

Summary of the Ph.D. thesis

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The title of thesis: **Quality of life of adults with autism**

Keywords: quality of life (QoL), autism, optimization of the quality of life, personalism, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), human, adulthood, quality of life index (QoL index), quality of life dimensions

Introduction: The presented thesis on the quality of life of adults with autism is interdisciplinary and it is placed on the edge of education, embedded on special education and other social sciences and humanities. It also includes issues within psychology of quality of life, education of adults, sociology of culture and the education as an institutions. The leading theme at thesis is the quality of life, which is a social construct and covers many different areas of life. The literature on the subject presents many instruments for studying the quality of life of disabled people, however, most of them are addressed to high-functioning people, and only a few to people with profound developmental and behavioral difficulties (R. L. Schalock, M. Verdugo, 2012). Among the few efforts to define the concept of quality of life for a group of people with severe intellectual disability, there were studies conducted by K. Petry, B. Maes and C. Vlaskamp (2005, 2007, 2009), based on the concept of D. Felce and J. Perry (1995, 1996) and pilot studies conducted by J. J Bleszyński (2017) based on the R. A Cummins concept. The aim of the research was to get to know the quality of life of youth intellectually disabled. The author pointed out the essence and need to conduct research in the field of quality of life, which allow to look more broadly at people with disabilities and to see their resources and needs. Despite the significant increase of people on the spectrum, there are only a few conducted research about quality of life of adults diagnosed with autism.

Method: The aim of the conducted research was to get to know the quality of life of adults with autism in two selected specialist centres in the United States and Poland. The research is based on the concept proposed by R. L. Schalock. The tool used in research was *San Martin Scale. Assessment of quality of life in people with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities* by M. A. Verdugo, L. Gomez, B. Arias, et al. (2014) created under the direction of

R. L. Schalock. The concept of R. L. Schalock is based on a subjective and objective assessment, and the measurement concerns the determination of the indicator of quality of life and eight dimensions. In the questionnaire, the dimensions examined are self-determination, emotional well-being, physical well-being, material comfort, rights, personal development, social inclusion and interpersonal relations, which testify the quality of life of the studied population in four areas; independence, social participation, competence / performance and well-being. The study focused on 240 adults with autism from 18 to 51 years old. In the course of the research, sociodemographic data were collected such as age, gender, taking medication and co-occurring disorders / behaviors.

Conclusions: The conducted analysis showed that the studied population presents the average quality of life in the studied countries, and the highest rated scale measures are self-determination and rights. In addition, the analysis showed a number of statistically significant correlations between the examined dimensions of quality of life within and between studied countries, and correlations between the assessed dimensions of quality of life and the indicator of quality of life, comprehensive index of quality of life in accordance with the assumptions of the research tool.