PSYCHOSOCIAL SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT FOR A SUCCESSFUL UNIVERSITY CAREER

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SOCIAL SKILLS

• GOOD SOCIAL SKILLS ENABLE PEOPLE TO BE COOPERATIVE, CONTROLLED IN BEHAVIOR AND UNDERSTANDING OF OTHER PEOPLE’S NEEDS AND DESIRES. (HEIMAN AND MARGALIT, 1998)

• FOR BLIND CHILDREN, LEARNING SOCIAL SKILLS IS AS IMPORTANT AS LEARNING TO READ. (HATLEN, 2004)

• THE ABSENCE OR LACK OF VISUAL INPUT CAN AFFECT THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS' SOCIAL SKILLS. (FRIEND, 2005); HATLEN AND CURRY, 1987)

• CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS, WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, ARE NOT AS GOOD IN SOCIAL COMPETENCE AS THE SIGHTED CHILDREN. (FERRELL, 1996)
ISOLATION AND SEGREGATION

VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN WITHOUT GOOD SOCIAL COMPETENCIES SUFFER ISOLATION AND SEGREGATION FROM THEIR SIGHTED PEERS (GURALNICK, 1996; 1987; SACKS AND SILBERMAN, 2000; SACKS AND WOLFFE, 2006).

• LACK FEEDBACK ON SOCIAL BEHAVIOR
• LACK FEEDBACK ON PLAYING EXPERIENCES
• NO COOPERATION OR SKILLS IN TAKING TURNS (TURN-TAKING) DURING PLAY
• NO SKILLS IN INVITING FRIENDS TO PLAY TOGETHER
ADOLESCENTS' PROBLEMS

- Visually impaired adolescents face various problems in social relations comparing to their sighted peers. (Kroksmark & NordeLL, 2001; Pfeiffer & Pinquart, 2011; Rosenblum, 1998; Sacks & Wolffe, 1998).

- They spend more time alone with themselves,

- Difficulty in getting close relationships

- Difficulty in socialize with their peers
VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS AT COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

The number of visually impaired students in colleges and universities has increased dramatically during the previous decades (Zhou, Smith, Parker, & Griffin-Shirley, 2013).

High school grades (McKenzie & Schweitzer, 2001) and parental education (Dedonno & Fagan, 2013) are related to university grades, as are strong academic self-efficacy beliefs (Butler, 2011).

Other factors of successful academic achievement:

• Gender
• Age
• Academic Obstacles
• Facilitators
• Social Inclusion
• Full- and part-time student status
• Single versus multiple disabilities
PROBLEMS

THE LITERATURE ON GRADUATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IS INCONSISTENT (HERBERT ET AL., 2014)

MOST STUDIES DEAL WITH STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES, AND NOT WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS. (E.G. BUTLER, 2011; DADEPPO, 2009)

MOST STUDIES FOCUS ON THE GRADES AND GRADUATION AND THEY DO NOT CONSIDER VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS' SOCIAL LIFE.
WE THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS ARE

- FAMILY BACKGROUND
- HIGH SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT
- INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION
- GOOD RELATIONS WITH CLASSMATES
- STABLE SOCIAL NETWORK - CLOSE FRIENDS
SUCCESSFUL UNIVERSITY CAREER

• IN THE TRADITIONAL NARRATIVES, INTELLECTUAL AND MENTAL CAPACITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR A SUCCESSFUL UNIVERSITY CAREER.

• HOWEVER, STUDIES HAVE PROVED THAT INTELLECTUAL APTITUDES ONLY ACCOUNT FOR 30-50% OF THE STUDENTS’ PERFORMANCE (CABRERA, GARCÍA & HERNÁNDEZ, 1999).

• PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL SKILLS HAVE PROBABLY A GREATER ROLE FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT THAN ANY OTHER, NON-DISABLED STUDENTS DUE TO THE FACT THAT STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT ARE MORE DEPENDENT ON A VIVID SOCIAL NETWORK (KEF, 1999).
ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED FOR VI STUDENTS

• KNOWLEDGE ON THE UNIVERSITY (ELECTRONIC LEARNING SYSTEM; STUDY AFFAIR DEPARTMENT; SPORT; LIBRARY; APPLICATION ON SOCIAL GRANTS, ETC.)

• KNOWLEDGE ON THE RIGHTS TO ACCOMMODATIONS

• UNDERSTANDING WHEN AND HOW TO DISCLOSE DISABILITY FOR DIFFERENT PERSONS AT UNIVERSITY

• SELF-DETERMINATION AND A STRONG SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTITY

• HIGH LEVEL OF IT, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS, AND INTERNET RESOURCES

• ACCESS CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR ACADEMIC SUPPORT (E.G. DISABILITY CENTER)

• SELF-ADVOCACY

• BASIC OR HIGHER LEVEL OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SKILLS

• SUPPORT NETWORK OF OTHER STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES
THE ROLE OF ELTE DISABILITY CENTER

318 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY – 54 STUDENTS HAS VISUAL IMPAIRMENT – 21 HAS TOTAL BLINDNESS

SERVICES:

• TEACHING ROUTES
• ADAPTATION OF DORMITORY
• RENTING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT (DICTATION, VIDEOMAGNIFYER, JAWS, ETC.)
• IT SUPPORT: COURSE ON OFFICE; COURSE ON LIBRARY USAGE; PERSONAL SUPPORT IN USING NEPTUN; TEACHING SCREEN READING AND MAGNIFYING SOFTWARES; TEACHING THE ‘R’ STATISTICAL SOFTWARE
• ADAPTATION AND DIGITALIZING THE LEARNING MATERIAL
• SUPPORTING FIELD PRACTICE (ESP. FOR TEACHING PRACTICE)
• CAREER GUIDANCE – INDIVIDUAL
• CAREER MANAGEMENT COURSE
• HIRING AND TRAINING PERSONAL ASSISTANTS (STUDENTS)
• ENGLISH SPEAKING CLUB
REFERENCES I.


