

THE PERCEPTION OF A HEALTH DISABILITY WITHIN SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF VOLUNTEERING AND THE ATTITUDE OF CZECH AND POLISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO PERSONS WITH A HEALTH DISABILITY

INTRODUCTION – DISABILITY IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

At present, handicapped people create a significant group of persons in all states and countries of the world. The percentage of those persons in the individual EU countries varies from 5 to 19% (depending on the different criteria when assessing the disability). Generally, we can say that approximately 38 million people in the EU, or every tenth European of all age categories, are handicapped (Michalík 2013). In the Czech Republic, the number of the handicapped persons is approximately 10% based on qualified estimates; thus, that amounts to approximately 1 million inhabitants of the Czech Republic. However, other persons must be added to this number as most of the handicapped persons live in families and the caregivers are also more or less affected by the psychological, emotional, social and economic results of a disability. Thus, it is obvious that caring for these persons should be the effort of all of society in the fields of social care, respite care, and health care, as well as activities such as volunteering.

DEFINITIONS OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Definitions of volunteering always come from certain principles or perspectives on why this activity is performed, and what benefits it brings to both the volunteer and the client. Nevertheless, it is always a demonstration of solidarity, self-fulfilment and mutual enrichment.

It is Haškovcová (2010) who characterises a voluntary activity according to the principles on which it is based, and addresses the principles of shared solidarity and practical help to needy people. On the other hand, Matoušek (2003: 55) defines the term of volunteering from the perspective of the

performance of the voluntary activity: *Volunteering is an unpaid and non-carrier activity, which people perform so that they can help their fellowmen, community or society.* Horecký (2010: 20) also states the definition of volunteering, in which he mentions the contribution of the activity itself for a volunteer: *Volunteering is not a sacrifice, but a natural demonstration of civic maturity. It brings a specific help to those who need it, but at the same time it gives a feeling of meaningfulness, it is a source of new experience and skills and enrichment of interpersonal relations.* Similarly, Bočková, Hastrmanová, Havrdová (2011: 87) define volunteering by means of the volunteer's own activity as: *An activity, by means of which we give our time, our talent, our abilities, but also our strength as unselfish help to others.*

CLASSIFICATION OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

One of the possibilities to classify volunteering based on the number of volunteers who participate in the given activity, according to Matoušek (2003):

- **Individual volunteering**, when a person finds a place or organisation, in which they would like to volunteer. The individual also decides with which group of clients they would like to work. The activity can be one-time or long-term.
- **Mini-project**, this is usually a one-time activity of a group of people that share a common desire and willingness to participate in the preparation and realisation of the project.
- **Participation in so-called work camps**, which are usually organised by agencies that select groups of volunteers.

Šormová and Klégrová (2006) specify volunteering in respect to a future client of the volunteers as follows:

- **Voluntary civic help**, is a spontaneous and usually natural assistance to a family, among friends etc.
- **Mutually beneficial volunteering**, is a voluntary activity within a community, which its members perform for one another.
- **Community beneficial volunteering**, a specific activity assigned to a volunteer; this activity must be done and its requirements must be fulfilled.
- **Voluntary work**, a volunteer's activity is usually long-term based.

Volunteering can also be divided depending on the number of participants, to whom the volunteer or volunteers provide service. It implies that volunteering is:

- **Group**, a volunteer or volunteers work in a group;
- **Individual**, a volunteer or volunteers are in contact with one client.

The final volunteering categories are specified **according to the field in which they operate**:

- Social services;
- Health care;
- School system;
- Extracurricular education;
- Sports;
- Therapies;
- Environmental and nature protection issues;
- Culture, etc.

VOLUNTEER AND HIS INTERPRETATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In the Czech Republic, Act no. 198/2002 Coll., Section 1 (Act no. 198/2002 Coll.) specifies that: *A volunteer is a natural person, who is able to perform volunteering in respect to their intellectual and volitional maturity.* The Act, Section 3 (Act no. 198/2002 Coll.), further specifies a volunteer as follows: *A volunteer can be a natural person that is:*

- *Older than 15, if volunteering service performance is concerned with the Czech Republic;*
- *Older than 18, if volunteering service performance is concerned abroad, and that person willingly decides to provide volunteering service based on their qualities, knowledge and skills.*

The professional literature (Tošner, Sozanská 2006: 12) states a simpler specification of a volunteer: *Anybody can be a volunteer.* Nevertheless, they add a description of the specific volunteer's activity (Tošner, Sozanská 2006: 20): *A volunteer is a person who, beyond his everyday duties and in his free time, uses his skills, knowledge and experience to the benefit of others, who need our help.* Matouš et al. (2002: 12) complete this definition: *Everybody can become best involved in the place where they know the relations best – in the place of their address or former workplace. Young seniors represent the most important source of volunteers in the Czech Republic. These especially are activities in health care and social services or neighbourly help.*

Volunteers can also be classified according to basic criteria, e.g. age, sex, education, profession, length of operation in the organisation and there are other possibilities to divide volunteers.

MOTIVATION FOR VOLUNTEERING

The motivation for volunteering can differ with every volunteer. The basic reasons for volunteering are: a desire to be beneficial, the possibility of meaningful activity, a new experience, or the acquirement of basic skills during contact with people, etc.

Bočková, Hastrmanová, Havrdová (2011: 87) consider in detail the positive role of volunteering, in which can be found: not only a good feeling from helping others, possibilities to create new friendships and enhancement of one's own feeling of being needed, but also in spending active free time and possibilities of contact with new people.

However, it is also necessary to consider a negative motivation, which can also appear in a volunteer. Gulová (2011: 66) specifies its elements in the following way: *sympathy leading to degradation of a client, inappropriate curiosity, salvation by deeds, a desire to sacrifice oneself, loneliness, a desire for friendship, personal feeling of irreplaceability, a lack of self-respect, a desire to meet someone more miserable, and bossiness.*

Theoretically, anyone can become a volunteer; nevertheless, there are certain personal preconditions for this activity, such as the positive motivation for volunteering and the willingness to cooperate. Patience, empathy and the ability to listen are also important. A certain level of enthusiasm, interest and courage is a precondition too. A volunteer should not forget about themselves and their willingness to deepen their knowledge and skills further is also important.

If an organisation considers using volunteers, it is necessary to take into account basic questions, which the workers of the given organisation should ask before approaching a volunteering centre or volunteers (Horecký 2010: 21):

- *Why – why do we actually want the volunteers?*
- *Where – where will the volunteers work?*
- *What – what will the volunteers do?*
- *When – when and how often should the volunteers come to the institution?*
- *What – what will their activity look like?*
- *Who – who will be the person responsible for the volunteer in our organisation?*
- *To whom – who will the volunteer come to?*

VOLUNTEERING CENTRES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

These are mainly non-profit organisations, which provide volunteers with facilities for their activities, to not only provide continuous supervision training, but also insurance for the volunteer. They cooperate with various

organisations and institutions that use volunteering. A volunteer coordinator is an important person here providing realisation of the volunteering activities. The coordinator trains new volunteers, hires them, and finishes cooperation with them. They process information about the volunteers' activities, deals with possible conflicts or issues, etc. The coordinator cooperates with a contact person in the institution or organisation. That person is usually a social or activation worker, who specifies the rules according to the needs of the given institution and ensures the course of the volunteering activities in the institution or organisation.

BEGINNING AND COURSE OF VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

If an individual decides to volunteer, they must decide in the beginning whether to approach an institution or organisation directly and offer them their time and abilities. The other possibility is to contact a respective volunteering centre. We will focus on contacting a volunteering centre in more detail.

The respective workers of the volunteering centre will invite the person interested in volunteering to a personal interview (or the volunteer will complete a questionnaire in the beginning and then a personal interview will follow). Both parties will inform the other party of their expectations and requirements during the interview. They will also specify the possibilities of the centre and the volunteer. It is certainly good to determine a target group, with which the volunteer would like to cooperate within their activities, or to determine a sphere of activities, which the volunteer would like to do.

Next, there is some time left for both parties to consider the possibility of volunteering. If both parties are still interested, the practical training of the volunteer can follow in the organisation. However, the training is not a condition. Next, a volunteering contract is concluded with the volunteer. They are informed of the basic rules, personnel, and centre or organisation standards. Only then are the activities actually performed. The volunteers should regularly participate in supervision; however, it depends on the rules of the given centre. Regular meetings of the volunteer and the centre worker (they can be called a volunteer coordinator) can also be arranged and the volunteers can regularly meet to share their experience. A volunteer's attendance sheet does not have to be used as a rule, but its completion has proved useful (especially, in the cases of repeated volunteering). The volunteer records their activities classified according to time and content. This sheet should be regularly handed over to the so-called volunteer coordinator. The content of the volunteering activities may change. The target group, activity or organisation may also

change during the volunteering activities. Nevertheless, a change should always follow only after mutual communication and analysis of the situation together with the volunteer and the centre worker.

ATTITUDES AND STEREOTYPES TOWARDS HANDICAPPED PERSONS

During the development of human society, disability for its external observability has become a subject of many myths, stereotypes and prejudices accompanying everyday life of the majority of society. It was also used as a theme for books, theatre performances and films. There are attitudes known from the past perceiving disability as (Michalík 2013: 105): *God's punishment or at least as a thing which is odd and different. In both these attitudes we see the perception of so-called abnormal.*

Despite this, society has been trying to counterbalance these discriminating stereotypes more or less successfully during the last decades; even today we still encounter cases where people do not want to accept the integration of handicapped people into their immediate environment.

Generally, the attitudes and relationships of a certain majority of society depend on the socio-cultural influences of the given environment because they are not inborn, but are formed gradually by learning and experience in a social group. Society usually supports certain attitudes and refuses others, or even punishes them. Vágnerová (2004: 190) states that: *These attitudes are difficult to change; we can often talk about stereotype or prejudice.* In practice, it means that if the atmosphere in the majority of society towards handicapped people is not positive, the prejudice towards those people will still appear. Moreover, this prejudice will be transferred from generation to generation.

These facts have led us to the question of what attitudes will the younger generation (in this case, undergraduates – future teachers) have toward handicapped people in general, and in relation to themselves, to their own social status and to people who are close socially. We were also interested in whether these attitudes will vary significantly in different socio-cultural environments, between Czech and Polish undergraduates.

AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of the performed research was to discover the differences in the general perception of disability in society by undergraduates in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland in a broader social context. This aim has

When a factor analysis of the measurement on these scales was performed, Osgood (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum 1957) extracted 4 common factors, out of which the last, fourth factor was practically unimportant. The strongest factor was the first one – marked as the evaluation factor (h), the second one as the potency factor (p) and the third one as the activity factor (a).

When constructing the semantic differential (hereafter referred to as SD) we can proceed from the initial Osgood's scales, however, it is necessary to follow a certain proportion when we have to consider that the evaluation scales are usually the strongest ones, therefore, they should not outnumber the scales measuring potency or activity. The scales usually have seven levels.

However, when a checking factor analysis was performed in the Czech socio-cultural conditions (Chráska 2007) it was found that only two factors significantly contributed to a dispersion of the values. The extraction of three factors leads to a relatively unreliable measurement when one scale measures different factors at different terms. The first factor was marked as the evaluation factor in compliance with Ch. Osgood. The second factor is a combination of the initial potency and activity factors and it was called the energy factor. The scales, which are saturated by the energy factor, express how much the respondents perceive the selected terms as "something", which is connected with exertion, difficulties, changes or activity. Based on the analyses performed, a measuring instrument – ATER (Attitudes Toward Education Reality) – has been created. This instrument contains 10 scales, out of which 5 measure the evaluation factor (h) and 5 measure the energy factor (e), * marks reserve scales again – see Figure 1. This measuring instrument was used in our research for measuring the attitudes of Czech and Polish undergraduates (Chrasková 2012).

CARE FOR THE HANDICAPPED IN SOCIETY					
1	good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	bad		h
2	undemanding	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	demanding		e*
3	pleasant	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	unpleasant		h*
4	trouble	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	trouble-free		e
5	fair	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	dark		h
6	light	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	heavy		e*
7	ugly	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	beautiful		h
8	easy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	difficult		e*

9	sweet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	sour	h
10	strict	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	lenient	e

Figure 1. Data sheet of a two-factor semantic differential – ATER for the term “Care for the handicapped in society”

The data, which was obtained from the students (Chrásková 2012) by means of the individual scales of the ATER questionnaire, were analysed in the STATISTICA Cz 12 program by means of factor analysis (Chráska 2008) so that the factor compliance could be assessed.

During selection of the scales, the scales were designed in such a way so that each scale would measure only one factor, i.e. only the evaluation or the energy of the term. If the designed scales are always supposed to measure only one factor, only two important factors, which always correlate with the same scales, i.e. the evaluation factor with the scales 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and the energy factor with the scales 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, must appear in the factor analysis. Summary of the factor analysis for all terms and scales is well arranged in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Checking of SD factor structure at Czech undergraduates

Term	Compliance with factor structure of scale									
	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10
Health	y	y	y		y	y!	y	y	y	y
Education*	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Future	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Parents	y	y	y		y		y	y!	y	y
Friendship	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
I	y	y	y		y		y	y	y	y
Money	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Foreign language knowledge*	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y!
My future success at work	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Position of the handicapped individual in society	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
My relationship with handicapped people	y	y	y		y		y		y	y
Care of the handicapped in society	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Compliance with factor structure proposed	12	12	12	8	12	9	12	11!	12	10

* first strongest factor is energy

During measurement of the attitudes of Czech undergraduates we calculated the average evaluation and energy of the terms from the following scales, which corresponded most to the designed model after performing the factor analysis (Chráska 2008):

- evaluation – scales 1, 3, 5, 7, 9,
- energy – scales 2, 8.

An identical measurement of the attitudes using the semantic differential was also performed on Polish undergraduates. In terms of content, identical terms of school and social environment were presented to them, the terms that were also earlier presented to Czech undergraduates (Chrásková 2011).

The semantic differential was translated for the Polish students by a native speaker after a personal consultation and discussion about the exact meaning of the terms.

To prevent possible problems with the factor structure of the Polish version of the ATER questionnaire, we have decided to verify this structure. The summarised analysis results are shown in Table 2. It is evident that compliance with the expected factor structure is not as large, as none of the scales has the required structure (unlike the analysis in the Czech Republic). Therefore, for further calculation of the average evaluations and energies of the examined terms, it is possible to apply the following scales with some reservations:

- For evaluation – scales 1 and 3.
- For energy – scales 2 and 8.

Table 2. Checking of SD factor structure at Polish undergraduates

Term and its Polish equivalent	Compliance with factor structure of scale									
	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10
Health		y	y!	y	y		y		y	
Education*	y		y		y	y		y		y
Future	y	y	y		y!	y	y!	y		y!
Parents	y	y	y	y			y	y		
Friendship	y	y	y		y		y	y	y	
I	y	y	y			y	y	y	y	
Money	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Foreign language knowledge*	y!			y		y		y		
My future success at work	y	y	y		y!	y!	y	y	y	
Position of the handicapped individual in society		y	y		y		y		y	
My relationship with handicapped people	y	y!	y			y		y		

Care of the handicapped in society	y	y	y		y		y		y	
Compliance with factor structure proposed	10	10	11	4	8	7	9	9	7	2

* first strongest factor is energy

DETERMINATION OF RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

Three research assumptions (RA) have been determined in the performed research.

RA1: Perception of the issues relating to disability in the societies of the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland will be very similar or only with slight differences when taking into consideration the historical-cultural closeness of both nations.

RA2: The examined group of respondents will perceive the terms relating to their individual social status differently in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland when taking into consideration their current job preparation.

RA3: The examined group of respondents will perceive the terms relating to close social relations similarly in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland.

The following terms have been determined as indicators for evidence of the individual research assumptions:

RA1:

- „Position of the handicapped individual in the society”;
- „Care for the handicapped in society”;
- „My relationship with handicapped persons”.

RA2:

- „Health”;
- „Future”;
- “Education”;
- „Foreign language knowledge”;
- „My future success at work”;
- „Money”.

RA3:

- „I”;
- „Parents”;
- „Friendship”.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH SAMPLE

In 2012, for the research on attitude, several study groups were selected as a research sample according to their field of study. In the Czech Republic, 404 students from the Faculty of Education, Palacký University (Chrásková 2013) in Olomouc studying social sciences, technical and special education participated in the research. In the same year, the research sample of respondents was created by 102 students studying social sciences and technical teaching at the University in Rzeszow in the Republic of Poland.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The average evaluation and energy of all examined terms is given in Table 3. An independent semantic space of terms has been developed from these values for each country (see Figure 2 and 3). In order to differentiate the students' attitudes in both countries better, another semantic space depicting the terms with respect to their subjective evaluation and extent of the energy invested has been developed. We can determine "closer" and "more distant" terms with respect to their subjective perception by the students and also their different perceptions in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland (substantial shifts are depicted with an arrow in Figure 4).

The Table also further shows significances in the difference between the average calculated results of evaluation and energy of the individual terms in both countries – comparison was made by means of a Student's t-test in the STATISTICA 12 CZ program. The statistically important values are in bold. The Table clearly shows that there are significant differences in the perception of almost all terms evaluated by the students.

We find the following differences in the terms related to the attitudes towards disability and social environment:

The term "**Position of the handicapped individual in society**" is evaluated significantly worse in the Czech Republic (hereafter referred to as CZ) and perhaps for that reason it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in the Republic of Poland (hereafter referred to as PL).

- The term "**Care for the handicapped in society**" is in CZ evaluated similarly as in PL, however, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term "**My relationship with handicapped persons**" is in CZ evaluated similarly as in PL, however, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL in the same way as in the previous point.

Table 3. The average evaluation and energy of all examined terms

Term and its: average evaluation (h) and energy (e)	The Czech Republic – Palacký University in Olomouc	The Republic of Poland – University of Rzeszow	Value of tested criterion t	Calculated significance p	Statistically important difference
Health – h	5,37	5,12	1,75	0,08	No
Health – e	4,23	3,63	3,58	<0,01	Yes
Education – h	5,14	4,77	3,01	<0,01	Yes
Education – e	4,88	4,17	5,01	<0,01	Yes
Future – h	5,16	4,41	5,08	<0,01	Yes
Future – e	4,93	4,48	3,07	<0,01	Yes
Parents – h	5,96	5,76	1,70	0,09	No
Parents – e	4,15	3,28	5,71	<0,01	Yes
Friendship – h	6,09	5,77	2,85	<0,01	Yes
Friendship – e	3,90	2,92	5,43	<0,01	Yes
I – h	5,16	5,53	-3,25	<0,01	Yes
I – e	4,53	3,25	8,45	<0,01	Yes
Money – h	4,89	4,95	-0,45	0,65	No
Money – e	5,27	4,28	6,91	<0,01	Yes
Foreign language knowledge – h	4,48	4,82	-1,77	0,08	No
Foreign language knowledge – e	5,54	4,09	9,35	<0,01	Yes
My future success at work – h	5,05	5,03	0,17	0,86	No
My future success at work – e	4,92	4,00	6,40	<0,01	Yes
Position of the handicapped individual in society – h	3,53	4,14	-5,02	<0,01	Yes
Position of the handicapped individual in society – e	5,64	4,18	11,83	<0,01	Yes
My relationship with handicapped people – h	5,70	5,62	0,73	0,46	No
My relationship with handicapped people – e	3,40	2,66	4,45	<0,01	Yes
Care of the handicapped in society – h	4,15	4,01	1,09	0,28	No
Care of the handicapped in society – e	5,30	4,26	7,46	<0,01	Yes

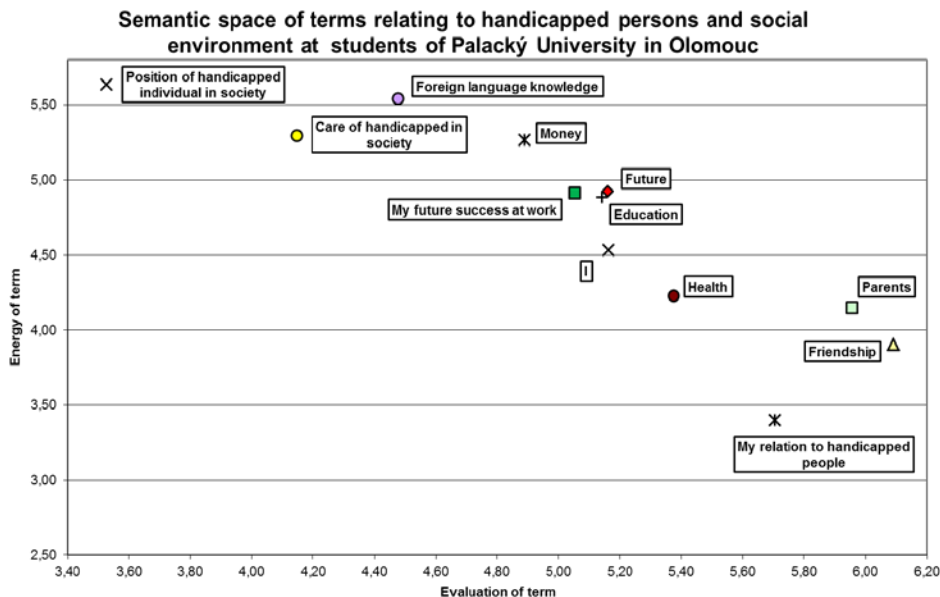


Figure 2. Semantic space of terms relating to handicapped persons and social environment of students of Palacký University in Olomouc

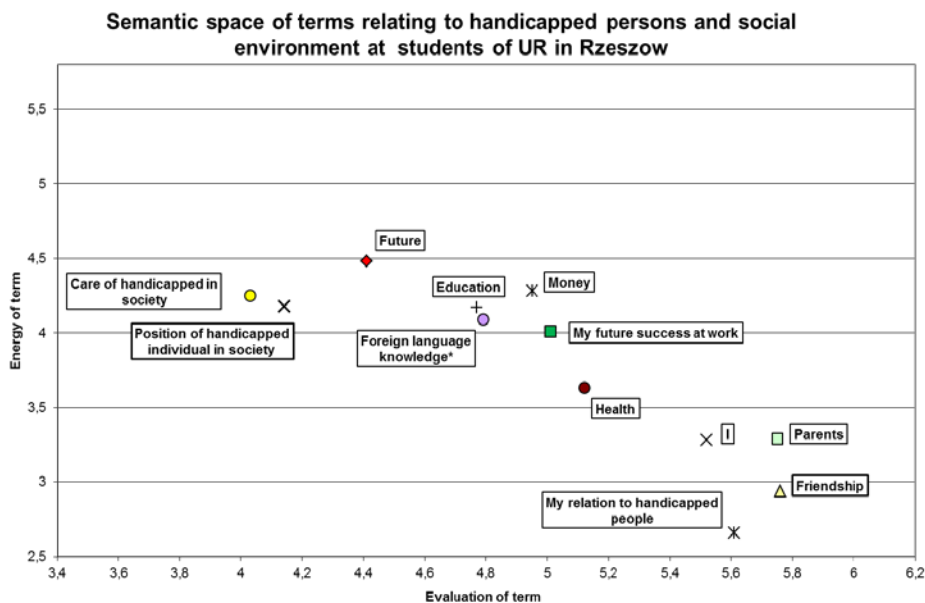


Figure 3. Semantic space of terms relating to handicapped persons and social environment of students of UR in Rzeszow

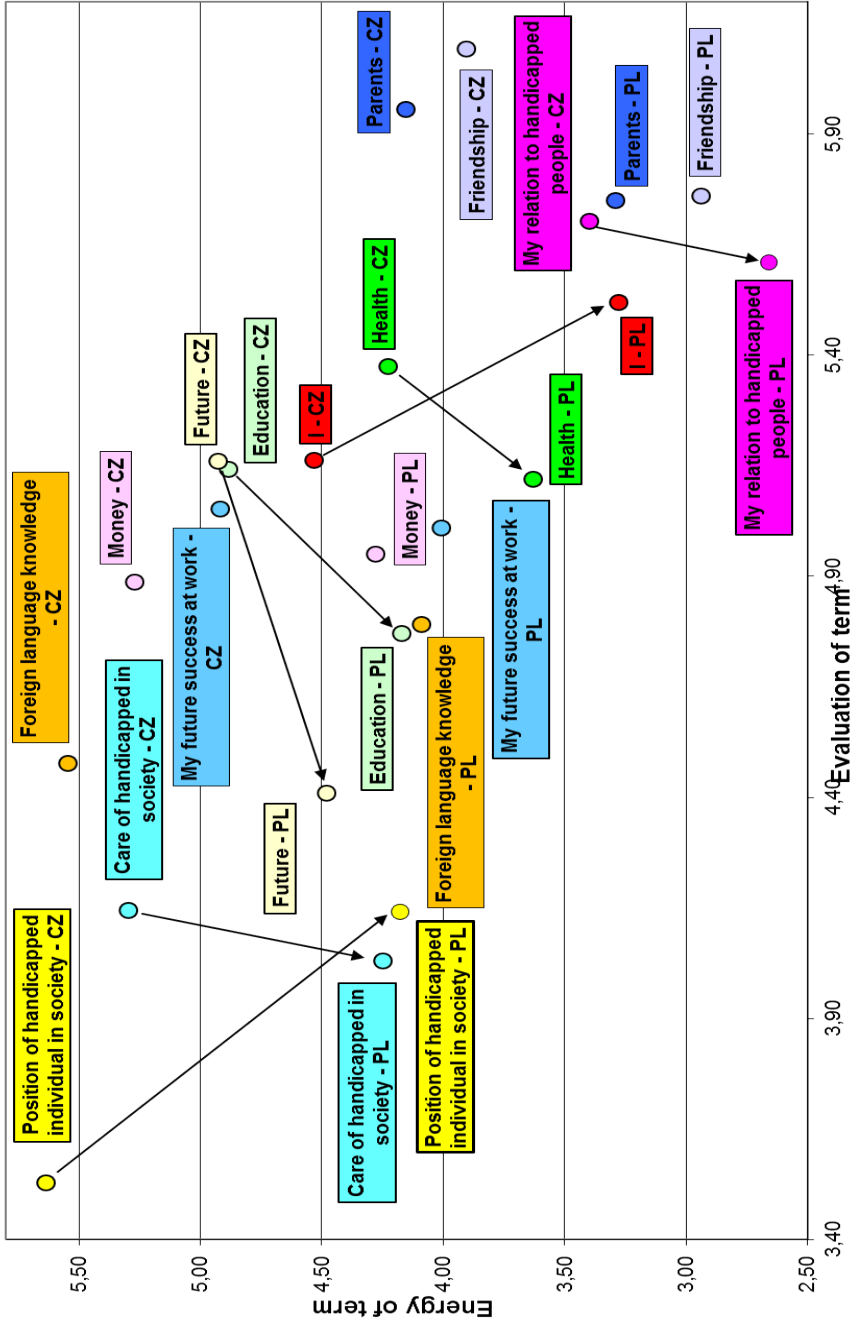


Figure 4. Semantic space of terms relating to handicapped persons and social environment of students in the Czech Republic (CZ) and the Republic of Poland (PL)

- The term “**I**” is evaluated significantly worse in CZ than in PL and it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Health**” is evaluated better in CZ than in PL (however, not statistically importantly), nevertheless, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Future**” is evaluated significantly better in CZ than in PL, but at the same time it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Education**” is evaluated in the same way as the previous term “Future” in CZ, significantly better than in PL, but at the same time it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Foreign language knowledge**” is evaluated worse in CZ than in PL (however, not statistically importantly), nevertheless, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**My future success at work**” is evaluated very similarly in CZ and PL, however, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Money**” is evaluated very similarly in CZ and PL as well as the previous term, however, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested in CZ than in PL.
- The term “**Parents**” is evaluated better in CZ than in PL (however, not statistically importantly), nevertheless, it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.
- The term “**Friendship**” is evaluated significantly better in CZ than in PL, but at the same time it is related to a significantly higher rate of energy invested than in PL.

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Based on a comparison of the changes in the semantic space of the examined terms of Czech and Polish undergraduates by means of the Student’s t-test, it was decided that the determined research assumptions were valid.

Research assumption RA1: *Perception of the issues relating to disability in the society of the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland will be very similar or with little differences when taking into consideration the historical-cultural closeness of both nations, **has not been confirmed.*** Generally, all terms related to handicapped people are perceived in CZ as the terms with a higher rate of energy invested than in PL. Moreover, the respond-

ents in CZ perceive the “Position of the handicapped individual in society” significantly worse in CZ than the respondents in PL.

Research assumption RA2: *The examined group of respondents will perceive the terms relating to their individual social status differently in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland when taking into consideration their current job preparation, has been confirmed.* Generally, all terms related to individual social status and job preparation are perceived in CZ as the terms related to a higher rate of energy invested in comparison with how they are perceived by respondents in PL. Moreover, the respondents in CZ evaluate the terms “Education” and “Future” significantly better than the respondents in PL.

Research assumption RA3: *The examined group of respondents will perceive the terms relating to close social relations similarly in the Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland, has not been confirmed.* Generally, the terms related to close social relations are perceived by the respondents in CZ as the terms related to a higher rate of energy invested than by the respondents in PL. The terms “Parents” and “Friends” are further evaluated by the respondents in CZ better than in PL. On the other hand, the term “I” is evaluated significantly better in PL than in CZ.

CONCLUSION

It is sad that a certain part of the majority of society still perceives disability as the predestination of a handicapped individual to be placed within the area of social care. The attitude towards this fact differs with each person depending on their upbringing, environment, personal health condition, rate of informedness in a given field, and also, among others, on their own personal experience. Therefore, the integration efforts of society may play an important role in the change of some stereotypes which citizens hold.

By informing children about these issues from a very young age, we can more easily achieve that handicapped people will be perceived as a natural part of everyday life. Volunteering can also help. Close contact with handicapped persons, where prior special training of the future volunteer is not necessary, may represent another way for the mutual bringing of the majority of society together with handicapped persons.

Regarding the fact that the educational and training activities of teachers represent one of the ways to influence children’s attitudes, we were interested in the attitudes of the undergraduates preparing for a teaching job, the undergraduates who will form the next generations in society. The aim of our

research was to show their attitudes towards these issues and thus create some basis for further integration efforts in the field of bringing the majority of society together with this group of people.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Act no. 198/2002 Coll., Zákon č. 198/2002 Sb. o dobrovolnictví a dobrovolnické službě.
- Bočková L., Hastrmanová Š., Havrdová E. (2011), 50+ Aktivně: Fakta, inspirace a rady do druhé poloviny života, Respekt Institut, Praha, ISBN 978-80-904153-2-4.
- Chráska M. (2007), *Metody pedagogického výzkumu*, Grada, Praha, ISBN 9788024713694.
- Chráska M. (2008), *Uplatnění vícerozměrných statistických metod v pedagogickém výzkum*, Votobia, Olomouc, ISBN 802440897X.
- Chrásková M. (2011), *Způsob vnímání vybraných pojmů školního a sociálního prostředí studenty Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci a Univerzity v Rzeszowe*, „EDUKACJA-TECHNIKA-INFORMATYKA. Wybrane problemy edukacji technicznej i zawodowej”, FOSZE, Rzeszow, ISSN 20809069.
- Chrásková M. (2012), *Diskrepance ve vnímání vybraných pojmů školního a sociálního prostředí studenty univerzity v Rzeszowe v roce 2010 a 2011*, [in:] V. Stoffová (ed.), *Actual problems of modern education in 21st century. Aktuálne problémy moderného vzdelávania v 21. Storočí*, UJS, Komárno, ISBN 9788081220654.
- Chrásková M. (2013), *Students' attitudes and their forming as significant part of teachers' preparation. Dissertation*, Masaryk University, Faculty of Education, Brno.
- Gulová L. (2011), *Velmi stručný přehled metod a teorie sociální práce*, [in:] L. Gulová (ed.), *Sociální práce: Pro pedagogické obory*, Grada Publishing, Praha, ISBN 9788024733791.
- Haškovcová H. (2010), *Fenomén stárí*, Havlíček Brain Team, Praha, ISBN 9788087109199.
- Hewstone M., Stroebe W. (2006), *Sociální psychologie, Moderní učebnice sociální psychologie*, Portál, Praha, ISBN 80-7363-092-5.
- Horecký J. (2010), *Dobrovolnictví v sociálních službách*, „Sociální služby” 12, No: 6-7, ISSN 18037348.
- Janoušek J. (1988), *Sociální psychologie*, SPN, Praha.
- Kerlinger F.N. (1972), *Základy výzkumu chování. Pedagogický a psychologický výzkum*, Academia, Praha.
- Matouš M., Matoušová M., Kalvach Z., Radvanský J. (2002), *Pohyb ve stárí je šancí*, Grada Publishing, Praha, ISBN 8024703319.
- Matoušek O. (2003), *Slovník sociální práce*, Portál, Praha, ISBN 8071785490.
- Michalík J. (2013), *Právo, společnost a zdravotně postižení*, VUP, Olomouc, ISBN 978 8024435336.
- Osgood Ch.E., Suci G., Tannenbaum P. (1957), *The Measurement of Meaning*, University of Illinois Press, ISBN 0252745396
- Šormová L., Klégrová A. (2006), *Dobrovolnictví*, Vzdělávací institut ochrany dětí, Praha, ISBN 8086991687.
- Tošner J., Sozanská O. (2006), *Dobrovolníci a metodika práce s nimi v organizacích*, Portál, Praha, ISBN 8073671786.

Vágnerová M. (2004), *Psychopatologie pro pomáhající profese*, Portál, Praha, ISBN 8071788023.

Výrost J., Slaměník I. (2008), *Sociální psychologie*, Grada Publishing, Praha, ISBN 9788024714288.

Summary

At present, handicapped people create a significant group of persons in all states and countries of the world. In the Czech Republic, the number of the handicapped persons is approximately 10% based on qualified estimates; thus, that amounts to approximately 1 million inhabitants of the Czech Republic. However, other persons must be added to this number as most of the handicapped persons live in families and the caregivers are also more or less affected by the psychological, emotional, social and economic results of a disability. Thus, it is obvious that caring for these persons should be the effort of all of society in the fields of social care, respite care, and health care, as well as activities such as volunteering.

Key words: people with disabilities, volunteering, attitudes of students