

PENKTASIS TARPTAUTINIS SIMPOZIUMAS „AKTUALŪS TYRIMAI PSICHOLOGIJOJE: TARPTAUTINĖ PATIRTIS“

Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto Teorinės psichologijos ir Bendrosios psichologijos katedros kartu su ilgamečiais partneriais Nebraskos Kearney universitetu (JAV) tęsia tradicija tampančių vaizdo konferencijų, skirtų psichologijos studentų darbams pristatyti, seriją. 2009 m. lapkričio 18 d. įvyko ketvirtoji tarptautinė vaizdo konferencija – tarptautinis simpoziumas „Aktualūs tyrimai psichologijoje: tarptautinė patirtis“. Šioje konferencijoje pranešimus skaitė Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto ir Nebraskos Kearney universiteto (JAV) psichologijos bakalauro studijų absolventai, magistro studijų programų studentai bei doktorantai.

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ASPECTS OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE (BASED ON THE 5F-WEL MODEL) AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF-ESTEEM AMONG 11-12-FORM SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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In addition to the typical changes experienced during adolescence, teenagers, who are in 11th and 12th forms, experience additional challenges during the last years at school. Thus, healthy lifestyle becomes an essential issue for teenagers and self-esteem may become the feature which would help the teenagers go through this part of life. The study analyzes the aspects of a healthy lifestyle as well as the relationship of these

aspects to self-esteem in a sample of 11-12-form secondary school students.

The subjects of research were 200 students (72 boys and 128 girls). Age of students varied between 16 and 20 years. Lifestyle was defined using the 5F-WEL questionnaire (translation into Lithuanian by A. Prancėvičienė and L. Gustainienė, 2006). The questionnaire is based on the Indivisible Self, an Evidence-Based Model of Wellness (Myers, Sweeney, 2005). Self-esteem was evaluated using Self-Esteem Scale by M. Rosenberg.

The results showed that the level of wellness among girls was slightly lower than that of boys. No significant relations were found between such variables as the level of education of parents, family structure and the components of wellness (Social Self, Physical Self, Creative Self, Essential Self and Coping Self). The analysis revealed no significant difference between self-esteem in boys' and girls' samples. There was a tendency observed that the level of wellness was higher among schoolchildren with higher levels of self-esteem.

FACTORS RELATED TO SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS' COMFORT WORKING WITH POVERTY: ARE TRAINING INSTITUTIONS DOING ENOUGH TO ENSURE COMPETENCE IN THIS AREA?

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Many children are currently living in poverty and are suffering from the effects of poverty. School psychologists are in a position to assist these children and families. The purpose of the study is to determine what factors relate to school psychologists' comfort working with poverty and to assess the need for training institutions to incorporate or further develop this type of preparation into their programs. All school psychologists in a Midwestern state were mailed a survey asking for information regarding demographics and practitioner related information. 144 useable surveys were returned and analyzed to answer the research questions. The highest predictors of comfort working with poverty are years of experience working with poverty and time spent working with poverty. Although it is important for training programs' multicultural courses to address the culture of poverty, it is essential that school psychologists in training be given exposure and opportunities to work directly with children and families living in poverty.

PECULIARITIES OF ILLNESS PERCEPTION, MOTIVATION TO CHANGE AND PREFERENCES FOR TREATMENT METHODS AMONG ALCOHOL ADDICTED PEOPLE ACCORDING TO THEIR PREVIOUS TREATMENT EXPERIENCE

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The aim of the research was to determine the peculiarities of illness perception, motivation to change and treatment preferences among alcohol addicted people according to their previous treatment experience.

Methodology: 70 individuals currently going through alcohol detoxification in Kaunas Region Addiction Centre (Lithuania) completed Brief Illness Perception Questionnaire, questionnaire to assess motivation to change and preferences for treatment method questionnaire.

The main results: Analysis allowed dividing individuals into three groups according to their previous treatment experience: 1) no previous experience; 2) treatment in Alcoholics Anonymous or Minnesota Model program; 3) pharmaceutical and other treatment. The research showed that previous treatment experience in Alcoholics Anonymous or Minnesota Model program was related to highest illness recognition, perception of longest illness duration and poorest personal control of an illness, highest motivation to change and best alcohol avoidance skills compared with other treatment groups. Absence of previous treatment experience was related to poorest illness recognition, perception of best personal control of an illness, poorest motivation to change and alcohol avoidance skills. Individuals with previous treatment experience in Alcoholics Anonymous or Minnesota Model program didn't express preference for the pharmaceutical treatment. Individuals with no previous treatment experience didn't express preference for Minnesota Model program; however they did prefer detoxification and pharmaceutical treatment.

Conclusion: illness perception, motivation to change and preferences for treatment methods are related to previous treatment experience.

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF MATTERING AT BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Much of the mattering research, based on Schlossberg's (1989) original work, has been empirical data that suggests mattering does matter in higher education. However, little has been found on the actual acts, behaviors and practices of individuals who have influenced students' perceptions of mattering. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate senior university students' perceptions of mattering at Black Hills State University.

A qualitative phenomenological approach was used to investigate the phenomenon of mattering. A criterion sampling strategy was used in selecting 11 senior students for personal interviews and data collection. Using the process of horizontalization, the data was analyzed by highlighting the significant statements and then clustering the relevant expressions. Through this process five themes emerged: nurturing, recognition – the little things, student involvement, campus environment – I'm not a number and mattering is cyclical. The themes were used to develop descriptions of what the participants experienced, which established the phenomenon's "essence" and an understanding of the core meaning of mattering.

It was concluded that the five themes in this study relate to the dimensions of mattering established by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) and Schlossberg (1989): *attention, importance, ego-extension, dependence and appreciation*. Furthermore, data support the application of mattering concepts and incorporating the information to institutional

practices. By integrating mattering practices in higher education, administrators and educators can aid in creating a supportive community that sustains students' learning, personal development and sense of mattering. Consequently, mattering practices can increase student retention, improve programs, increase energy and enthusiasm from administration, faculty and staff and foster an environment that potentially increases student enrollment (Schlossberg, 1989). Consequently, it is imperative that higher education practitioners fully understand the phenomenon of mattering.

RISKY DRIVING OF LITHUANIAN ADULTS: GENDER DIFFERENCES AND RELATIONSHIP WITH RISK-TAKING PROPENSITY AND OTHER RISKY BEHAVIOURS

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The approximate yearly number of road accidents in Lithuania is 6500. This is one of the highest numbers of road traffic accidents in Europe. It has been found that three-component structure (which involves road, vehicle, and driver) accounts for the road accident. Previous studies suggest that risky driving behavior causes or contributes to at least 40% of traffic collisions. Scholars argue that various forms of risky actions constitute the syndrome of risky behavior: involvement in any risky behavior increases chance to take any other. However, there is a lack of the data in recognizing risky driving as a component of this behavioral syndrome.

The aim of this study was to investigate the gender differences in risky driving behavior and its correlations with risk-taking propensity, aggressiveness, and substance use among Lithuanian adults.

The research was based on self-reported assessment of risk-taking propensity, aggressiveness, tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs use, lapses while driving, driving mistakes, and driving violations.

285 Lithuanian adults (137 males and 148 females) were recruited to this study using snowball method. Participants were aged from 18 to 58 years (mean 31.8, SD=8.73), no age differences between men and women were found.

As it was expected, results revealed multiple gender differences in risky behaviors: males tend to do more violations while driving, they tend to use tobacco, alcohol and other drugs more frequently, females make more lapses while driving. Males have higher scores in risk propensity scale than females. Correlation analysis revealed that risky driving is related to other risky behaviors. Those men, who report driving in a risky manner, tend to behave more aggressively towards others; they also use illicit drugs more frequently. Women, who have higher scores in risky driving scale, report more prevalent aggressive behavior, more frequent use of alcohol, and propensity to risk. Smoking seems to be unrelated to risky driving for both, males and females.

To conclude, gender differences in risky driving are significant, but not unidirectional. Males exhibit more violent driving, while females make more lapses. Risky driving is

related to other risky behaviors and seems to constitute one risky behavior syndrome. Propensity to risk is related to risky driving only in females, but not in males. This might imply that risky driving for women shows disposition of personality to act in a risky way, while men's risky driving seems to be based by other reason unrecognized in this research, but not due to risk taking personality.

COMPARING ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF STUDENTS IN TRADITIONAL AND GENDER SPECIFIC CLASSROOMS

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With continued emphasis on accountability and student achievement scores, schools are finding ways to address the gaps between males and females. One means of addressing this gender gap is through the use of single gender classrooms. Previous literature reports data has been collected indicating the improvement of achievement scores for boys. Limited research is available indicating the impact of single gender classrooms on girls' academic achievement. The comparison of scores from male and female single gender classrooms and traditional classrooms needs to be analyzed to identify if improvement in scores is equal for both boys and girls who are learning in single gender classrooms.

The purpose of this research study was to provide information about gender specific classrooms by presenting data collected at a Midwestern elementary school. Two main questions were addressed in this research study: 1. Do students in gender specific classrooms perform better than students in traditional classrooms? 2. Do students in gender specific classrooms maintain achievement levels from fall to spring?

In this study scores from girls and boys in traditional and single gender classrooms for both reading and math were compared to determine if single gender classrooms provided a learning environment that fostered greater achievement for students than the traditional mixed gender classrooms. Additionally, scores from the fall and spring were compared to identify the impact of gender specific classrooms over time. Proposed implications of the use of gender specific classrooms used as a tool to improve student achievement will be discussed. Additional implications of the use of gender specific classrooms will also be presented.

BIOFEEDBACK RELAXATION POSSIBILITIES OF REDUCING PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGICAL STRESS

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The research analyzes the effectiveness of biofeedback relaxation for reduction of the rate of physiological and psychological tension (galvanic skin response (GSR), skin temperature, pulse, breathing frequency and muscle tension rates).

60 students (1 to 6 study years) from Vytautas Magnus University were examined using biofeedback relaxation apparatus NeXus-10, produced by Mind Media (The Netherlands). During the examination, special sensors were attached on the chest and hands of the respondents. With the help of biofeedback apparatus NEXUS-10 electrodes, the frequency rates of the GSR and temperature, pulse and breathing were recorded. Subjectively perceived tension in muscles was measured using the portrayal of the human's silhouette composed by Vebster (1984). The respondents were divided into two groups: the group of biofeedback relaxation consisted of 29 participants (22 females and 7 males), while comparison group consisted of 31 participants (24 females and 7 males).

The results of the research show that subjectively perceived tension in muscles decreased during the biofeedback relaxation. The rates of the physiological tension decreased in the experimental group after four relaxation sessions. Besides, in the group of biofeedback relaxation significant changes of skin resistance and skin temperature were detected which indicates higher relaxation of respondents.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND THE ACCREDITATION OF A COLLEGE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

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The histories of both quality assurance (as used in manufacturing/business sectors) and accreditation (as used in educational institutions) were outlined. An ERIC database search indicated the merging of the two concepts in the last 20 years. An account of how a school psychology program in the U. S. went through accreditation was next narrated. Then several quality systems (both general and specific) were compared and contrasted-ISO (International Standards Organization), TQM (Total Quality Management), EQF (European Quality Award Framework), and NASP (National Association of School Psychologists). Finally, Stufflebeam's CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model was used to integrate the various quality systems.