

ABSTRACT

This doctoral dissertation was devoted to the analysis of the possibilities of applying the Snoezelen method in interventions supporting the emotional and cognitive functioning of children and adolescents developing within the intellectual norm. The starting point for the undertaken considerations was the assumption that an appropriately designed multisensory environment may constitute a factor supporting the development of a child's psychological resources, particularly in terms of self-efficacy and stress coping strategies. The decision to undertake this research topic resulted both from the observed increase in interest in the Snoezelen method in therapeutic and educational practice and from the limited number of empirical reports concerning its application among children and adolescents developing within the intellectual norm.

The theoretical part of the dissertation includes an analysis of the theoretical foundations of the Snoezelen method, its origins, assumptions, and contemporary directions of development. The importance of the therapeutic environment and multisensory experiences for child development was discussed, and the method was related to selected psychological, pedagogical, and psychomotor concepts. Particular attention was devoted to the emotional and cognitive functioning of children and adolescents, self-efficacy from the perspective of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, and stress coping strategies. The conducted analyses made it possible to develop a research model assuming the possibility of changes in selected emotional and cognitive resources following participation in Snoezelen interventions.

The methodological part presents the assumptions of the author's own research, the research problems, research procedure, and characteristics of the applied research instruments. The study was conducted within a quantitative research strategy and included both a pilot stage and the main study. A pre-post intervention measurement design was applied, taking into account both the child's self-report and the assessment of the child's functioning made by the parent. The study employed the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test (used to determine intellectual norm), the Personal Competence Scale KompOs (used to assess self-efficacy and its dimensions), the How Do You Cope Questionnaire (used to assess stress coping strategies), and their modified versions extending the measurement to include the parental perspective. Additionally, selected sociodemographic and control variables were analysed.

The empirical part presents the results of the research conducted in a group of children aged 11–13 years. The analyses included the assessment of changes in self-efficacy and applied stress coping strategies after completion of Snoezelen interventions. The significance of selected control variables was also evaluated, together with the analysis of consistency between children's self-assessment and parental assessment of their functioning. The obtained results indicated changes

consistent with the assumed direction of intervention effects – an increase in the level of self-efficacy and more frequent use of adaptive strategies, particularly active coping and seeking support, accompanied by a reduction in strategies based on emotional focus. A tendency towards reducing discrepancies between children's self-assessment and parental assessment was also observed.

The interpretation of the results was conducted with consideration of methodological limitations and caution regarding the possibility of generalising the findings. However, the obtained results allow the Snoezelen method to be considered a promising direction for supporting the emotional and cognitive functioning of children and adolescents and indicate the need for further research on the mechanisms and effectiveness of this type of intervention. The conclusions formulated on the basis of the conducted analyses may provide a foundation for the development of pedagogical, psychological, and therapeutic practice, as well as for further scientific exploration in this field.

Keywords: Snoezelen, Multisensory Environment (MSE), self-efficacy, stress coping strategies, emotional and cognitive functioning, children and adolescents