

DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

Thesis author: mgr Aleksandra Majewska

Thesis title: Adjustment responses of people with impaired mobility in light of their personal resources

Thesis promoter: prof. dr hab. Janusz Kirenko

The thesis explores the issue of adjustment responses exhibited by persons with mobility-related disabilities in the context of their varied personal resources. Adjustment is here understood as it was defined in the interactive model of psychosocial adaptation to disability by H. Livneh and R. F. Antonak (1997), namely as one of the elements of an adaptation process, wherein reaching psychosocial adaptation means that a person with a mobility impairment achieves acceptance in relation to their environment.

The thesis aims primarily to show the relationship between the personal resources of people with mobility-related disabilities and their adjustment responses. Both adults with congenital disability and disability acquired in young adulthood are studied. The following personal resources are considered: coping styles and strategies, social support, personality traits. Furthermore, the research also includes the intervening variable of temporal life satisfaction. The participant population for this study is 159 persons, of which 79 have a congenital mobility-related disability and 80 have an acquired one.

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter one discusses terminology about and conceptualizations of mobility-related disability; it also contains an overview of some issues specific to the psychosocial functioning of people with mobility impairment. Chapter two describes the particular focus of this research, i.e. the concept of adjustment responses in people with mobility-related disabilities. It also contains the results of original empirical research about adjustment responses among such persons and, additionally, describes the characteristics of young adulthood as a life stage, since the research participants are in that stage. Chapter three contains a description and analysis of the concept of personal resources, i.e. social support, ways of coping with stress and personality traits. Chapter four covers the methodological basis of original research performed by the author: research aims, research problems, hypotheses, variables, indicators, a discussion of the way the research was organized, as well as a description of the study population in terms of demographic variables. Chapters five, six and seven are devoted to analyzing the data obtained from the research

participants. This includes an analysis of the predictive function of independent variables with regard to adjustment responses, with the predictive function being analyzed in two distinct contexts — in connection to the temporal life satisfaction variable and the time when the disability was acquired. The summary contains a discussion of the research results, a description of the research project's limitations and implications for institutions that provide care to persons with disabilities.

The research results indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between the personal resources of persons with mobility-related disabilities and their adjustment responses. The included independent variables and intervening variable have a predictive function with regards to explaining the different dimensions of adjustment responses among persons with mobility impairment.

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