

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

PaedDr. Eva Vancu, Ph.D*, Mgr. Timea Hoková*

karaffova@fedu.uniba.sk, hokova@fedu.uniba.sk

* Department of Psychology and Pathopsychology, Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava, Bratislava, Slovakia

ABSTRACT

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

Key words: resilience, visual impairment, factors

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

- A relation of psychological resilience to successful inclusion into the mainstream society and life satisfaction
- People with visual impairment (VI) face various barriers linked to the psychosocial consequences of their sight loss (various adversity situations in life)
- An importance to empower individual resilience resources and skills to prevent stress

RESEARCH SAMPLE AND METHODS

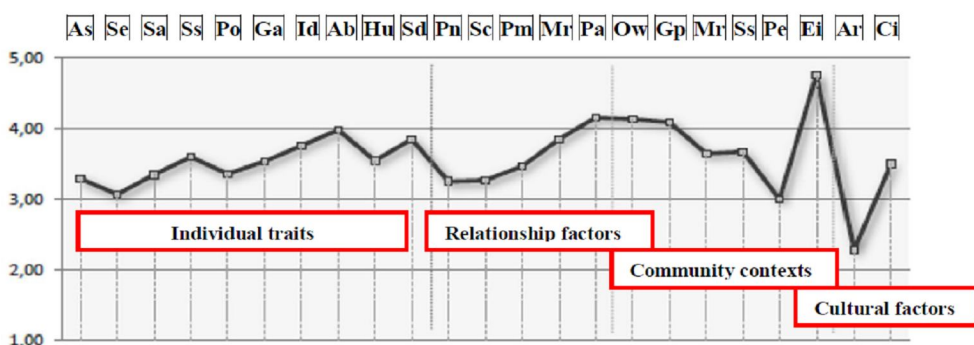
- 35 adolescents and young adults
- 22 women and 13 men
- 13 low vision + 12 partially sighted + 8 blind + multiple (visual + other disability)
- 22 participants with congenital VI

CYRM, The Child and Youth Resilience Measure, 58-item self-report instrument covering four dimensions of children’s lives (Individual, Relational, Community and Culture factors)

RESULTS

In the group of respondents scored higher in relationship factors and education factors (Graph 1). Access to education and information with higher average values (4,63). Lower values within cultural factors.

Graph 1 Overview of the values of factors resilience



Individual traits: As/ Assertiveness, Se/Self-efficacy, Sa/Self-awareness, Ss/Social support, Po/Positive outlook, Ga/Goals, aspirations, Id/Independence, dependence, Ab/ Abstinence, Hu/Humor, Sd/Sense of duty; **Relationship factors:** Pn/Parenting, child's needs, Sc/Social competence, Pm/Presence of positive mentors, Mr/Meaningful relationships, Pa/Peer group acceptance; **Community contexts:** Ow/Opportunities for age-appropriate work, Gp/Government provision, Mr/Meaningful rights, Ss/Safety and security, Pe/Perceived social equity, Ei/education, information; **Cultural factors:** Ar/Affiliation with a religious organization, Ci/Cultural and/or spiritual identification

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- Further research in the area of psychological resilience of WI using also qualitative approach (with specific emphasis on adolescents and young adults)
- Importance of external factors (e.g. education and access to information) – in this relation improvement of internal resilience factors related to specific personalities
- Developing a training model in order to improve skills fostering resilience (taking into account psychological barriers faced by individuals with various types of visual impairments)
- Transferring adversities into challenges and search for new possibilities = successful social inclusion

All references are available on demand from the authors of the study.

The study was supported by the KEGA grant No. 067UK-4/2014