

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation entitled “The image of psychosocial experiences of young hearing adults in the context of growing up with deaf siblings”

This doctoral thesis presents research on the psychosocial experiences of hearing adults who grew up with deaf siblings. The aim of the research was to discover and describe the personal psychosocial experiences of adult siblings of deaf people, not only to present a subjective picture of what it is like to be a hearing sibling of deaf people, but also to indicate practical implications for improving the quality of family relationships with a deaf child and contributing to a reduction in the psychosocial difficulties of hearing siblings. The subject of the analysis is the complex nature of the experiences of adult hearing siblings of deaf people, which requires an interdisciplinary approach. The structure of the work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter, entitled “The issue of deafness in the light of the literature on the subject,” defines the concepts and causes of hearing disorders and presents their classifications. It presents the social development of deaf people in the context of, among other things, language, emotions, and theory of mind. A review of terminology is provided and the characteristics of the early adulthood developmental period are presented. The issue of the relationship between communication and identity development in deaf people (cultural model) is addressed. A selected psychological concept was reconstructed—John Bowlby's attachment theory. The second chapter, entitled “The family in selected theoretical and cognitive concepts,” discussed the nomenclature and characteristics of the family, including families with deaf children, and presented typologies of parental attitudes. Methods of communication and support for families raising a deaf child and the resulting consequences in the roles of mothers and fathers are presented. A review of existing research on family relationships with a deaf child in the parent-child-sibling subsystems is provided. A conceptual theoretical framework based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model (formerly Ecological Systems Theory) was presented and discussed (Guy-Evans, 2024). The methodological part provides a detailed description of the qualitative research conducted using a phenomenological approach and the interview method (Individual In-Depth Interview – IDI) with elements of the biographical method. Referring to its wide application in socio-pedagogical research, the effectiveness of the presented research in the qualitative field has been proven. The thesis describes the method and process of data analysis and interpretation in accordance with the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis procedure. It presents the philosophical and methodological justification for the research (phenomenology-hermeneutics, paradigms), objectives (theoretical, diagnostic and practical) and research problems. In chapter four (4.), which covers the author's own research, the profiles of the narrators are presented at the beginning. Next, the research report is presented - the interpretation of the interviews allowed for the identification of themes and categories that illustrated the psychosocial experiences of hearing siblings of deaf people. The analyses show that the experience of being a sibling of a deaf person is an individual, diverse, and multidimensional process at every stage of life. The summary presents a discussion, and the conclusions and results are compared with reports from other studies. The work concludes with pedagogical proposals and final reflections.