

PUBLIC LECTURE EVALUATION

Masaryk University

Faculty	Faculty of Education
Procedure field	Special Pedagogy
Applicant	Jan Šiška, doc. PhDr. Ph.D.
Lecture date	13. 3. 2024
Lecture topic	Mapping the experiences of youth with IDD during their transition from school to adult life
Persons present (number)	18 (7 onsite and 11 online)
Designated evaluators (board members)	prof. PhDr. Karel Pančocha, Ph.D., M.Sc. prof. Amy Hewitt, PhD, FAAIDD prof. Jan Tøssebro, Ph.D. prof. PhDr. RNDr. Marie Vágnerová, CSc.

Jan Šiška held a public lecture on 13th of March 2024 entitled “Mapping the experiences of youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities during their transition from school to adult life.” The lecture was presented in the English language.

The presenter opened the presentation by acknowledging the work of professor František Čáda, who first introduced the topic of transition of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) from school to adult life to the Czech professional public at the beginning of the 20th century.

The focus of the presentation was on understanding and improving the transition process for individuals with ID and the presenter used the logic of guiding questions to explore the topic. The presentation framed transition as a specific life course phase, identifying both risk and protective factors involved. The presenter emphasized the significance of transition, as successfully navigating this process can significantly influence one's developmental trajectory into adulthood. Drawing upon contemporary research, it was highlighted that transition for individuals with ID is particularly crucial due to their heightened vulnerability to less typical life trajectories.

The discussion delved into the evolving paradigms surrounding disability (from charity/religious models to the current economic models), questioning whether disability resides within individuals or is a product of societal structures. This led to a recognition of the need to change societal perceptions and structures to better accommodate individuals with disabilities.

The presenter provided insights into the definition of intellectual disability and its changes over time and over cultural settings, stressing its lifelong impact on cognitive functioning and behavior. Transition, as conceptualized in the presentation, was portrayed as a series of interconnected life events, both normative and non-normative, leading individuals through various life stages.

The presentation further outlined the research project PEDAL (researching transitions of young people with intellectual disabilities), which was supported by the Czech science foundation and where Jan Šiška took the role of primary investigator. The research project's objectives aimed to explore the experiences of young people with ID during transition, understand current support approaches, and identify factors facilitating or impeding successful transitions. The research methods employed included focus groups, transition case studies, and life course interviews. The presenter thoroughly described the methodological properties and presented specific research outcomes as provided by each of the three methods.

Emerging findings from the life course interviews shed light on the complex trajectories experienced by individuals with ID, highlighting significant turning points, available resources, and the unpredictable nature of transitions.

In terms of future directions, the presentation emphasized the need for policymakers, educators, disability support professionals, and families to recognize the interconnectedness of life stages and collaborate to support successful transitions. It advocated for longitudinal research designs to understand the long-term impacts of policies and actions and the role of institutions in producing disability.

Overall, the presentation offered a comprehensive overview of the challenges and opportunities in supporting individuals with ID during their transition to adulthood. It called for a holistic approach that considers the individual's experiences, societal structures, and collaborative efforts across various stakeholders to ensure successful outcomes.

After the presentation, there were approximately 10 questions from the audience onsite and online. Applicant was able to answer all questions adequately and with great insight. The presentation was engaging and scientific at the same time. During the discussion the following questions among others were raised: 1. How do you modify research methods to accommodate people with intellectual disabilities? The applicant introduced strategies to make his research accommodating for participants with ID, especially adapting communication. 2. What role does etiology play in successful transition? The applicant explained how various types of disabilities influence life courses. 3. What are the differences between transition policies in the US and the Czech Republic? The applicant was able to compare the situation in both countries and gave examples of successful programmes.

Conclusion

The lecture delivered by doc. PhDr. Jan Šiška, Ph.D., entitled "Mapping the experiences of youth with IDD during their transition from school to adult life" and delivered as part of the professor appointment procedure, **demonstrated** sufficient scholarly qualifications and pedagogical capabilities expected of applicants participating in a professor appointment procedure in the field of Special Pedagogy.

Date: March 13, 2024

prof. PhDr. Karel Pančocha, Ph.D., M.Sc.

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