertaken remedial activity, I have established that the respondents with visual disability and those without visual disability (selected according to age and sex) do not significantly vary statistically in terms of preferred styles of coping with difficult situations. Trying to find some connections between coping and meaning of life I have proved that focusing by the people with visual disability on task activity co-occurs with a higher assessment of meaning of life in the general aspect and in such specific areas as: goals of life,

meaning of life, affirmation of life, self-evaluation, evaluation of one's life, attitude to death, while focusing on emotional coping with problems has a statistically significant connection with a lower assessment of meaning of life in the general aspect and its specific areas. In the case of the preference of avoiding by seeking social contacts, the established interrelations have turned out to be consistent with those defined in the context of task activity preference (13a). In a different study I have verified the connections between coping with stress and social competence of the respondents with visual disability. Among other things, I have observed that the people who in difficult situations prefer the task style, are characterized by a higher level of social competence in the general aspect, as well as in its specific areas, whereas in the case of the people following their emotions, one can notice a lower level of social competence in the general aspect, but also in situations related to social exposure and requiring assertiveness (9a). The results obtained in the aforementioned analysis allow to draw conclusions about the significance of the included variables for coping with difficult situations by people with visual disability.

In studies concerning visual disability it is important to define the scope and level of psychosocial resources crucial in the process of coping and its correlates. One of the resources is social support. While comparing social support for the people with visual disability and those without it, selected according to age, sex and place of residence, I have proved that the respondents with visual disability give a considerably lower assessment of social support received from significant people both in the general aspect and in terms of emotions, affirmation and help. Taking into account the structural approach to support, I have noticed that the network of social support for the people with visual disability is smaller than for the people without visual disability who have given a higher assessment to some significant people in the emotional and affirmative aspect (11a). It can thus be concluded, that the occurrence of disability is important for the experienced social support. While verifying the correlates of social support, I have drawn attention to meaning of life and social competence. In the research carried out in the discussed area I have established, that experiencing stronger emotional support has a statistically significant connection with a higher assessment of meaning of life both in the general aspect and in the majority of the specific areas. I have obtained similar results in the field of practical support, and in the case of affirmative support the results were close (12a). In the course of analysis with social competence, I have proved that respondents who receive stronger social support in the general aspect, as well as in terms of emotions, affirmation and help, exhibit a higher level of competence determining the

effectiveness of behavior in intimate situations, and a higher level of social competence in the general aspect (8a).

A very important resource analyzed by me in the described problem area is the self-esteem of people with visual disability, especially its role in shaping optimism. I have stated that higher self-esteem of the people who are visually impaired co-occurs with a higher level of optimism. Optimistic attitude to life correlates with a positive image of oneself as a family member, a higher level of self-acceptance and self-satisfaction, or perceiving oneself as a person of value. Optimism has a statistically significant connection also with the positive assessment of one's behavior and one's personality separately from one's body and in relation to other people (14a). This allows for the conclusion that people with visual disability are able to overcome their own limitations and can enjoy life, which in their situation is extremely important.

A few works in the analysed research area were devoted to psychosocial resources of the individuals suffering from sensory disability. By conducting detail characterisation of the social competences I concluded that the respondents who are visually or hearing impaired display satisfactory level of social competences, when it comes to both general and specific aspects. In most cases, such competences derive from the skills necessary in the situations in which social exposure requires efficient behaviour. The competences used in the situations calling for assertiveness are significant as well, whereas the skills related to close interpersonal relations are the least significant in shaping social competences (6a). Moreover, I have shown that social competences of the people with sensory disability are statistically correlated with self-esteem. For example higher self-confidence in the fields of perception and self-presentation co-exist with higher level of social competences in both general and more specific aspects. On the other hand, positive self-image as a family member is correlated with satisfactory social competences in general terms, the lack of difficulties in the realization of one's own goals thanks to the ability to either influence or succumb to others, and the ability to function satisfyingly in interpersonal relations (7a). The obtained results are optimistic when it comes to the abilities of the people with sensory disability. Such abilities are significant as they create favourable conditions to function at different levels.

In the context of the obtained findings, I considered the attempt to characterize the personal resources of the respondents with sensory disability to be an important goal of my research studies. However, what I also had to take into account was the type of disability. I conducted my research among the visually and the hearing impaired people. I have determined that the type of disability only to a small extent affects social support. The same

concerns the sense of meaning of life. I have also shown that more statistically important differences occur in the field of self-esteem. I have concluded that the hearing impaired people more often see and accept themselves as worthy and likeable individuals who are characterised by stronger sense of individuality, higher level of self-acceptance and self-satisfaction, and who also display more positive self-image as a family member (15a). Hence, it is worth mentioning that in further explorations the sheer fact of the disability existence may be as important as its type.

While referring to the cognitive values of studies on coping with stress, as well as personal and social resources of the visually impaired, and to a lesser extent the hearing impaired people, an optimistic approach should be adopted in the analysis of their experiences. Such an approach creates a broad context for the interpretation of individual differences related to social adaptation of the disabled. It also allows for analysing the variables, such as social competences, coping with stress, and optimism, that have not been taken into account in the cases of visually and hearing impaired people. The issues presented in the analysed field are further discussed in the habilitation monograph that is the culmination of many years of work on psychosocial functioning of visually impaired people.

I have presented the issues on coping with stress, and on personal and social resources of the disabled people at seven science conferences: Nationwide Science Conference “Diversity of Concepts, the Multiplicity of Spaces as a Current Challenge for the Theory and Practice of Special Pedagogy” (Lublin, 2010), International Science Conference Pedagogical „Multidimensionality of Development. Social Unit - Space – Institution” (Lublin, 2011), International Science Conference “The Place of the Other in the Modern Sciences on Upbringing” (Poznan, Obrzycko, 2013), International Science Conference “Medical Care and Socio-Pedagogical Support for Chronically Ill People and the Ones with Disability – History and Present Day” (Katowice, 2014), Nationwide Science Conference “Disability and Senility in Cognition, Experiencing, and Social Perception” (Supraśl, 2015), Nationwide Science Conference “The Disabled Person in Social Space. Two Worlds – Unity in Educational, Rehabilitating, Professional and Creative Practices” (Warsaw, 2015), Nationwide Science Conference “The Person. The Tradition of Special Pedagogy as the Inspiration for Creating the Society for Everyone” (Warsaw, 2017).

2) Adaptation and quality of life of children and youth with disability and chronic disease

The satisfying quality of life defined as the effect of a well-executed adaptation is the needed goal of rehabilitation processes applied to people at different age, including children

and youth with disability and chronic disease. Hence my interest in the issues related to the adaptation and quality of life that have been presented in the following publications:

1b. Mazur B. (2006) Poczucie jakości życia młodzieży słabo widzącej [The Sense of Quality of Life in Visually Impaired Youth]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 1, p. 28-36 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).

2b. Mazur B. (2006) Wsparcie społeczne a poczucie jakości życia młodzieży słabo widzącej [Social Support and the Sense of Quality of Life in Visually Impaired Youth]. In: Z. Palak, A. Lewicka, A. Bujnowska (ed.) Jakość życia a niepełnosprawność. Konteksty psychopedagogiczne [The Quality of Life and Disability. Psychopedagogical Contexts]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, p. 355-364 (own contribution – 50%, co-author S. Byra).

3b. Mazur-Szabała B. (2007) Poczucie jakości życia młodzieży niepełnosprawnej intelektualnie w stopniu lekkim [The Sense of Quality of Life in Youth with Mild Intellectual Disability]. Zeszyt Naukowy „Wokół problematyki upośledzenia i wsparcia społecznego” [Scientific Notebook “Around the Issues of Disability and Social Support”], no. 16, p. 303-312.

4b. Szabała B. (2009) Przystosowanie społeczne dzieci z cukrzycą typu 1: niektóre jego uwarunkowania [Social Adaptation of Children with Diabetes Type 1: Specific Conditioning]. „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” [“Man – Disability – Society”], no. 2(10), p. 95-110.

5b. Szabała B. (2010) Przystosowanie społeczne dzieci z lekką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną [Social Adaptation of Children with Mild Intellectual Disability]. In: Z. Palak, A. Bujnowska, A. Pawlak (ed.) Aktualne problemy edukacji i rehabilitacji osób niepełnosprawnych w biegu życia [Current Education and Rehabilitation Problems of the Disabled in the Course of Life]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, p. 69-80.

6b. Szabała B. (2011) Jakość życia a poczucie osamotnienia młodzieży z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym [The Quality of Life and Sense of Loneliness of Youth with Mild Intellectual Disability]. In: Z. Palak, M. Piątek, A. Róg, B. Zięba-Kołodziej (ed.) Jakość życia młodzieży ze środowisk zagrożonych patologią społeczną [The Quality of Life of Children Endangered with Social Pathology]. PWSZ Publishing House, Tarnobrzeg, p. 203-228.

In the publications on the adaptation of children with chronic disease / disability, I have focused on the aspect of their social adaptation. The undertaken research topic referred to characterising social adaptation of the children with diabetes type 1 and determining the potential significance of the occurrence of chronic disease, which could be conducted thanks to the applied comparative analysis on the group of healthy children selected in terms of specific criteria, such as age, sex, place of residence. Apart from that, I have paid attention to the role of other variables that can shape the level of social adaptation of the children with diabetes type 1, such as sex, duration of diabetes and its level of metabolic control. I have shown that the respondents with diabetes type 1 manifest significantly more inhibited behaviour and were characterised by lower levels of socialisation. I have noted certain differences in the categories of sexes as the girls in comparison to the boys were more motivated for learning at school. As far as the disease variables are concerned, only one of

them, i.e. the level of metabolic control of diabetes turned out to be significant in the social adaptation of ill children. I have stated that the bad and the very bad level of metabolic control of diabetes is associated with significantly lower motivation for learning at school, much lower socialisation, higher intensity of anxiety and lowered mood (4b). The presented scientific elaboration allows for expanding the knowledge on social functioning of children with diabetes type 1, which becomes important in the context of the ambiguous current empirical findings and the fact of diagnosing the disease in an increasing number of children in public and integrated schools.

I am of the opinion that a similar value can also be attributed to the work presenting the social adaptation of children with a mild intellectual disability. Aiming at defining the potential specificity of the adaptation related to the fact of intellectual disability, in the research proceedings I have planned comparative analysis considering a group of children without intellectual disability chosen in terms of their age and sex. I showed that the respondents with mild intellectual disability manifested many more inhibited behaviours, whereas the girls in comparison with the boys were characterised by stronger motivation for learning at school and less frequent antisocial behaviour (5b). Therefore, the obtained findings are in accordance with the ongoing discussion on the integration model for educating this group of pupils.

I have devoted more of my publications in the discussed research area to the issues related to the quality of life of youth with disability. In my analysis, I have been primarily interested in the correlation between disability and the quality of life of young people. In the subject matter literature I have focused on the empirical verification of the findings that indicate that for people with disability life is more satisfying than for people without visual disability. This thesis was negatively verified during the research that I conducted among the youth with mild intellectual disability and their peers without intellectual disability (selection criteria: age, sex) where the assessment of the quality of life presented by the respondents with disability was significantly lower than in the case of the respondents without disability (3b). In this context I carried out analysis aiming at determining the dependencies between the quality of life of youth with disability and their sense of loneliness. The decision to choose this variable was based on reviewing the current subject literature. I have determined that the higher quality of life of the respondents with mild intellectual disability is to a great extent statistically related to good relations with peers and other significant persons, which counteracts the feeling of loneliness (6b). It allows for the conclusion that the selected psychosocial variable is an important correlative of the quality of life of youth with mild

intellectual disability. These issues seem significant not only in terms of functioning of youth with mild intellectual disability, but also in terms of upbringing and school.

The realization of the subject matter related to the quality of life of young people with disabilities was also presented in two articles based on the research conducted among the visually impaired youth and their sighted peers selected according to the criteria of age and sex. The obtained findings unequivocally show that the visually impaired respondents present significantly higher sense of quality of life (1b), which allows for positive approach to the thesis that states that people with disability have a happier life than people without disability. It must be highlighted that the findings obtained in the group of the visually impaired are optimistic. The results may prove the adaptation of the visually impaired respondents to the situation resulting from the disability, their acceptance of the occurring limitations, as well as their resources essential in shaping the quality of life. Taking into account the last of the mentioned aspects, determining the correlations between the sense of quality of life of visually impaired youth and social support has become the important goal of the research studies. I have stated that the higher quality of life co-occurs with the satisfying sense of social support in general. It also concerns emotions, affirmation and help (2b). The significance of the conducted research should be perceived not only from the perspective of the upbringing process of the visually impaired youth, but also as supporting activities that constitute an important element in the process of rehabilitation.

I have presented the findings of the research in the scope of the analysed issues at three science conferences: Nationwide science Conference “The Quality of Life of Disabled and Socially Maladjusted People” (Lublin, 2004), Nationwide Science Conference “Educational and Rehabilitating Contexts of the Development of People with Disability at Different Stages of Life” (Nałęczów, 2008), International Science Conference “The Quality of Life of Youth in Environments Endangered with Social Pathologies” (Tarnobrzeg, 2010).

3) Social approach to people with disability

When addressing the issue of broadly defined functioning of people with disability (children, adolescents, adults) it is impossible not to mention the social dimension of disability, or the image of a person with disability. These problems have been discussed in the following publications:

1c. Szabała B. (2010) Stereotypy odnoszące się do osób z upośledzeniem umysłowym – konsekwencje i sposoby zmiany [Stereotypes Referring to People with Intellectual Disability – Consequences and Manners of Changing]. In: M. Chodkowska, S. Byra, Z. Kazanowski, M. Parchomiuk, D. Osik-Chudowolska, B. Szabała, Stereotypy

niepełnosprawności. Między wykluczeniem a integracją [Stereotypes of Disability. Between Exclusion and Integration]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, p. 61-71.

2c. Szabała B. (2012) Osoby z upośledzeniem umysłowym w stereotypowym postrzeganiu społecznym [People with Intellectual Disability in Stereotypical Social Perception]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, pp. 255 (own contribution – 50%, co-author M. Chodkowska).

3c. Szabała B. (2012) Stereotypowy wizerunek osób niewidomych [Stereotypical Image of the Blind]. In: M. Parchomiuk, B. Szabała (ed.) Dystans społeczny wobec osób z niepełnosprawnością jako problem pedagogiki specjalnej [Social Distance towards People with Disability as a Problem in Special Pedagogy]. Vol.1. Przyczyny – konsekwencje – przeciwdziałanie [Reasons – Consequences – Counteraction]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, p. 89-110.

4c. Szabała B. (2012) (ed.) Dystans społeczny wobec osób z niepełnosprawnością jako problem pedagogiki specjalnej [Social Distance towards People with Disability as a Problem in Special Pedagogy]. Vol.1. Przyczyny – konsekwencje – przeciwdziałanie [Reasons – Consequences – Counteraction]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, pp. 257 (own contribution – 50%, co-editor M. Parchomiuk).

5c. Szabała B. (2012) (ed.) Social Distance Towards Individuals with Disability as a Problem in Special Pedagogy. Vol. 2. Socio-educational Contexts. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, pp. 151 (own contribution – 50%, co-editor M. Parchomiuk).

My interests in this research area first of all included stereotypes of disability, to be more precise, the stereotypes of people with disability. Reviewing the available subject literature I have presented the stereotypes most frequently related to the blind (3c) and the people with intellectual disability (1c). Apart from that I have indicated the sources of stereotypes and the possibilities of attenuating or changing them (1c). For me both publications are valuable in terms of their detailed analysis of the addressed issues and their numerous references used in discussions. The considerations included in the publications are significant due to the established image of social mechanisms whose role escalates in the context of experiencing disability.

The realization of the issues related to stereotypes of people with intellectual disability is also presented in the monograph co-written with M. Chodkowska. The work has an empirical character and the conducted research studies fit in the socio-pedagogical perspective. In the theoretical part included is the content that helps to familiarise oneself with issues of intellectual disability and stereotypes. The empirical part presents the analysis referring to the stereotypical tendencies in relation to intellectual disability shown by respondents of a different age and status in the education system (pupils, students, teachers). Moreover, this part contains the attempt to define the correlation between the stereotypical tendencies towards people with intellectual disability and psychosocial functioning of the respondents, i.e. pupils, students and teachers, with reference to their: attitude to people with

disabilities, self-esteem, empathy, tendencies to anxiety reactions of both occasional and constant character. The obtained findings in the scope of stereotypical approach towards people with intellectual disability, and in the scope of the correlations between stereotypical tendencies and psychosocial functioning of the respondents, emphasise the complexity of the presented issues and justify the accuracy of the chosen variables (2c). The work complements current knowledge on how people with intellectual disability are perceived by particular groups in Polish society, and shows the mechanisms of this perception and social conditioning.

The stereotypes show people with disability in unfavourable light and therefore cause the social distance towards the disabled. Two collective works reflect the interest in the subject matter, of which one is written in English and co-edited by M. Parchomiuk (4c, 5c). They include the elaborations on multi-layered character of social distance towards people with various disabilities, and discuss the possibilities of overcoming such a distance.

I addressed the issue of social perception of people with disability in the paper presented at the International Science Conference “Pedagogical Discourses around the Problems of Social Distance” (Lublin, 2011).

4) Psychosocial aspects of functioning of parents of children with disability and chronic disease

A child’s disability or chronic disease is a serious source of stress for parents, affecting the functioning of a family multilaterally. The studies on the literature have directed my research towards psychosocial aspects of parents’ functioning with disabled children or the ones suffering from chronic disease. They find their reflection in the following research papers:

1d. Mazur B. (2005) Co charakteryzuje rodziny dzieci przewlekle chorych? [What Characterizes Families with Children Suffering From Chronic Disease?], „Małżeństwo i Rodzina” [“Marriage and Family”], no. 4(16), p. 40-44.

2d. Mazur-Szabała B. (2008) Radzenie sobie w sytuacjach trudnych przez matki dzieci niepełnosprawnych [Coping with Difficult Situations by Mothers with Disabled Children]. „Auxilium Sociale - Novum” [“Social Support – Novelty”], no. 1-2, p. 170-177.

3d. Szabała B. (2008) Postawy rodzicielskie matek dzieci niepełnosprawnych [Parental Attitudes of Mothers with Disabled Children], „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 2, p. 66-76.

4d. Szabała B. (2010) Wsparcie społeczne rodziców dzieci z chorobą nowotworową [Social Support for Parents with Children Suffering from Cancer]. „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” [“Disability and Rehabilitation”], no. 2, p. 68-86.

5d. Szabała B. (2011) Wsparcie społeczne matek dzieci niepełnosprawnych [Social Support for Mothers with Disabled Children]. „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” [“Man – Disability - Society”], no. 1(13), p. 47-67 (own contribution – 50%, co-author - M. Parchomiuk).

6d. Szabała B. (2011) Wspieranie rozwoju dziecka niepełnosprawnego poprzez aktywizację jego rodziny [Supporting the Development of Disabled Children through Their Families' Activation]. W: E. Chodkowska, M. Uberman. (ed.) Wspieranie rozwoju ucznia nieprzeciętnego w szkole ogólnodostępnej [Supporting the Development of Extraordinarily Talented Children in a Public School], URz Publishing House, p. 80-87.

7d. Szabała B. (2011) Wsparcie społeczne matek dzieci niepełnosprawnych a ich postawy rodzicielskie [Social Support for Mothers with Disabled Children and Their Parental Attitudes]. W: A. Garbarz, B. Szluz, M. Urbańska, W. Walc (ed.) Rodzina w środowisku lokalnym. Pomoc – wsparcie – opieka [Family in a Local Environment. Assistance – Support – Care], URz Publishing House, p. 73-90 (own contribution – 50%, co-author - M. Parchomiuk).

8d. Szabała B. (2014) Realizacja funkcji opiekuńczo-wychowawczej w rodzinie a satysfakcja z rodzicielstwa u rodziców dzieci z niepełnosprawnością [Realization of Educational and Caring Function in a Family and Satisfaction from Parenthood in Parents with Disabled Children]. W: S. Badora, P. Maciaszczyk, M. Piątek (ed.) Pedagogika opiekuńcza wobec problemów rodziny i możliwości jej wspierania [Caring Pedagogy in the Face of Family Problems and the Possibilities of Its Support], PWSZ Publishing House, Tarnobrzeg, p. 143-166 (own contribution – 50%, co-author M. Parchomiuk).

In the analyzed area of interest I focused, among other things, on the relationships existing in families with children suffering from chronic diseases. Based on the overview of the available literature concerning this topic I characterized marital relationships of parents with sick children, their parental attitude towards their offspring suffering from chronic disease and their healthy siblings, relationships between siblings and a social and emotional situation in a family. I arrived at a conclusion that the competences of family members with whom a child with a chronic disease lives, largely impact the way this family functions in particular areas (1d). When exploring this issue I took interest in social support. I attempted to empirically define social support experienced by mothers and fathers of children with cancer. I have proved that even though the network of social support of the surveyed parents is very similar, the mothers assess their chances of receiving social support from significant persons in a general sense as well as in terms of emotions, affirmations and help substantially higher than fathers (4d). The analysis allowed for drawing conclusions related to the importance of raising a child with a chronic disease for the quality of a mother's and a father's life, which is essential for understanding the entire mechanism of family functioning, especially from the perspective of experiencing a child's disease.

As part of the analyzed subject I raised the issue of coping with stress by mothers with disabled children and its resources (social support). In order to determine possible specificity of preventive activity of the mothers with disabled children, especially with intellectual

disability, and to define social support received, related to raising a child with special educational needs when conducting research I took into consideration the sample group of the mothers of children without disability who fulfilled specified criteria (e.g. child's age). I found out that the mothers of disabled children and mothers of children without disability do not differ significantly as for the ways of coping with difficult situations (2d) as well as in terms of social support they receive (5d, 7d). It is worth noting that the statistical analysis employed in one of the elaborations allowed me to determine those types of the mothers who are specific as far the intensity of social support received and parental attitudes are concerned (7d). In another scientific paper, on the other hand, it enabled a broader interpretation of social support, referring to its subjective dimension (5d). The value of the above-mentioned works lies in the fact that they draw our attention to diversified experiences of mothers with disabled children resulting from their life circumstances.

Touching upon the issue of psychosocial functioning of parents with disabled children, the topic of parental attitudes cannot be omitted, all the more so as the existing literature abounds in empirical material pointing to their unfavourable intensification. Verifying information included in the literature I have prepared a research paper aimed not only at characterizing parental attitudes of mothers with disabled children, mainly intellectually disabled, but also at capturing their essence, which became possible by means of presenting a breakdown of the results obtained by mothers with disabled children with the results of mothers of children without disability selected on the basis of specified criteria (child's age and sex). It turned out that the mothers with disabled children substantially more often than the mothers of children without disability ensure excessive care, strive to accentuate their advantage over a child, are characterized by vulnerability towards a child and distance in contacts with a child (3d). Furthermore, I have shown that there are statistically relevant relations between parental attitudes of the mothers with disabled children and their sense of social support. The variable related to support coexists in various configurations with varied intensity of desirable and undesirable parental attitudes (7d). Based on the obtained research findings I suggested directions of psychological and pedagogical help. The above-mentioned academic works allow for deepening the knowledge on how mothers with disabled children function, especially in terms of social support received and its significance for the shaping of parental attitudes.

Within the scope of the problem area I also included the issue of performing duties which are typical of the educational and caring function in a situation of a child's disability and its connections with satisfaction derived from parenthood. The survey was conducted

among the fathers and mothers of children with disability (intellectual, sensory and physical one). In the process of the analysis I established that the performance of educational and caring duties towards a disabled child mainly rests with the mothers, which is reflected in a different perception of feeling of being overburdened. Minor discrepancies were revealed between parents when it comes to satisfaction from parenthood of disabled children in its emotional and cognitive aspect. I found that performing the educational and caring function by the mothers, as regards duties and feeling of being overburdened, does not show any significant relations with satisfaction from parenthood. Statistically relevant connections between the variables appeared in the group of fathers, where their greater commitment to duties related to care and upbringing of a child with disability and greater burden resulting from the performance of educational and caring responsibilities correlates to stronger parental satisfaction in its emotional and cognitive dimension (8d). The conducted research should be viewed as cognitively valuable as the issues raised have rarely been the object of interest. Furthermore, including fathers of disabled children in the surveyed group enabled me to achieve a comprehensive picture of the issues under discussion and made me eligible to make assumptions, as in the case of social support for the mothers and the fathers of children with cancer, on the significance of raising a disabled child for the quality of mother's and father's role. In this respect all the actions optimizing the area of parental duties undertaken by parents of disabled children should be mother and father-oriented.

Developing the issue of optimizing the actions undertaken by parents of disabled children I have prepared a theoretical elaboration. I focused on the following forms of assistance: the activity of associations and support groups, individual and family therapy, fostering skills for the support of the development of disabled offspring, relieving parents of child care, cooperation with specialists. I emphasized that the result of the actions supporting mothers and fathers of disabled children should be the autonomy of a disabled child and its family (6d). The issues touched upon in the publication are relevant from the point of view of parents with disabled children, in particular as regards their parental role.

The issues related to psychosocial aspects of parents' functioning with disabled children or children with chronic disease were presented at four scientific conferences: International Symposium "Supporting the Development of Regions, Groups and Persons at Risk of Marginalization" (Rzeszów, 2009), National Scientific Conference "Psychology in Medicine – Medicine in Psychology" (Lublin, 2009), National Scientific and Training Conference "Supporting a Family in a Local Environment" (Rzeszów, 2011), National

Scientific Conference “Caring Pedagogy in the Service of a Child and a Family” (Tarnobrzeg, 2013).

5) Moral dilemmas in the context of studying

An important feature of the contemporary Polish society is ambivalence which is noticeable in many areas of a human life. Ambivalence is connected to different dilemmas experienced by man and arising from various world views or moral attitudes. In this context I focused on moral dilemmas of students, the result of which are the following publications:

1e. Szabała B. (2007) Postawy wobec moralności w sferze publicznej przyszłych kreatorów różnych jej obszarów [Attitudes Towards Morality in a Public Space of Future Creators of Its Areas]. In: J. Rutkowiak, D. Kubinowski, M. Nowak (ed.) Edukacja – Moralność – Sfera publiczna [Education – Morality – Public Space]. “Verba” Publishing House, Lublin, p. 73-92 (own contribution – 20%, co-authors: M. Chodkowska, S. Byra, Z. Kazanowski, M. Parchomiuk).

2e. Szabała B. (2008) Autorytety moralne młodzieży studiującej [Moral Authorities of the Studying Youth]. „Forum Oświatowe” [“The Educational Forum”], no. 1(38), p. 83-99 (own contribution – 20%, co-authors: M. Chodkowska, S. Byra, Z. Kazanowski, M. Parchomiuk).

3e. Szabała B. (2010) Udział wartości w kształtowaniu identyfikacji zawodowej u młodzieży akademickiej [The Role of Values in the Shaping of Professional Identification in Academic Youth]. In: M. Chodkowska, M. Uberman (ed.) Szkoła i jej wychowankowie. Między tradycją a wyzwaniem edukacji przyszłości [School and Its Alumni. Between Tradition and Challenges of Future Education]. URZ Publishing House, Rzeszów, p. 249-261.

4e. Szabała B. (2010) Młodzież wobec moralności w zawodach kreujących sferę publiczną [Youth Towards Morality in Professions Creating the Public Space]. UMCS Publishing House, Lublin, pp. 426 (own contribution – 20%, co-authors: M. Chodkowska, S. Byra, Z. Kazanowski, M. Parchomiuk).

The issues raised in the discussed area of topics concerned attitudes towards morality. They were reflected in research, the aim of which was to recognize various attitudes of the youth studying at different faculties (journalism, law, medicine, political science, pedagogy) towards morality in professions which given academic courses were preparing them for. The conducted analysis suggests that the youth preparing for a creative functioning in a Public Space do not reveal a satisfactory level of moral sensitivity. Instead, they are characterized by a high risk of deaxiologization of their future professional role, the lack of moral authorities both among the living and the dead representatives of their future professional environments and sometimes even readiness to accept the conduct which is contrary to the deontology of a profession (1e). Other research have also pointed to the lack of moral authorities among the academic youth and clear deficits as regards recognized moral authorities, especially in the area of professional morality. However, it is difficult to state unequivocally whether such a situation results from the crisis of authorities or it is a sign of moral autonomy (2e). The

issues touched upon in the publications are crucial in terms of functioning of young people in a professional environment. Their relevance is all the more significant in contemporary times, in which the crisis of authorities among young people, not only in the area of professional functioning, has become almost a prevalent phenomenon.

The issue of moral dilemmas in people preparing to assume a professional role has been also raised in a monograph developed in cooperation with colleagues from the Department of Special Sociopedagogy. The book is based on an interesting research concept taking into account various aspects of morality in actions related to fulfilling future professional roles by the students of five faculties (journalism, law, medicine, political science, pedagogy). The theoretical part is a good introduction to the empirical analysis. The subsequent chapters of the empirical part present the research results obtained by the academic youth in the following areas: the understanding of the concept of morality, the perception of moral dilemmas referring to all the aspects of the Public Space, the perception of moral dilemmas which are typical of future professional roles, the evaluation of moral principles in a social life, the diagnosis of the validity of professional sanctions, the level of identification with a chosen profession treated as an essential factor of sense of responsibility for the performance of a given professional role, the evaluation of the issue of socializing moral principles in the study course of future creators of the Public Space. The findings indicated a necessity to develop certain practical measures concerning, among other things, the preparation of such areas of academic education which would be oriented towards the development of moral and ethical competences (4e). The significance of the research must be considered in the broader context of preparing young people for a professional role in the future. The issue touched upon in the publication has not been analyzed to such a great extent before.

The obtained results aroused my interest in the values preferred by academic youth, studying at the following faculties: journalism, medicine, political science, law and the role of values in the shaping of professional identification. I have proved that a given academic course significantly differentiates the results of the respondents as regards the preferred values, professional identification and the correlations between them. I have established that the biggest number of statistically relevant relations were found among the students of political science whereas their total lack characterized the students of journalism. In addition, I have found that the role of values in the shaping of professional identification in particular groups of academic youth can be varied. The conclusion is that the reason for such discrepancies can be attributed to diverse determinants of professional identification (3e). The

value of the publication lies in the fact that it allows for deepening the current knowledge on motivating function of values which appears to be meaningful in the area of professional functioning.

The research findings on the analyzed issues I presented at four scientific conferences: Nationwide Pedagogical Convention of the Polish Pedagogical Society (Lublin, 2007), International Scientific Conference “The Present Towards Educational Challenges Related to Creating the Civilization of the Future – Florian Znaniecki’s Inspiration in Contemporary Studies on Educational and Social Transformations” (Rzeszów – Lwów, 2008), International Scientific Conference “Thought and Educational Practice in the Face of Civilizational Changes. Education for Cultural Identity of Regions (Homelands) Towards European Unification and Multiculturalism” (Sanok, 2010), International Scientific Conference “Theory and Practice in Prevention and Support for Disabled People – Towards Tradition and Innovation” (Kraków, 2015).

Summary

The issues which constitute the subject of my publications are interdisciplinary. They are obviously embedded in special pedagogy but their close links with pedagogy, psychology, sociology, among other things, shape the character of scientific and research interests typical of these domains.

My scientific and research work focuses on five issue areas, among which coping with stress and personal and social resources of disabled people are central. The interest in other areas arises from systematic and gradual broadening of horizons and searching for various perspectives that help explain the issues under discussion. It is also an expression of raising my own competences, in particular in the branch of knowledge indispensable to conduct didactic classes. The prospects of future explorations will be centered around the represented problems, especially coping with stress and personal and social resources of disabled people. I am planning to devote a lot of attention to the realization of postulates included in my monograph serving as the basis for initiating postdoctoral procedures, as well as to the development of activities related obtaining grants and international cooperation.

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