

KURČIŲ IR NEPRIGIRDINČIŲ STUDENTŲ ĮSITRAUKIMO Į UNIVERSITETINES STUDIJAS GALIMYBĖS: JUNGTINĖS KARALYSTĖS PATIRTIS

Stefanija Ališauskienė, Indrė Ungeitytė
Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, Lietuva

Anotacija

Šis tyrimas atliktas Jungtinės Karalystės universitetuose. Apklausta dešimt respondentų iš trijų skirtingų universitetų, veikiančių Londone. Tyrimo tikslas – atskleisti kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įsitraukimo į universitetines studijas galimybes. Pagrindiniai tyrimo uždaviniai: išanalizuoti universitetinio mokslo prieinamumą kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams; išsiaiškinti, ar prieinamos būtinos priemonės ir įranga, reikalinga visaverčiam studentų įtraukimui ir įsitraukimui užtikrinti, kaip tenkinami studentų poreikiai, atsiradę dėl klausos praradimo; atskleisti, kaip studijų programa pritaikoma tenkinant papildomus tokių studentų mokymosi poreikius. Dalyvių imtį sudarė universiteto papildomos mokymosi pagalbos personalas ir dėstytojai.

Tyrimas atliktas taikant kokybinio tyrimo priėgą. Duomenys rinkti pasitelkus internetinį klausimyną, kuriame pateikti atsakymų pasirinkimai ir galimybė pateikti savo komentarus. Duomenys analizuoti taikant teminę analizę.

Pagrindinė tyrimo išvada: kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai studijuodami dažnai susiduria su sunkumais, kadangi universitetai nėra visiškai prieinami šiems besimokantiejiems dėl išteklių, kitų reikalingų mokymosi priemonių ir įrangos trūkumo. Dėstytojams reikia daugiau mokymų ir paramos, kad jie galėtų suteikti reikiamą papildomą pagalbą pažeidžiamiesiems studentams. Studijų programa išlieka ta pati visiems studentams, tačiau kartais daromos išimtytys studentams, turintiems papildomų poreikių. Paprastai kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams gali būti skiriama daugiau laiko užduotims atlikti.

Esminiai žodžiai: *kurtieji, neprigirdintieji, įtrauktis, aukštasis mokslas, iššūkiai.*

Įvadas

Šiuo tyrimu siekta atskleisti kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įsitraukimo į universitetines studijas galimybes ir išanalizuoti universitetinio mokslo prieinamumą kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams. Siekta nustatyti, ar prieinamos būtinos priemonės ir įranga, reikalingos įtraukčiai studijose, kaip tenkinami studentų mokymosi poreikiai, atsiradę dėl klausos praradimo; siekta ištyti, kaip studijų programa pritaikoma tokių studentų papildomiems studijų poreikiams tenkinti. Dalyvių imtį sudarė universiteto papildomos mokymosi pagalbos personalas ir dėstytojai. Šio tyrimo projekto dalyviai – aukštųjų mokyklų dėstytojai, dirbantys arba anksčiau dirbę su kurčiais ar neprigirdinčiais studentais. Iš viso apklausta dešimt respondentų iš trijų universitetų, veikiančių skirtingose Londono vietose. Duomenys šiam projektui rinkti internetiniu apklausos būdu pasitelkiant klausimyną, kuriame pateikta ir atvirų klausimų. Duomenys analizuoti taikant teminę analizę.

Kurtumas ar klausos praradimas gali sukelti papildomų sunkumų studijuojant universitetuose, nes ne kiekviena aukštoji mokykla gali suteikti reikiamą pagalbą pažeidžiamiems besimokantiejiems. Kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įsitraukimas į studijas aukštosiose mokyklose yra opi problema, tačiau pasigendama šios srities mokslinių tyrimų ir įrodymais grįstos informacijos. Paprastai tyrėjai daugiau dėmesio skiria kurčių vaikų ugdymui pradinėje ar vidurinėje mokykloje nei studijoms aukštojoje mokykloje tyrinėti. Aukštasis išsilavinimas kurtiems ir (arba) neprigirdintiems asmenims gali duoti reikšmingos naudos, pavyzdžiui, padidinti įsidarbinimo galimybes, suteikti platesnes karjeros alternatyvas (Marschark, Lampropoulou ir Skordilis, 2016).

Siekiant pažinti kurčiųjų ir neprigirdinčiųjų poreikius svarbu suprasti, kas apskritai yra kurtumas. Žinoma, kad kurtumas gali būti skirtingų laipsnių ir atsirasti dėl skirtingų priežasčių. Pasak Spencer ir Marschark (2010), kurtumo laipsnius galima suskirstyti į keturias grupes: lengvas, vidutinis, sunkus ir labai sunkus. Visų laipsnių kurtumą gali sukelti įvairios priežastys, jis gali atsirasti bet kuriuo metu. Kurtumas ar klausos praradimas gali atsirasti, kai asmuo patiria vienos ar abiejų ausų funkcijos sutrikimą (NDCS, 2019). Taip gali nutikti dėl įvairių išorinių priežasčių: dėl infekcijos (meningitas, tymai, kiaulytė, raudonukė, pūslelinė ir kt.), sunkios geltos, nėštumo metu atsirandančių komplikacijų, deguonies trūkumo ar sunkios galvos traumos, per stipraus triukšmo poveikio (Wearmouth, 2016). Remiantis statistika, beveik 50 proc. naujagimių kurtumą patiria dėl genetinių priežasčių (Wearmouth, 2016).

Nepaisant to, kad asmuo turi klausos sutrikimą, jis, kaip ir kiekvienas kitas asmuo, turi teisę į kokybišką švietimą ir ugdymą. Remiantis teisės aktais (Equality Act, 2010)¹, visi universitetai ir kolegijos turi būti įtraukūs ir atlikti

¹ www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/your-rights-under-equality-act-2010

„pagrįstus pritaikymus“, kad galėtų teikti aukštos kokybės pagalbą žmonėms, turintiems specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių. Visos aukštojo mokslo institucijos privalo atlikti būtinus pritaikymus, reikalingus įtraukčiai užtikrinti. Kiekvienas universitetas ar kolegija turi turėti ne tik reikiamą specialią įrangą, bet ir pagalbos neįgaliesiems komandą. Jei studentai nuo studijų pradžios galėtų gauti vertėjų ar asistentų paslaugas ir kitą papildomą pagalbą, mokymosi rezultatai galėtų žymiai pagerėti. Vis dėlto kurti ir (ar) neprisigirdintys besimokantieji, lyginant su girdinčiais, dažniausiai į aukštojo mokslo įstaigą ateina turėdami žemesnius akademinis pasiekimus bei ribotas žodinės ir rašytinės kalbos žinias (Marschark ir Wauters, 2008).

Literatūros apžvalga

Atsižvelgiant į tyrimo tikslus, šioje straipsnio dalyje pateikiama mokslinių tyrimų, politinių ir empirinių išvadų, susijusių su kurčių ar neprisigirdinčių studentų mokslo prieinamumo didinimu, literatūros apžvalga.

Pasak UNESCO (2009), įtrauktis ugdyme yra procesas, implikuojantis reikiamus pokyčius ir pritaikymus mokyklose ir kitose mokymosi institucijose, kad kiekvienas asmuo galėtų patenkinti savo poreikius ugdymo aplinkoje ir įgytų naujų žinių bei įgūdžių, nepriklausomai nuo jo negalių ir sutrikimų. Įtraukusis ugdymas ir įsitraukimas yra labai svarbūs užtikrinant žmogaus orumą, žmogaus teises, pasitenkinimo ir visavertiškumo jausmus (UNESCO, 1994). Salamankos deklaracijoje (1994) teigiama, kad įtraukusis ugdymas atspindi įvairių strategijų ir metodų tobulinimą ir plėtojamą vadovaujantis pirminio palankių aplinkybių ar galimybių suvienodinimo idėja (Frederickson ir Cline, 2015). Specialieji ugdymosi poreikiai turi būti tinkamai tenkinami – tam reikia keisti švietimo sistemą ir ugdymo turinį, o ne asmenį, turintį specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių (Knoors ir Marschark, 2015). Kiekvienas asmuo galėtų pasiekti geresnių rezultatų, jei jis gautų tinkamą paramą ir galėtų tinkamai įveikti kylančius sunkumus.

Tyrimai rodo, jog kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų mokymosi procesui ir jų socialiniam gyvenimui neigiamos įtakos turi dažnai pasitaikančios įvairios kliūtytys. Viena iš dažniausių – kurčių ir girdinčių žmonių bendravimas. Kaip pastebi Marschark ir kt. (2002), kurčiam asmeniui vienu metu paprastai reikia kreipti dėmesį į kelis informacijos šaltinius, pavyzdžiui, stebėti dėstytoją ir tuo pačiu metu stebėti skaidrių pateiktį. Dėl nuolatinio dėmesio skirstymo studentas informaciją gali suprasti neteisingai arba praleisti dalį dėstytojo ar kolegų pateikiamos informacijos. Bendravimo sunkumai irgi yra viena iš kliūčių, trikdanti sklandų įsitraukimą. Neįgaliųjų diskriminacijos akte (*The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995*) nurodoma, kad kiekviena organizacija turi vienodai elgtis su kiekvienu besimokančiuoju, nepaisant specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių ar negalių, nes švietimo ir (ar) mokslo įstaiga yra atsakinga už pagrįstus studijų aplinkos

pritaikymus (Price ir Skinner, 2007). Jungtinės Karalystės aukštojo mokslo ir mokslinių tyrimų įstatymas (DfE, 2017) skelbia, jog visiems asmenims turi būti sudarytos lygios galimybės, suteikiančios jiems bet kurių aukštojo mokslo teikėjų teikiamo aukštojo mokslo prieinamumą. Marschark ir kt. (2016) pastebi, jog neretai susidaro įspūdis, kad kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai per paskaitas mokosi mažiau nei jų girdintys kolegos. Dažniausiai taip gali nutikti dėl to, kad šie studentai negauna visos informacijos, ne visa mokymosi medžiaga išverčiama tiksliai taip, kaip sakė dėstytojas. Kurčio studento kalbos įgūdžiai ir žodynas yra siauresni nei girdinčiųjų, todėl dažnai gali atsirasti klaidingų interpretacijų (Marschark ir kt., 2016). Pasak Scheetz (2012), pirmas dalykas, kurį turi atlikti kurti ar klausos sutrikimą turintys besimokantieji įstoję į universitetą, – kreiptis į administraciją dėl gestų kalbos vertėjo ir konspektuotojo paslaugų. Tuomet, esant poreikiui, aukštoji mokykla turėtų sudaryti visas būtinas sąlygas pasirinkti tinkamą sėdėjimo vietą auditorijoje ir (arba) galimybę pratęsti rašto užduočių atlikimo laiką, gauti konsultacijų (Scheetz, 2012). Be to, universitetai turėtų turėti kompiuterinį vertėją realiuoju laiku (CART), kompiuterinę kalbos transkripcijos sistemą (C-Print), kurią galėtų naudoti kurtieji ar neprigirdintieji (Scheetz, 2012). Jei kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai gautų tikslų universitete pateikiamos informacijos vertimą raštu ir (arba) gestų kalba, mokymosi rezultatai ir dalykinės žinios žymiai pagerėtų. Dėstytojai turi sutelkti dėmesį į tai, ko reikia konkrečiam studentui, kad jis galėtų daryti pažangą, ir užtikrinti sklandų asmeninių gebėjimų tobulinimą (Warnock ir Norwich, 2010; Hultqvist ir kt., 2018).

Ruairc (2013) teigimu, negalią turinčių studentų įtraukties samprata kai kada gali būti suprantama kaip utopinė, nes daugeliu aspektų įtrauktis praktikoje gali būti labai toli nuo realybės. Viena iš priežasčių yra ta, kad įtraukiojo ugdymo samprata politikoje ir realioje praktikoje paprastai traktuojama skirtingai (Ekins, 2017). Busby (2019) atskleidžia dabartinę įtraukties, prieinamumo ir reikalingos pagalbos teikimo kurtiems ar neprigirdintiems studentams aukštosiose mokyklose situaciją. Minėto autoriaus tyrimo dalyvių studentų patirtys atskleidžia aplinkybes, verčiančias kurčius ir neprigirdinčius studentus permąstyti, ar verta tęsti studijas universitetuose, jei jie negali gauti pakankamos paramos ir jei prastėja studijų kokybė. Kai kurie studentai yra priversti laukti metus ar daugiau, kad gautų vertėjų, dėstytojų specialistų ir (arba) konspektuotojų pagalbą paskaitose (Busby, 2019). Jei asmuo nesupranta, ką dėstytojas kalba paskaitoje, kaip tokiu atveju šie pažeidžiami žmonės gali įgyti pakankamai žinių ir įgūdžių, kaip jie gali mokytis kartu su girdinčiais bendramoksliais? Aukštosios mokyklos pagalbos neįgaliesiems komanda ir pedagogai turi sukurti tinkamą aplinką, vienodą prieigą prie įrangos, patalpų ir mokymo programos kiekvienam studentui (Reid ir Peer, 2016).

Sunkumų ir iššūkių, su kuriais susiduria kurti ir neprigirdintys besimokantieji aukštosiose mokyklose, gali atsirasti ir dėl netinkamo specialiųjų ugdymosi

poreikių tenkinimo ankstesnėse ugdymo įstaigose. Yra tyrimų, įrodančių, jog kurčių ar neprigirdinčių besimokančiųjų galimybės siekti akademinės ir socialinės sėkmės niekada nebuvo tokios geros kaip dabar, nes per pastaruosius keletus metus šiems besimokantiejiems galimybių bendrauti verbaline ir neverbaline (gestų) kalba gerokai padaugėjo (Knors ir Marschark, 2015). Tačiau, kaip teigia Lederberg ir kt. (2013), norėdami sėkmingai studijuoti, asmenys turi turėti pakankamą raštingumo įgūdžių. Neturėdamas pakankamai gerų skaitymo ir rašymo įgūdžių, kurčias ar neprigirdintis asmuo negali visapusiškai įsitraukti į visas veiklas auditorijoje, dėl to gali patirti akademinę nesėkmę (Hrastinski ir Wilbur, 2016; Brown ir Cornes, 2015).

Kaip pastebi Moores (2001), diskusijos apie kurčiųjų ar neprigirdinčiųjų mokymą ir mokymąsi dažnai išreiškiamos „instruktavimo“ terminu, o ne analizuojamos kaip abipusio grįžtamojo ryšio procesas. Dėl šios priežasties kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų kalbos mokymosi, raštingumo ir apskritai studijų kokybės klausimai turėtų labiau atspindėti realius poreikius, atsirandančius studijų praktikoje (Swanwick, 2017). Swanwick (2017) siūlo kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams taikyti pedagoginę sistemą, grindžiamą sociokultūrinio požiūriu ir apimančią dialoginę studijų teoriją ir tarpkalbinę prieigą. Pasak Alexander (2008), tokia prieiga skatina praktikus daugiau dėmesio skirti studijų aplinkai ir dėstymo strategijoms, studentų ir dėstytojų tarpusavio santykiams, bendradarbiavimo ir bendravimo įgūdžiams.

Šiame kontekste siekiant užtikrinti kurčių studentų kokybiškas studijas pasigendama tyrimų ir dėmesio mokymosi proceso teoriniam pagrindimui ir praktiniam realizavimui (Swanwick, 2017; Knors ir Marschark, 2014). Pasak Marschark ir Hauser (2012), daugiau tyrimų randama apie tai, kaip kurti ir (ar) neprigirdintys studentai gali mokytis, o ne kaip mokyti tokius studentus.

Metodika ir etinis pagrindimas

Tyrimo tikslas ir uždaviniai suformuluoti siekiant atsakyti į tokius probleminius klausimus: *koks yra aukštojo universitetinio mokslo prieinamumas besimokantiejiems, turintiems klausos sutrikimų? kokios būtinos priemonės, įranga, pagalba taikoma universitetuose, siekiant užtikrinti įtraukias studijas kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams? kaip tenkinami klausos sutrikimą turinčių besimokančiųjų studijų poreikiai universitete? kaip studijų programa pritaikoma papildomiems šių besimokančiųjų studijų poreikiams tenkinti?*

Duomenys tyrimui rinkti taikant kokybinio tyrimo prieigą (Rumrill, Cook, ir Wiley, 2011; Thomas, 2017). Tyrimo duomenys rinkti pasitelkus internetinį klausimyną, derinant uždaro tipo klausimus su galimybe pateikti komentarus. Klausimyną sudaro demografinis blokas ir klausimai, kuriais siekiama atsakyti

į keliamus šio tyrimo tikslus (iš viso 23 klausimai). Duomenims rinkti naudotas anoniminis internetinis klausimynas, nes tikėtasi, kad taip dalyviai bus skatinami nuoširdžiai atsakyti į visus klausimus, nebijos paminėti dalykų, apie kuriuos jų darbo vietoje kalbėti gali pasirodyti netinkama ar neetiška. Kaip pastebi Daniel ir Harland (2018), internetinė apklausa gali būti tinkama renkant duomenis iš institucijų, kuriose šio projekto metu buvo tiriamos švietimo aplinkybės ir reiškiniai. Tokiu atveju klausimyne gali būti klausimų rinkinys su atsakymo variantais, pateiktais tyrėjo, gali būti klausimų su kokybine dimensija, kur dalyviai galėtų rašyti komentarus ir išreikšti savo nuomonę tam skirtose klausimyno vietose (Daniel ir Horland, 2018).

Tyrimo dalyviai

Dalyvauti šiame tyrime buvo pakviesti keli Londono universitetai. Sutiko dalyvauti tik trys universitetai. Likusios pakviestos institucijos atsisakė dalyvauti tyrimo projekte dėl įvairių priežasčių. Viena iš jų buvo ta, kad įstaigoje šiuo metu nėra kurčių ir (ar) neprigirdinčių studentų. Antroji priežastis buvo išteklių trūkumas. Iš viso tyrime dalyvavo dešimt savanorių – universiteto papildomos mokymosi pagalbos darbuotojų ir dėstytojų. Tyrime dalyvavo šešios savanorės moterys ir keturi vyrai, šiuo metu dirbantys ar anksčiau dirbę su kurčiais ir (arba) neprigirdinčiais studentais ir einantys įvairias pareigas universitetuose: penki dalyviai yra vyresnieji dėstytojai, trys dirba dėstytojais universitetuose, vienas yra pagalbos neįgaliesiems komandos vadovas, kitas yra ne tik neįgalųjų tarnybos vadovas, bet ir specialusis pedagogas. Dauguma dalyvių (šeši iš dešimties) turi daugiau nei dešimties metų darbo su kurčiais ir (arba) neprigirdinčiais studentais patirtį, du žmonės turi nuo penkerių iki dešimties metų mokymo patirties, du dalyviai turi nuo vienu iki penkerių metų darbo patirties su šia konkrečia studentų grupe.

Dauguma respondentų turi didelę darbo ar dėstymo patirtį specialiosios pedagoginės pagalbos srityje, todėl galima teigti, kad jų atsakymai į pateiktus klausimus yra patikimi ir išryškina realią esamą situaciją.

Tyrimo etika

Ruošdamasis dirbti su žmonėmis, ypač su pažeidžiamomis grupėmis, tyrėjas turi įžvelgti galimas grėsmes ir sumažinti jų riziką (Thomas, 2017). Jei rizika yra per didelė, tyrėjui gali tekti nutraukti savo tyrimą, nes žmonių gerovė ir jų poreikiai visada turi būti svarbiausi. Tačiau šiame tyrime nebuvo nei fizinės, nei psichologinės rizikos. Vienintelė galėjusi atsirasti rizika buvo konfidencialumas, saugumas, sutikimas, skaidrumas ir dalyvių apsisprendimas dalyvauti neatlygintai. Siekiant sumažinti galimą riziką visi dalyviai buvo informuoti apie ty-

rimo projektą ir jo tikslus prieš suteikiant prieigą prie klausimyno ir pasirašant sutikimo formą. Savanoriai buvo informuoti, kaip bus panaudoti surinkti duomenys ir kur jie vėliau bus saugiai laikomi. Paaiškinta, kad konfidencialumas garantuojamas naudojant anoniminės apklausos metodą. Klausimyno pradžioje respondentai galėjo rasti trumpą priminimą apie tyrimą. Anonimiškumas buvo garantuotas ir todėl, kad tyrimas vykdytas trijuose skirtinguose universitetuose, veikiančiuose skirtingose Londono vietose, todėl neįmanoma atsekti, kuris darbuotojas užpildė klausimyną, neįmanoma nurodyti, kurioje aukštojo mokslo įstaigoje jis dirba. Nekilo jokio pavojaus dalyvaujančių asmenų ir universitetų, kurčių ar neprigirdinčių studentų grupės privatumui ar reputacijai. Respondentai buvo informuoti apie jų teisę atsisakyti dalyvauti tyrime bet kuriuo metu iki konkrečios datos, kai pradėdama surinktų duomenų analizė.

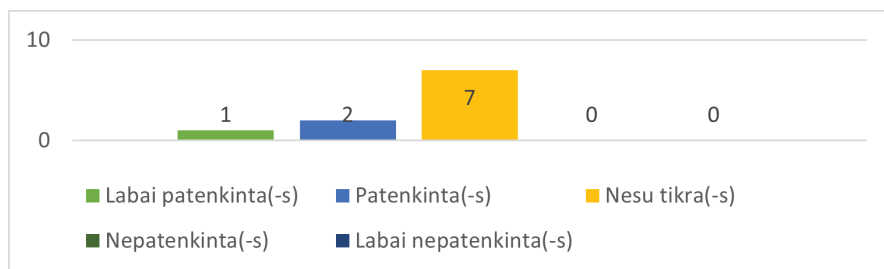
Tyrimo rezultatai ir diskusija

Siekiant atsakyti į pagrindinį šio tyrimo klausimą ir išsiaiškinti, kas šiuo metu daroma ir ką dar būtų galima padaryti, siekiant visavertės kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įtraukties universitetuose, buvo pateikti įvairūs klausimai apie dabartinę situaciją universitetuose, problemas ir iššūkius, kylančius šiuo metu, kaip būtų galima situaciją pagerinti, kaip su šiais iššūkiais galėtų susidoroti dėstytojai ir studentai. Tyrimas atskleidė, jog, didesnės dalies tyrimo dalyvių manymu (šešių iš dešimties dalyvių), visuomenės požiūris į kurčius ir (arba) neprigirdinčius asmenis dažniausiai yra teigiamas; trys dalyviai neatsakė į šį klausimą, vienas dalyvis mano, kad visuomenės požiūris į kurčiuosius yra neigiamas. Ko gero, nėra vieno teisingo atsakymo ar nuomonės apie visuomenės požiūrį į kurčius ar neprigirdinčius studentus. Jis gali skirtis priklausomai nuo skirtingų žmonių grupių ir konkrečių visuomenės dalių konkrečioje aukštojo mokslo institucijoje ar mieste, kuriame ji yra įsikūrusi.

Vieno iš tyrimo klausimų atsakymai rodo, kad dauguma dalyvių (devyni) neturi žinių apie galimą kurčių ar klausą praradusių studentų profesijos pasirinkimą arba jų žinios apie tai yra ribotos. Trys dalyviai teigia, jog jie galėtų nurodyti studentams specialistą, galintį profesionaliai patarti, pavyzdžiui, pasiūlytų karjeros konsultantą. Scheetz (2012) teigimu, besimokantieji renka profesijas ir studijų kryptį dėl įvairių priežasčių. Kai kurie asmenys pirmiausia svarsto, ar gaus tinkamą uždarbį, prestižinę darbo vietą, galinčią užtikrinti geresnę socialinę padėtį, kitiems svarbus veiksnys yra piniginis atlygis. Dalis tyrimo dalyvių mano, kad profesijos pasirinkimas dažniausiai priklauso ne tik nuo besimokančiųjų specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių ir negalių ar gebėjimų, bet ir nuo jų interesų. Studentai specialybes renka atsižvelgdami į savo stipriąsias puses, pomėgius ir interesus. Nepriklausomai nuo kurčių ir neprigirdinčių besimokančiųjų profesijos pasirinkimo, bendras tikslas yra parengti konkretų

asmenį būsimam darbui, kad jis galėtų jausti asmeninį pasitenkinimą ir savo vertę (Scheetz, 2012). Nors daugelis respondentų turi tik bazinių žinių apie studentų profesijos pasirinkimo galimybes, devyni iš dešimties dalyvių mano, kad profesijos, kurias kurti ir neprisigirdintys studentai gali rinktis aukštosiose mokyklose, nėra apribotos. Vis dėlto vienas respondentas neatsakė į klausimą, nes neturi pakankamai žinių apie galimus profesijos pasirinkimus. Dalyviai, teigė, kad ribų nėra, pridūrė, jog teoriškai ribojimų nėra, visi studentai gali rinktis bet kurią jiems patinkančią specialybę, tačiau praktiškai dažnai kyla problemų dėl išteklių. Pavyzdžiui, viena respondentė pasidalijo savo patirtimi ir teigė, kad ji dirbo su kurčiais dėstytojais, gaudavusiais papildomos paramos, kad galėtų sėkmingai bendrauti su studentais. Be to, tyrimo dalyvė pastebėjo, kad egzistuoja ir struktūrinės ribos – dėstytojams, dirbantiems su studentais, turinčiais specialiųjų poreikių (įskaitant kurčius ar neprisigirdinčius studentus), neteikiama papildoma specialistų pagalba, patarimai, neskiriama daugiau laiko. Vadinasi, parama priklauso nuo to, kiek papildomo darbo dėstytojas yra pasirengęs imtis. Tai atspindi švietimo įstaigų „įtraukties“ darbotvarkes, kur specialistų parama dėstytojams yra ribota arba jos visai nėra, tačiau papildomos paramos lūkesčiai yra dideli. Kitaip tariant, gali būti nustatoma riba, kiek paramos gali gauti universiteto ar katedros studentai ir dėstytojai.

Atsakydami į klausimą apie studentų pasitenkinimą dauguma respondentų nėra tikri, ar besimokantieji yra patenkinti pasirinktomis studijomis: du iš dešimties dalyvių mano, kad studentai yra patenkinti, vienas respondentas teigia, kad kurti ir neprisigirdintys studentai yra labai patenkinti pasirinktomis studijomis (žr. 1 pav.).



1 pav. Studentų pasitenkinimas pasirinktomis studijomis

Tačiau, remiantis tyrimu apie kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų pasitenkinimą, galima teigti, kad studentų patirtis universitete dažniausiai nebuvo maloni ar teikianti pasitenkinimą dėl įvairių priežasčių, pavyzdžiui, dėl išteklių ir paramos trūkumo studijų metu (Busby, 2019). Kai kurie studentai buvo priversti laukti keletą mėnesių, kad gautų vertėjo ar konspektuotojo paslaugas.

Iš pateiktų dalyvių atsakymų kyla klausimas, ar dėstytojai, nusprendę dalyvauti šiame tyrime, patys, atlikdami savo vaidmenį, padeda kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams. Tyrimas parodė, kad visi dalyviai teigia padedantys šiems studentams. Kaip teigė respondentai, dauguma jų naudoja tokius metodus kaip konspektavimas ar užrašymas, garso transkripcija, britų gestų kalba arba vertėjų paslaugos, šiems studentams jie skiria papildomo laiko užduotims atlikti. Akcentuojama, kad vaizdo įrašuose labai svarbus yra antraščių pateikimas, papildomos vaizdinės medžiagos su subtitrais naudojimas, informacijos pateikimas vizualiai ir žodžiu, išankstinis skaidrių pateikimas, kad studentai galėtų susipažinti su būsimų paskaitų medžiaga prieš prasidedant paskaitoms. Be to, jei reikia, sėdimų vietų planas auditorijoje taip pat turėtų būti pakeistas. Kaip teigia vienas respondentas, labai svarbu apgalvoti sėdimų vietų planus ir išdėstymą, kad kurčias ar klausos sutrikimą turintis besimokantysis kalbantį dėstytoją girdėtų stipriąja ausimi arba bent aiškiai matytų dėstytojų lūpas. Be to, pedagogai turėtų užtikrinti, kad kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams turėtų būti prieinami visi užrašai; jei reikia, besimokantieji turėtų turėti galimybę gauti papildomo laiko užduotims atlikti ir užsiėmimams pasiruošti. Tyrimo dalyvio siūlymu, jei įmanoma, dėstytojai turėtų naudoti prietaisą, pagarsinantį jų balsą ir leidžiantį studentui įsitraukti į paskaitą. Kai kuriose paskaitose gali būti naudinga pateikti dėstytojų internetinių seminarų stenogramas, siekiant užtikrinti, kad besimokantieji galėtų sekti paskaitą. Kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai turėtų būti skatinami bendrauti su kitais, raštu pateikti atsakymus į klausimus, atsakinėti per paskaitas. Vienas dalyvis atskleidė, kad kurti studentai ne visada gali pasinaudoti pasiūlymu bendrauti raštu, todėl kai kurie dėstytojai pasikliauja gestų kalbos vertėjais. Galėtume analizuoti, kodėl studentai nenaudoja rašytinės komunikacijos metodo, – galbūt dėl to, kad nesupranta klausimo arba nežino atsakymo, o gal tiesiog neužtenka drąsos. Į šį klausimą būtų galima atsakyti kitame tyrime, pagrįstame studentų požiūriu.

Tyrimo dalyvių teigimu, norint suteikti reikiamą pagalbą kurtiems ar klausos sutrikimą turintiems besimokantiejiems, labai svarbu įvertinti kiekvieno studento poreikius – dėl to dėstytojai turėtų bendradarbiauti ir bendrauti su pagalbos studentams komanda, kad būtų galima parengti rekomendacijas, kaip dėstytojas galėtų padėti ir kokie pritaikymai turėtų būti atliekami.

Siekiant užtikrinti studijų kokybę ir tinkamą pagalbą kurtiems arba klausos sutrikimų turintiems besimokantiejiems, kyla dar vienas klausimas: ar universitetai tinkamai parengia dėstytojus, kad jie galėtų studentams suteikti geriausią įmanomą pagalbą? Tyrimas parodė, kad tik vienas iš dešimties dalyvių teigia, jog universitetas anksčiau organizavo mokymus, kaip padėti kurtiems arba neprigirdintiems studentams; septyni dalyviai teigia, kad jų aukštosios mokyklos apskritai nesiūlė mokymų, kaip teikti pagalbą tokiems studentams; viena dalyvė pripažino, kad jos darbovietėje buvo siūlomi mokymai, bet, deja, ji ne-

galėjo dalyvauti dėl nepatogaus mokymų laiko, kurio nebuvo įmanoma pakeisti taip, kad būtų galima suderinti mokymus su esamu darbo grafiku. Vis dėlto, kaip pastebi respondentė, kolegos, galėję lankyti mokymus, apie juos atsiliepė teigiamai. Vienas respondentas dalyvavo mokymuose dirbdamas dar pradinių klasių mokytoju, bet niekada nedalyvavo tokiuose mokymuose dirbdamas dėstytoju aukštojoje mokykloje, nors dirba joje jau dešimt metų. Viena dalyvė neinformavo, ar ji dalyvavo, ar nedalyvavo tokiuose mokymuose darbo vietoje, bet ji teigia esanti kompetentinga pati rengti mokymus kolegoms universitete. Ši dalyvė kartu su kitais aštuoniais respondentais mano, kad aukštosios mokyklos neorganizuoja pakankamai mokymų. Vienas asmuo nėra tikras, ar darbo vietoje yra organizuojama pakankamai mokymų.

Tyrimas atskleidžia, kad aukštosiose mokyklose dėstytojams trūksta būtinų mokymų, kaip teikti pagalbą, kokius metodus taikyti, siekiant padėti kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams. Šiuo metu, pasak dalyvių, studentai gali gauti nurodymus, kaip naudoti programinę įrangą, gali naudotis kurčiųjų perspėjimo įrenginiu, garso indukcinės kilpos sistemomis amfiteatrinėse auditorijose. Pusė respondentų nurodo, kad pirmas dalykas, kurį kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai gali gauti aukštojoje mokykloje, yra asmeninių poreikių įvertinimas ir informacija apie galimą pagalbą.

Vieno universiteto atstovai, dalyvaujantys šiame tyrime, atskleidė, kad jų universitete yra tam tikra paramos teikimo procedūra: pagalbos komanda pirmiausia įvertina studentų poreikius ir tik tada pateikia rekomendacijas, kaip šiuos poreikius patenkinti. Pagalbos neįgaliesiems komanda neteikia paramos pati, bet skiria neįgalių studentų pašalpą (NSP) studentui. Kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams tenka atsakomybė susirasti reikalingas priemones ir įrangą, kad galėtų gauti pagalbą auditorijoje, nes universitetas gali skirti tik valstybės finansavimą ir pateikti sąrašą agentūrų, kuriose studentas galbūt galėtų gauti paramą. Pavyzdžiui, jei besimokančiajam reikia vertėjo, studentas turi jį susirasti pats ir sumokėti už jo paslaugą NSP pinigais. Tačiau ne visi studentai gali patys susirasti reikiamą pagalbą. Kaip atskleidžia Busby (2019) tyrimas, ne kiekvienas studentas gauna kokybišką paramą net ir radęs agentūrą, sutinkančią teikti paramą. Studentai skundėsi agentūrose įdarbintais ir į universitetus dirbti siunčiamais vertėjais ir konspektuotojais. Anot jų, besimokantieji buvo priversti ilgai laukti, kol galės pasinaudoti vertėjų ir konspektuotojų pagalba. Studentai niekada negali būti tikri, ar pagalbos sulauks per visas paskaitas. Panašu, kad agentūrų darbuotojai yra nepatikimi, nes vieną dieną jie gali pasirodyti auditorijoje, o kitą dieną nepasirodyti visai to nepranešę (Busby, 2019).

Taigi, jei vertimo ir konspektavimo paslaugos yra tokios nereguliarios, kaip studentai gali patirti sėkmę studijuodami? Tyrime dalyvavę aukštųjų mokyklų darbuotojai skundėsi stygiumi lėšų, reikalingų kurčiųjų ir neprigirdinčiųjų mo-

kytojų rengimui užtikrinti. Tikėtina, kad studentai nėra patenkinti net ir gavę valstybės finansavimą, nes trūksta pagalbos personalo. Universitetai turėtų apsvarstyti galimybę patys samdyti pagalbinių personalą, ne tik skirti valstybės finansavimą ir patarti, kur studentai galėtų rasti reikiamą pagalbą, daugiau investuoti į darbuotojų mokymą, kad šie galėtų padėti studentams auditorijose be vertėjo ar konspektuotojo.

Kaip rodo tyrimo duomenys (tai patvirtino visi tyrimo dalyviai), visi kursai ir užsiėmimai vyksta tose pačiose grupėse kartu su girdinčiais, kitais kurčiais ir (ar) neprigirdinčiais studentais. Visapusiška įtrauktis turėtų apimti papildomą paramą, įrangą ir išteklius, kad besimokantieji, turintys papildomų poreikių, galėtų mokytis ir bendrauti su kolegomis ir dėstytojais.

Bendravimas dažnai gali tapti problema paskaitų metu, grupinėse diskusijose, studentų tarpusavio diskusijose. Visi respondentai teigia, kad komunikacijos barjerai egzistuoja. Keturi iš dešimties dalyvių patvirtina, kad bet kokios kliūtys yra išsprendžiamos su papildoma vertėjo pagalba. Tyrimo dalyvių teigimu, kliūčių gali kilti ir tada, kai diskusijos vyksta bendroje auditorijoje. Tuomet kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai negali panaudoti skaitymo iš lūpų įgūdžių, dažnai priešais esančiam dėstytojui reikia pakartoti, ką jis sakė būdamas už studento nugaros. Tai sulėtina paskaitos tempą ir gali neigiamai paveikti kitus studentus. Kaip pastebi respondentai, svarbu apmąstyti mokymosi aplinką ir sėdėjimo vietų išdėstymą, kad jis būtų racionalus ir naudingas, kad visi galėtų bendradarbiauti.

Dalies respondentų teigimu, norėdami sumažinti tokius nepatogumus, kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai paprastai informuoja girdinčius studentus apie savo sutrikimą ir paprašo bendramokslį kalbėti aiškiai ir atsisukus į juos veidu, kad jie galėtų skaityti iš lūpų. Tačiau kaip tada kurti studentai ar studentai, turintys klausos sutrikimų, įsitraukia į grupinio darbo veiklą ir atlieka užduotis kartu su girdinčiais studentais? Du iš dešimties dalyvių pažymi, kad darbas grupėmis yra aukštojo mokslo mokymosi dalis, todėl tikimasi, kad visi studentai dirbs kartu. Respondentai pastebi, kad kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai dažnai pirmenybę teikia darbui su pasirinktais bendraamžiais. Vieno iš tyrimo dalyvių nuomone, kartais pagalbos darbuotojas, pavyzdžiui, konspektuotojas, trukdo studentų diskusijai, todėl grupinis darbas dažnai priklauso nuo to, ar studentai prisitaiko prie skirtumų ir nori būti „stebimi“ pašalinių asmenų.

Su kokiais dar iššūkiams kurti ir neprigirdintys studentai gali susidurti studijuodami ir kaip šie iššūkiams sprendžiami? Tyrimo dalyvių manymu, vienas didžiausių iššūkių universitete yra gebėjimas iki galo suprasti dėstomos medžiagos turinį. Vertėjai – gestų kalbos vartotojai – negali išversti kiekvieno žodžio, visos dėstytojo žodžiu pateiktos informacijos. Vienas iš respondentų teigia, kad tai gali priklausyti nuo vertėjo įgūdžių ir motyvacijos. Vienas iš dalyvių siūlo žodinę informaciją studentams pateikti spausdinta forma.

Kita problema, kurią nurodo respondentai, yra atskirties ir izoliacijos jausmas dėl nepatikimų pagalbos paslaugų ar pasikliovimo verbaliniu bendravimu. Vienas iš respondentų, be žodinių instrukcijų, siūlo mokomąją medžiagą pateikti rašytine forma, o diskusijų punktus pateikti skaidrėse arba lentoje. Tačiau ne visa informacija gali būti transkribuojama raštu, pavyzdžiui, garso įrašai, tinkla-laidės ir (ar) kai kurie vaizdo įrašai konkrečiomis temomis ir apie konkrečius dalykus. Kai kurie išteklių yra nepasiekiami, jei nėra subtitrų. Tai gali kurtiems ir neprisigirdintiems studentams sukelti daug nepatogumų, gali tekti nuolat prašyti pagalbos, kuri ne visada būna veiksminga.

Svarbu suprasti, kas lemia atskirtį ir izoliaciją universitete – pagalbos stoka ar bendraamžių atstūmimas. Remiantis šio tyrimo rezultatais galima teigti, kad vyrauja teigiamas požiūris į kurčius ir neprisigirdinčius besimokančiuosius bei kurčius ar neprisigirdinčius dėstytojus. Visi respondentai teigia, kad didžioji dalis girdinčių studentų specialiųjų poreikių turinčius studentus labai palaiko ir jiems padeda. Tačiau kai kurių dalyvių (dviejų iš dešimties) teigimu, vis dėlto galima pastebėti, kad yra studentų, linkusių laikytis atstumo nuo specialiųjų poreikių turinčių studentų.

Šiame kontekste kyla klausimas, kokią įtaką daro šios bendraamžių nuostatos kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų socialiniam gyvenimui? Dauguma (devyni iš dešimties) dalyvių nėra tikri dėl studentų socialinio gyvenimo, vienas tyrimo dalyvis mano, kad visi studentai su visais elgiasi vienodai, niekas neišskiria kurčių ir neprisigirdinčiųjų.

Šiuo tyrimu buvo siekiama atskleisti, ar aukštosios mokyklos suteikia pakankamai išteklių, reikalingų kurčiųjų ir neprisigirdinčiųjų įtraukčiai užtikrinti. Dauguma (aštuoni iš dešimties) respondentų teigia, kad aukštosios mokyklos neturi pakankamai išteklių ir neorganizuoja pakankamai mokymų, susijusių su pagalba studentams. Vienas dalyvis pasidalijo savo patirtimi ir atskleidė, kad aukštosios mokyklos priklauso nuo NSP finansavimo kurtiems studentams. Toks paramos būdas sustiprina priklausomybės ar deficito modelį, o ne socialinį paramos neįgaliesiems modelį. Kol kas aukštosios mokyklos nepasižymi įtraukumu. Vienas respondentas nurodo, kokie struktūriniai iššūkiai kyla teikiant pagalbą kurtiems ir neprisigirdintiems studentams. Deja, tik „turingesni“ universitetai arba tie, kuriuose studijuoja mažiau studentų, turinčių papildomų poreikių, turi daugiau išteklių paramai neįgaliesiems skirti ar papildomiems poreikiams tenkinti. Tyrimo respondento nuomone, kurtiems ir neprisigirdintiems studentams, studijuojantiems universitete, tinkama pagalba yra sunkiau prieinama nei studentams, turintiems papildomų poreikių dėl disleksijos ar fizinės negalios.

Šiame kontekste kyla klausimas, kas galėtų būti vertinama kaip geroji studijų praktika? Pusės tyrimo dalyvių teigimu, geroji praktika yra tai, kad aukštojo

mokslo institucija apmoko vis daugiau personalo, kaip reikia dirbti besikeičiančioje studijų aplinkoje, kaip patiems įgyvendinti pokyčius siekiant užtikrinti kokybiškas studijas kiekvienam. Vienas iš respondentų mano, kad geroji praktika yra tada, kai kiekvienas kurčias ir neprisigirdintis studentas turi vertėją, jam teikiamos konsultacijos, papildomi užrašai, užtikrinama visapusiška technologijomis grįsta pagalba besimokantiesiems. Tyrimas parodė, kad šiuo metu studentai gauna tik gestų kalbos vertėjo paslaugas paskaitų ar konsultacijų metu, o pagalbos rengiant grupinius pristatymus ar atliekant grupines užduotis stojama.

Tyrimo dalyviai pateikė rekomendacijas, kaip aukštosiose mokyklose galima būtų pagerinti neprisigirdinčių ar kurčių studentų įsitraukimą ir studijų kokybę. Pirmiausia siūloma išsiaiškinti studentų poreikius, įsiklausyti į besimokančiuosius ir juos išgirsti. Tai leistų teikti veiksmingesnę pagalbą studentams. Siūloma organizuoti daugiau mokymų, kuriuose dėstytojai galėtų išmokyti įvairesnių įtraukiojo dėstytojų metodų. Respondentų teigimu, etatinis gestų kalbos vertėjas ir kitas pagalbą teikiantis darbuotojas universitete galėtų pakeisti mokymosi ir mokymo procesą teigiama linkme. Respondentų manymu, būtų tikslinga taikyti lankstesnę atsiskaitymo už atliktas užduotis sistemą, skiriant daugiau laiko joms atlikti. Respondentų teigimu, labai svarbu užkirsti kelią socialinei besimokančiųjų izoliacijai.

Apibendrinimas

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė, jog tyrime dalyvavusiuose universitetuose, nepaisant teigiamų įtraukiančių studijų pokyčių, vis dar kyla iššūkių ir kliūčių, trukdančių užtikrinti įtraukias ir kokybiškas studijas kurčiams ir neprisigirdintiems studentams.

Tyrimas parodė, kad dažnai deklaruojamos teorinės nuostatos skiriasi nuo praktikos. Teoriškai kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų įtrauktis atrodo idealiai. Šių dienų technologijos ir pagalbos metodai yra įspūdingi. Tačiau dauguma išteklių nėra prieinami universitetams, dėstytojams ir studentams.

Apibendrinant galima sakyti, kad pagrindinės tyrimo išvados yra tokios: kurti ir neprisigirdintys studentai universitetuose dažnai susiduria su sunkumais, kadangi universitetinės studijos nėra visiškai prieinamos tokiems besimokantiesiems; trūksta išteklių ir reikalingų priemonių bei įrangos, kurią būtų galima panaudoti studijuojant; dėstytojai negali suteikti reikiamos papildomos pagalbos pažeidžiamiesiems studentams, kadangi jiems patiems neretai trūksta kompetencijų, specialių mokymų ir paramos iš universiteto administracijos; atsižvelgiant į tai, kad studijų programa išlieka vienoda visiems studentams, pasigendama studijų proceso ir atsiskaitymo už atliktas užduotis lankstumo; vis dar pastebima kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų socialinės izoliacijos apraiškų.

Literatūra

- Alexander, R. J. (2008). *Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking Classroom Talk*. 4th edition. Cambridge: Dialogos.
- Brown, M. P., ir Cornes, A. (2015). Mental Health of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adolescents: What the Students Say. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education. Empirical Manuscript*, 20(1), 75-81. <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enu031>
- Busby, E. (2019). Lack of Support in Universities Drives Deaf Students to Consider Leaving Degrees. *The Independent Newspaper*. Retrieved from: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/deaf-students-university-support-national-deaf-childrens-society-disability-degrees-a8949266.html?fbclid=IwAR17p1DR2OliZkMXqUOoi4K2_Ove72wwl-4Tjb7K9nJJqosWT_wO1NQAzsMc
- Daliel, B. K. ir Harland, T. (2018) *Higher Education Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Research Process*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2017). *Higher Education and Research Act: detailed impact assessments*. December 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/29/impacts>
- Ekins, A. (2017) *Reconsidering Inclusion: Sustaining and Building Inclusive Practices in Schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Frederickson, N. ir Cline T. (2015) *Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Third edition. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Government Equalities Office. *Equality Act (2010)*. UK Public General Acts. Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Hrastinski, I. ir Wilbur, R. B. (2016) Academic Achievement of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in ASL. English Bilingual Program. *The Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 21, 2,156-170, <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/env072>
- Hultqvist, E., Lindblad, S., ir Popkewitz, T., S. (Eds.) (2018) *Critical analyses of Educational Reforms in an Era of Transnational Governance. Series: Educational governance research (7)*. Switzerland: Springer Nature, Springer International Publishing AG.
- Knors, H. ir Marschark, H. (2014) *Teaching Deaf Learners: Psychological and Developmental Foundations*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Knors H. ir Marschark, M. (2015). *Educating Deaf Learners: Creating a Global Evidence Base. Perspectives on deafness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Lederberg, A. R., Schick, B., ir Spencer, P., E. (2013). Language and literacy development of deaf and hard of hearing children: Successes and Challenges. *Developmental Psychology*, 49 (1), 15-30. Doi:10.1037/a0029558
- Marschark, M., ir Hauser, P. (2012). *How Deaf Children Learn*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M., Lampropoulou, V., ir Skordilis, E. K. (2016). *Diversity in Deaf Education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M., Lang, H.G., ir Albertini, J. A. (2002). *Educating Deaf Students: from Research to Practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M. ir Wauters, L. (2008). Language Comprehension and Learning by Deaf Children. In M. Marschark and P. C. Hauser (Eds.), *Deaf cognition: Foundations and overcomes* (pp. 309-350). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Moores, D. (2001). *Educating the Deaf: Psychology, Principles, and Practices (Vol. 5)*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *A System in Crisis: The Daily Battle for Specialist Teachers*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/a-system-in-crisis-the-daily-battle-for-specialist-teachers/>
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *Almost Half of Deaf Students Start University Without Support*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/almost-half-of-deaf-students-start-university-without-support/>
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *More Than Half of Adults Don't Feel Confident Talking to Deaf People*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/more-than-half-of-adults-don-t-feel-confident-talking-to-deaf-people/>
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *Stolen Futures. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland*. Retrieved from: https://www.ndcs.org.uk/get-involved/campaigning/campaigns-england/stolen-futures/?fbclid=IwAR3sD_Ye7T6aSi7LkvoDzIy8LOtjqq21JjiKpgubBBORinrk6b86N6v-vPs
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *What is deafness? Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/childhood-deafness/what-is-deafness/>
- Price, G. ir Skinner, J. (2007). *Support for Learning Differences in Higher Education: The Essential Practitioners' Manual*. Staffordshire: Trentham Books.

- Reid, G. ir Peer, L. (2016). *Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Inclusive Practice*. Second edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Ruairc, G. (2013). Including Who? Deconstructing the Discourse. In: G. Ruairc, E. Ottesen, ir R. Precey (Eds.), *Leadership for Inclusive Education: Values, Vision and Voices* (pp.9-18). The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Rumrill, P., D., Cook, B.G., ir Wiley, A.L. (2011). *Research in Special Education: Design, Methods, and Applications*. Second edition. Springfield, Illinois, USA: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd.
- Scheetz, N., A. (2012). *Deaf Education in the 21st Century: Topics and Trends*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Spencer, P. ir Marschak M. (2010). *Evidence-based Practice in Educating Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Students*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swanwick, R. (2017). *Languages and Languaging in Deaf Education: A Framework for Pedagogy. Professional perspectives on deafness: evidence and applications*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- The National Archives. UK Public General Acts. Disability Discrimination Act (1995)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>
- Thomas, G. (2017). *How To Do Your Research Project: A Guide For Students*. Third edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2009). *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. World Conference on Special Education: access and quality*. Spain: Ministry of Education and Science.
- Warnock, M. ir Norwich, B. (2010). *Special Educational Needs: A New Look*. London: Continuum.
- Wearmouth, J. (2016). *Special Educational Needs and Disability: The Basics*. Second edition. Updated with UK SEND law and SEND Code of Practice in England. New York, NY: Routledge.

KURČIŲ IR NEPRIGIRDINČIŲ STUDENTŲ ĮSITRAUKIMO Į UNIVERSITETINES STUDIJAS GALIMYBĖS: JUNGTINĖS KARALYSTĖS PATIRTIS

Stefanija Ališauskienė, Indrė Ungeitytė
Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, Lietuva

Santrauka

Šiuo tyrimu siekta atskleisti kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įsitraukimo į universitetines studijas galimybes ir išanalizuoti universitetinio mokslo prieinamumą kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams. Siekta nustatyti, ar prieinamos būtinos priemonės ir įranga, reikalingos įtraukčiai studijose, kaip tenkinami studentų mokymosi poreikiai, atsiradę dėl klausos praradimo; siekta iširti, kaip studijų programa pritaikoma tokių studentų papildomiems studijų poreikiams tenkinti.

Kurtumas ar klausos praradimas gali sukelti papildomų sunkumų studijuojant universitetuose, nes ne kiekviena aukštoji mokykla gali suteikti reikiamą pagalbą pažeidžiamiesiems besimokantiejiems. Kurčių ir neprigirdinčių studentų įsitraukimas į studijas aukštosiose mokyklose yra opi problema, tačiau pasigendama šios srities mokslinių tyrimų ir įrodymais grįstos informacijos. Paprastai tyrėjai daugiau dėmesio skiria kurčių vaikų ugdymui pradinėje ar vidurinėje mokykloje nei studijoms aukštojoje mokykloje tyrinėti. Aukštasis išsilavinimas kurtiems ir (arba) neprigirdintiems asmenims gali duoti reikšmingos naudos, pavyzdžiui, padidinti įsidarbinimo galimybes, suteikti platesnes karjeros alternatyvas (Marschark, Lampropoulou ir Skordilis, 2016).

Tyrimo tikslas ir uždaviniai suformuluoti siekiant atsakyti į tokius probleminius klausimus: *koks yra aukštojo universitetinio mokslo prieinamumas besimokantiejiems, turintiems klausos sutrikimų? kokios būtinos priemonės, įranga, pagalba taikoma universitetuose, siekiant užtikrinti įtraukias studijas kurtiems ir neprigirdintiems studentams? kaip tenkinami klausos sutrikimą turinčių besimokančiųjų studijų poreikiai universitete? kaip studijų programa pritaikoma papildomiems šių besimokančiųjų studijų poreikiams tenkinti?*

Duomenys tyrimui rinkti taikant kokybinio tyrimo priegą (Rumrill, Cook, ir Wiley, 2011; Thomas, 2017). Dalyvių imtį sudarė aukštųjų mokyklų dėstytojai, dirbantys arba anksčiau dirbę su kurčiais ar neprigirdinčiais studentais. Iš viso apklausta dešimt respondentų iš trijų universitetų, veikiančių skirtingose Londono vietose. Duomenys šiam projektui rinkti internetiniu apklausos būdu pasitelkiant klausimyną, kuriame pateikta ir atvirų klausimų. Duomenys analizuoti taikant teminę analizę.

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė, jog tyrime dalyvavusiuose universitetuose, nepaisant teigiamų įtraukusių studijų pokyčių, vis dar kyla iššūkių ir kliūčių, trukdančių užtikrinti įtraukias ir kokybiškas studijas kurtiems ir neprisigirdintiems studentams.

Tyrimas parodė, kad dažnai deklaruojamos teorinės nuostatos skiriasi nuo praktikos. Teoriškai kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų įtrauktis atrodo idealiai. Šių dienų technologijos ir pagalbos metodai yra įspūdingi. Tačiau dauguma išteklių nėra prieinami universitetams, dėstytojams ir studentams.

Apibendrinant galima sakyti, kad pagrindinės tyrimo išvados yra tokios: kurti ir neprisigirdintys studentai universitetuose dažnai susiduria su sunkumais, kadangi universitetinės studijos nėra visiškai prieinamos tokiems besimokantiejiems; trūksta išteklių ir reikalingų priemonių bei įrangos, kurių būtų galima panaudoti studijuojant; dėstytojai negali suteikti reikiamos papildomos pagalbos pažeidžiamiesiems studentams, kadangi jiems patiems neretai trūksta kompetencijų, specialių mokymų ir paramos iš universiteto administracijos; atsižvelgiant į tai, kad studijų programa išlieka vienoda visiems studentams, pasigendama studijų proceso ir atsiskaitymo už atliktas užduotis lankstumo; vis dar pastebima kurčių ir neprisigirdinčių studentų socialinės izoliacijos apraiškų.

Autoriaus el.paštas susirašinėjimui: stefanija.alisauskiene@vdu.lt

INCLUSION OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES: EXPERIENCE OF UNITED KINGDOM

Stefanija Ališauskienė, Indrė Ungeitytė,
Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Abstract

This research project has been conducted in United Kingdom and in total 10 respondents have been questioned from 3 different universities based in London. The aim of the research was to reveal the possibilities of deaf and hard of hearing students to be included into university studies. The main objectives of the research are: to analyse the accessibility to universities for deaf and hard of hearing students; to enquire about the availability of necessary tools and equipment for inclusion and how disabilities caused by hearing loss are offset or compensated for; to investigate how the curriculum is adapted to meet the additional learning needs of such students. The nature of participants has been university additional learning support staff and teaching staff members (educators).

The qualitative approach has been applied for the research. The data has been collected by using online questionnaire, including spaces for comments. The data was analysed using thematic analysis as well as a compilation of the numerical results.

The main conclusion of the research is: deaf and hard of hearing students often face difficulties while studying at universities because institutions are not fully accessible to such learners due to lack of resources and other necessary tools and equipment which could be used while learning. Lecturers are unable to provide all additional support to vulnerable students by themselves, educators need more training and support from their workplace. Curriculum remains the same for all students but sometimes there might be exceptions related with time. Usually deaf and hard of hearing student can have more time to complete given tasks.

Keywords: *deaf, hard of hearing, inclusion, higher education, challenges.*

Copyright © 2021 Stefanija Ališauskienė, Indrė Ungeitytė. Published by Vilnius University Press. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited

Introduction

The participants of this research project are higher education lecturers which are or were previously working with deaf or hard of hearing students. All in all, 10 respondents have been questioned from 3 universities which are based in different areas of London. And they have shared their experience and opinion on the subject of this research project. Data for this project is collected by using a mixed method research design and using online questionnaire. Questionnaire will be analysed using thematic analysis as well as a compilation of the numerical results.

In regard to this research project, what will be seen are the kinds of issues that arise while providing inclusive education to people who are deaf or hard of hearing and staff in higher education institutions. Eventually, strategies on how to improve inclusion for deaf students will emerge in the recommendations.

Nowadays the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education is a very sensitive matter which should be considered more often. As there is little information given, and a small number of researches made on higher education provision for adults. Usually researchers pay more attention to deaf children's education within early years, primary or secondary school but higher education is important as well. As graduating from university and getting a degree can produce significant benefits in deaf and/ or hard of hearing person's life, including the increase of employment possibilities and broader career alternatives, together with increased earnings (Marschark, Lampropoulou, & Skordilis, 2016). However, sometimes deafness and hearing loss can cause additional difficulties while studying at universities because not every higher education institution is able to provide required support to such vulnerable learners.

First step towards understanding deaf and hard of hearing people needs is understanding what deafness is in general. It is known that there can be different degrees of deafness and different causes of it too. According to Spencer and Marschak (2010), degrees of deafness can be usually classified to four groups: mild, moderate, severe and profound. All degrees can be caused by various reasons and may appear at any time. Unfortunately, nobody can be certain that one day they won't need to face deafness from a closer perspective because at any time even a hearing person can become deaf unexpectedly. Deafness or hard of hearing might appear when individual is experiencing failure of one or another part of ear functions (NDCS, 2019). This may happen because of various external reasons such as infections (meningitis, measles, mumps, rubella, herpes and etc.) or severe jaundice, complications during pregnancy period (impacts the child), shortage of oxygen or severe head injuries or uncovering to loud and too powerful noise (Wearmouth, 2016). Therefore, according to statistics,

almost 50% of new-borns are experiencing deafness because of genetics cause (Wearmouth, 2016).

Nevertheless, causes of deafness or hearing loss does not determine quality of education that learner can receive. Following the legislation of Equality Act 2010¹, it is clear that all universities and colleges are supposed to be inclusive and they must make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to give high quality support to people who have special educational needs. All higher education institutions must make necessary adjustments needed for full whole school inclusion. Every university or college must have not only a required special equipment but also a disability support team which would be responsible for making sure that all adjustments are made and support is given to every student no matter what kind of disabilities or disorders he or she has. If students could get interpreters, note takers and other additional support from the beginning of their studies, learning outcomes could increase noticeably. After all, learners who are deaf and/ or hard of hearing, comparing with hearing learners, usually come to higher institution with lower educational and academic achievements and limited knowledge of verbal and written language used in previous educational institutions (Marschark & Wauters, 2008).

Literature review

The research project is about the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education (universities) and it is focused on what is being done, and what more could be done, to support staff in assisting students. In regard, a review of literature is addressed to research, policy and empirical findings in relation to widening access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and are studying in higher education institutions.

Firstly, it is important to understand what inclusion is. There are many definitions of inclusion in education, but which can describe it best? According to UNESCO (2009), inclusion in education is a process which implicates necessary changes and adjustments in schools and other institutions of learning that every individual would be able to meet their needs within education setting and gain new knowledge and skills regardless of peoples' disabilities and disorders. Full inclusion and involvement are crucial to human dignity, human rights, feeling of the satisfaction and the enjoyment, as well as being a full-fledged person (UNESCO, 1994). Moreover, the Salamanca World Statement (1994) states that inclusive education reflects on improvement and expansion of various strategies and methods that follows the idea of original equalization of favourable circumstances or possibilities (Frederickson & Cline, 2015). Special

¹ www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/your-rights-under-equality-act-2010

educational needs should be met at all times because after all it is education system and curriculum which need to be changed not the individual, who has special educational needs, himself/ herself (Knoors & Marschark, 2015). Disabilities should be compensated as much as possible by individual's abilities. Everyone can reach better goals if they receive right support and if they can face challenges which are not too easy or not too hard for them.

Nevertheless, there are barriers which can have negative impact on deaf and hard of hearing student's learning process and his/ her social life. One of the most common barriers is communication between deaf and hearing people. As Marschark, Lang and Albertini (2002) notice, deaf person usually needs to pay attention to a few information sources at the same time, for example, observing lecturer and simultaneously looking to a PowerPoint presentation. A constant attention redirection makes student misunderstand or miss out a part of information given by the lecturer or colleagues. Other barrier might be segregation and exclusion caused by communication difficulties. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) points out that every institution and organisation must treat every student equally despite special educational needs and disabilities of particular individuals as it is responsibility of educational institution and organisation to make 'reasonable adjustments' (Price & Skinner, 2007). Higher Education and Research Act (DfE, 2017) proclaims, that there must be equal opportunities to all people, enabling them to access and participate in any higher education provided by English higher education providers. However, not all required adjustments can be made during sessions because of lack of resources. Marschark, Lampropoulou, & Skordilis (2016) notice, that deaf and hard of hearing students seem to learn less during the sessions than other hearing colleagues. Mainly it might be because they do not receive full information, not everything can be translated exactly as the lecturer said since usually deaf student's language skills and vocabulary is narrower than hearing learners which cause misinterpretations (Marschark, Lampropoulou, & Skordilis, 2016). In regard, according to Scheetz (2012), first thing which learners with deafness or hearing loss must do right after enrolling to university is to request for a sign language interpreter and a note taker. Then, if required, higher education institution should provide all necessary circumstances for preferential seating opportunity in the class or/ and possibility to extend time for written tasks, tutoring (Scheetz, 2012). Moreover, universities should have computer-assisted real-time translation (CART) as well as computer-aided speech-to-print transcription (C-Print) which deaf or hard of hearing individuals can use (Scheetz, 2012). If deaf and hard of hearing students could have exact translation, of information shared at university, in written words and/ or sign language, learning outcomes and subject knowledge could appreciably improve.

In the higher education context, Warnock & Norwick (2010) claim that lecturers must focus on what particular student needs in order to make progress and at the same time underline the seamless continuation of personal abilities and special needs. After all, students with special educational needs are recognised only if they are unable to take all advantages from school or other education setting where usually same age group students are able to benefit without supplementary support or adjustments made towards matter of studies (Hultqvist, Lindblad, & Popkewitz, 2018).

Nevertheless, some people see inclusion as unrealistic matter because of variety of difficulties, challenges or lack of necessary resources. A similar opinion has Ruairc (2013), since he notices that others can understand the concept of inclusion as utopian because quite often it can be very far from the reality in many aspects. One of the issues why it is a problem is that the concept of inclusion usually is seen differently in policy and actual practice (Ekins, 2017). It is common to see idealistic point of view and all requirements written in policy, however, not everything is being fulfilled in educational institutions. For example, one of the articles published by The Independent newspaper and written by Busby E. (2019), is revealing current situation of inclusiveness, accessibility and provision of needful support for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in higher education. In the article current students are sharing their experiences of being a student in higher education. Unfortunately, those stories uncover such circumstances which make deaf and hard of hearing students rethink if it is worth continuing studying at universities if they can't get enough support and if quality of studies is deteriorating. Some students are forced to wait one year (sometimes less) in order to receive support from interpreters, specialist tutors and/ or note-taker in lectures (Busby, 2019). If individual can't understand what lecturer is saying in class then how can these vulnerable people gain enough knowledge, skills and how can they study all together with hearing classmates? When expectations of final results remain the same for all students, is it fair that someone becomes excluded only because of lack of necessary recourses, even when learners are paying for high quality studies just like everyone else... It is known that while you are a child, you can choose going either to special schools for deaf and hard of hearing students or to mainstream schools depending on your needs and where those needs can be met better. But why is it different in higher education? All universities should be inclusive enough and able to provide high quality education. Especially, when people have right support, difficulties caused by deafness or hard of hearing has no impact on other particular skills of such a person except hearing. These individuals have the same rights, as anyone else, to follow their dreams towards better, independent life and future employment. They should be able to choose profession which they like, no matter their disabilities and/ or disorders.

Higher education institution disability support team and educators must be creating right environment for every student as it is their responsibility to make equal access to the equipment, facilities and curriculum (Reid & Peer, 2016).

Nevertheless, after current situation analysis, it becomes obvious that still there is a long way towards full inclusion. Some institutions have their own disability support teams, but they are unable to provide support needed for deaf or hard of hearing students. In order to notice such a disgraceful situation sometimes it is totally enough to just open official online website of a few universities and look for information about disability support. Some universities provide support only to students who have dyslexia or movement difficulties but not deaf or hard of hearing students.

There is a possibility that the roots of difficulties and challenges, which deaf and hard of hearing learners face in higher education institutions, might be appearing because of the failure in meeting students' needs during their previous studies at school. Some people might quarrel that the opportunities for learners, who are deaf or hard of hearing, to succeed academically and socially have never been as good as now because during the last few years' accessibility for these vulnerable learners to communication in verbal and nonverbal (sign) language has improved significantly (Knors & Marschark, 2015). Additionally, Lederberg, Schick, & Spencer (2013) notice that in order to succeed in further studies, individuals must have sufficient literacy skills. Without reading and writing skills which were good enough, deaf or hard of hearing person cannot fully engage in all classroom activities, he/ she might become outcast from colleagues in the same class and eventually even experience academic failure (Hrastinski & Wilbur, 2016). However, with the right support any person should be able to succeed. Sometimes only the scope of support that individual requires can vary. For example, if students could have an interpreter, a specialist lecturer or at least a note taker during every lecture, learning outcomes should appreciably become greater. As well as students' motivation, self-esteem and better mental health condition would increase. Brown & Cornes (2015) believe, that education systems must accomplish procedures necessary for the screening of students, who might have some special need, at certain age range, protocols, specialists for the support of families of individuals with mental health issues and their lecturers.

One of Knors & Marschark (2014) conclusions while analysing research literature about educating students, who has deafness and/ or hard of hearing, is that more research must be done to support educational implementation with deaf individuals. However, there are quite a lot of studies made already in related fields which should influence higher education more (Knors & Marschark, 2014). Therefore, arguments on how to teach deaf or hard of hearing students

are usually influenced by solicitude with the matter of language policy and/ or academical placement (Swanwick, 2017). Moreover, as Moores (2001) notices, debates on teaching and learning in deaf or hard of hearing education are often expressed in terms of “instruction” and not entirely analysed as a process of a two-way returning connection trade. As a consequence to this, quality of information approachable on deaf and hard of hearing student’s language study, literacy, numeracy improvement and curriculum study barely clash with debates about real classroom practice (Swanwick, 2017). Nevertheless, the focus on theory and practical sides of education which questions the meaning of learning and what it should involve to its process, and how it could take place practically in the classroom is missing in the research and related literature resources (Swanwick, 2017). According to Marschark & Hauser (2012), there are more literature resources and researches made on how students who are deaf and/ or hard of hearing can learn than how to actually teach those students in everyday practice.

However, Swanwick (2017) suggests using pedagogical framework for students who are deaf or hard of hearing that is being seen within a sociocultural perspective and which embraces a dialogic theory of studying and includes the approach and routine of translanguaging. The mentioned approach gives an idea about directions and antecedence for practice and grants a framework for establishing all classroom approach, which helps practitioners to analyse and understand what is learning by itself and how it can happen (Swanwick, 2017). As Alexander (2008) notices, this makes practitioners pay more attention to what and how subjects are being taught in education setting, as well as what relationships of all students and lecturers are among each other and how good their cooperation and communication skills are. Nonetheless, according to Swanwick (2017), practitioners of deaf and hard of hearing education usually feel stressed and anxious because of accomplishment of ideas about how to make language in the classroom approachable and understandable to all deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Furthermore, according to National Deaf Children’s Society (2019), staff members who are working with students who have deafness and hard of hearing, are forced to work overtime in order to make their class as effective and informative as possible to all students only because of lack of support they get while teaching individuals with special educational needs. However not always the expected lesson goals can be reached.

Methodology and ethical considerations

Some of the children and youngsters with special needs have opportunities to go to special schools for deaf or hard of hearing students where all teachers and other staff members can communicate in British sign language. Nevertheless,

when it comes to adults, there are not so many options they can choose from while deciding their future path. Universities for deaf students only – do not exist. Most of higher education institutions claim that they are inclusive institutions, yet, the reality in most of the cases seems different when it comes to deafness or hearing loss. It looks like some institutions understand inclusion only in a way of putting all students to the same groups but inclusion is a matter much wider.

The aim and the objectives of the research were formulated to address the problem questions as follow: *Is the higher university education available and accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing learners? What necessary means, tools, and support are applied to ensure inclusive studies for deaf and hard of hearing students? How the study needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners are met at universities? How study curricula are adjusted to the additional study needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners?*

Taking into consideration the main aim of the research to reveal a possibilities of deaf and hard of hearing students to be included into university studies, there were foreseen the following objectives: to enquire the accessibility to higher education (universities) and research about the availability of necessary tools and equipment for inclusion and how disabilities are caused by hearing loss or deafness offset or compensated for. The last but not the least objective is to investigate how the curriculum is adapted to meet the additional learning needs of such students.

Data for this project is collected by using a qualitative approach (Rumrill, Cook, & Wiley, 2011; Thomas, 2017). Regarding this, research project can have larger scale of participants and answers to given questions can be expected to be more comprehensive. The Questionnaire consists of a demographic part and the questions that address the research project objectives (23 questions in total). Anonymous online questionnaire has been used for the data collection because it was expected that participants might be encouraged to answer all questions sincerely, without being afraid of mentioning things which might seem inappropriate or unethical to talk about at their workplace. Moreover, Daniel, & Horland (2018) notice that online survey can be more suitable = to collect quantitative data from institutions where this project was investigating educational circumstances/ phenomena. In this case, questionnaire can contain a set of questions with optional answers (given by researcher) and also there might be questions with qualitative dimension where participants could write comments and express their opinion in designated spaces of the question (Daniel & Horland, 2018).

Participants

Several universities of London were invited to participate in this research. However, only three universities agreed to participate. The rest of institutions which were invited - refused to take place in the research project because of three reasons. One of them was that institution doesn't have deaf and/ or hard of hearing students at the moment. The second reason was lack of resources. The third reason was that, as the university had claimed, they do not participate in any research made by students who are from other than their higher education institution.

In total there were 10 volunteers from university additional learning support staff and teaching staff members (educators) participating.

Ethics

Ethics can be seen and understood as a group of principles which helps to understand what is good and what is wrong (Thomas, 2017). While preparing to work with people, especially vulnerable groups, the researcher must see possible threats and minimise their risk. Sometimes if risk is too high, the researcher might need to stop his/ her research because people's well-being and their needs must be always set first. However, in this research there were no harmful risks, neither physical nor psychological. The only risks that could have appeared were confidentiality, safeguarding, consent, transparent and participants' willingness – they had to be willing to participate as unpaid volunteers. In order to minimise possible risks, all participants were informed about the research project and its aims before giving access to questionnaire and signing consent form. Volunteers were informed how the collected data would be used and where it would be kept safely afterwards. Also, it was explained that confidentiality is guaranteed by using anonymous survey method. At the beginning of the questionnaire the respondents could find a short reminder about the research itself, in order to make the research topic clearer. Furthermore, anonymity was guaranteed as the research project was done in three different universities which are based in different areas of London and because of this it is impossible to track which staff member completed questionnaire as well as to indicate at which higher education institution he/ she is working. There were no privacy or reputation matter risks caused neither to participating individuals and universities, nor to a social group of deaf or hard of hearing students. The respondents were informed about their right of withdrawing at any time before specific date when analysis of collected data begins.

Findings and discussion

In order to answer the main question of this research project and to see what is being done currently and what else could be done for full inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education (universities), various questions were given about the current situation at universities, what kind of problems and challenges there are at the moment and how things could be made better, how lecturers and students could deal with those challenges.

In the research project, have participated 6 female and 4 male volunteers altogether who are now working or previously worked with deaf and/ or hard of hearing students and they play various roles at universities. 5 out of 10 participants are in senior lecturer positions, 3 out of 10 works as lecturers at universities, 1 out of 10 is a disability team manager and the last one is not only a disability service manager but also a special needs teacher.

Most of the participants (6 out of 10) have more than 10 years of experience while working with deaf and/ or hard of hearing students. 2 people have 5 to 10 years of teaching and the rest of the participants (2 out of 10) have only 1 to 5 years of working experience with this particular group of students.

The results reveal that most of the respondents are highly experienced while working and teaching about special educational needs and disorders, and it also proves that the answers to the given questions are reliable and pointing out real issues of the current situation, related to research project aims such as accessibility to higher education, availability of necessary tools and equipment for inclusion, ideas about offset and compensation of disabilities, and how curriculum is and can be adapted to meet additional learning needs of students with hearing loss or deafness.

6 out of 10 people, participating in the research, believe that society's approach towards individuals who are deaf and/ or hard of hearing is mostly positive. However, 3 out of 10 participants has not answered the question at all. One respondent claim that society's attitude is negative. Arguably there is no such thing as one right answer or opinion about society's attitude towards deaf or hard of hearing students. It might vary from different groups of people and particular societies within specific higher education institution or city where it is based.

One of the questions reveals that the majority (9 out of 10 people) do not have any knowledge at all, or their knowledge is very limited about possible vocational choices for students with deafness or hearing loss. However, although those 9 people are barely familiar with vocational choices, 3 of them have added that they would refer students to someone who could give them a more specialized advice, for example, a career adviser.

According to Scheetz (2012), learners choose professions and field of study because of various reasons. Some individuals are firstly considering if they can get impressive earnings or well recognised and prestigious work placement with better social status, others feel determined by monetary rewards (Scheetz, 2012).

However, a few of the participants believe that vocational choices usually depend not only on students' special educational needs and disabilities or their abilities but also on peoples' interests, it may take a huge part in all vocational choice process. Students choose specialties according to their strengths, hobbies and interests. Regardless of the vocational choices made by deaf and hard of hearing learners, the overall objective is to prepare particular individual for future employment that he/ she could feel personal satisfaction and self-worth (Scheetz, 2012).

1 out of 10 respondents has noticed that deaf and hard of hearing individuals often go into education/ teaching field but as the respondent assumes, there is a possibility that the awareness about such choices can be due to respondents' own background.

Although, many respondents have only basic knowledge about vocational choices of students, 9 out of 10 people believe that there is no limit of professions that deaf and hard of hearing students can choose in higher education institutions. Yet, one respondent has not answered the question because he/ she has not enough knowledge about possible profession choices and limits. Participants saying that there are no limits have also added that, in theory, there is no limitation and all students are able to choose any specialty they like, nevertheless, in practice resourcing is often an issue. For example, one of the respondents have shared her experience and claimed that she worked with lecturers who were deaf, and who had extra support to enable them to successfully engage with students, but as austerity cut budgets, the onus fell on the individuals to demonstrate how they can fulfil professional requirements individually. Moreover, participant has noticed that there are also structural limits – no additional specialist support, advice or time is being given to lecturers working with students with any identified need (including deaf or hard of hearing students). Which means, support and successful access come down to how much extra work a lecturer is prepared to take. This reflects education institution 'inclusion' agendas, where there is limited or no specialist support for the lecturers, but high expectations of additional support. In other words, limit can be determined by how much support is available to students and lecturers from the university or department.

Therefore, sometimes there might be exceptions made on vocational possibilities because as one respondent has noticed, there might be professional

body requirements for some courses such as nursing where deaf or hard of hearing students may struggle in placement and/ or practice.

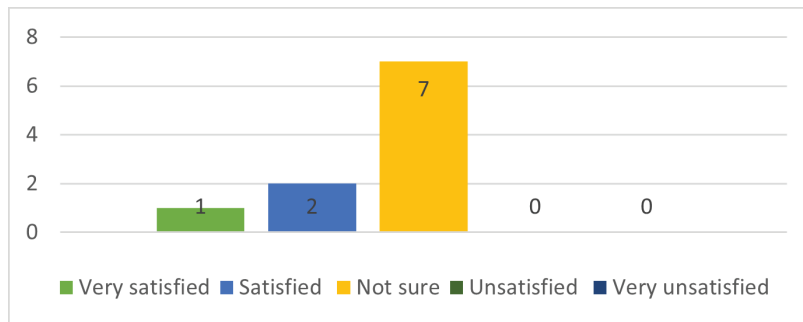


Fig. 1. Satisfaction of students who have hearing loss or deafness with their chosen studies.

Answering the question about student's satisfaction, most of the respondents are not sure if learners are satisfied with their chosen studies. 2 out of 10 participants (see above, Ex. 1) believe that students are satisfied and 1 out of 10 respondents (see above, Ex. 1) states that deaf and hard of hearing students are very satisfied about their chosen studies. However, as in the literature review you could see already, a recent article, published by The Independent newspaper, about deaf and hard of hearing student's satisfaction, shows that most of student experience at university were not so pleasant or satisfying because of various reasons such as lack of resources and support during studies (Busby, 2019). Some students were forced to wait for few months in order to get interpreter or note taker services.

From the answers given by the participants so far, another question arises, do the lecturers who decided to participate in this research project, support deaf and hard of hearing students themselves in their current or past role(s)? Gladly all 10 participants support students, which means that all the answers, given by the respondents, should be more relevant and clearly revealing current situation in this research area. Thus, answers to given questions can reveal how lecturers are (or previously were) supporting students with deafness or hearing loss. As respondents have stated, most of them are using methods such as note taking/ scribes, audio transcription, British sign language or interpreters, or giving extra time to deaf or hard of hearing students. Also, it is important to remember and use captions on videos and additional visual materials with subtitles, provide information visually as well as verbally, and post slides in advance that students could introduce themselves to a topic of coming lectures before it starts. Furthermore, if required, there should be

changes made in a seating plan too. As one respondent adds to this, it is crucial to consider seating plans and arrangements so that the learner with deafness and hearing loss could hear lecturer speaking with their 'good ear' or at least clearly see lecturers' lips for lip reading. In addition, educators should make sure that all notes are available for deaf and hard of hearing students to access, if required and needed, learners should be able to get extra time for tasks and preparation for the session. Moreover, as one participant suggests, where possible, lecturers could wear a device which amplifies their voice and enables the learner to engage more clearly with the lesson. In some lectures it might be useful to provide transcripts of lectures' webinars to ensure that learners are able to follow. Deaf and hard of hearing students should be encouraged to communicate with others and get engaged in written responses to questions and answer sessions. However, one participant reveals that some deaf students are not always able to take up the offer of written communication. So, some lecturers rely upon signers/ interpreters. We could analyse why students are not using written communication method, perhaps, it is because they cannot understand the question, or do not know the answer, or maybe they simply do not have enough courage. But this question can be answered in another research which would be based on students' point of view.

According to the participants, in order to give necessary support for learners with deafness or hearing loss, it is very important to evaluate every student's needs and then lecturers should cooperate and communicate with student's support team in order to receive recommendations on how lecturer could help and what kind of adjustments must be done for such vulnerable students.

When expecting good quality of support provided by educational institutions to learners with hearing loss or deafness, next question arises, do universities give enough training to lecturers in order to provide best support to students? Results of collected data demonstrate sad truth. Unfortunately, only 1 out of 10 participants says that university provided some training in the past of how to support students who are deaf or hard of hearing. 7 out of 10 participants claim that their higher education institutions haven't offered training on how to provide support to learners with deafness and hearing loss at all. 1 participant (out of 10) admits that her/ his workplace offered training but unfortunately, she was unable to attend because of inconvenient time of training which was not possible to change so that it would be possible to align with current work schedule. Nevertheless, as the respondent notices, colleagues who could attend training, had very positive reviews. 1 respondent admits having such training only when working as a primary school teacher but not during 10 years while working as a lecturer in higher education institution. Furthermore, 1 person has not said if she/ he received or not training at the workplace, but she/ he is competent enough to provide training by herself to other colleagues at

university. However, this person, together with other 8 respondents believes that higher education institutions clearly do not provide enough of training. One person is not sure if there is enough training provided by workplace.

This research project reveals the shortage of necessary support training for lecturers at higher education institutions, and methods used while supporting deaf and hard of hearing students but then what kind of support should students receive if there were enough resources and funding? Currently, according to the participants, students can get guidance with use of software, possible deaf alerter if required for accommodation, hearing loops in lecture theatres. Half of the respondents point out that the first thing what deaf and hard of hearing students can get from higher education institution is assessment of their personal needs from disability support team. And only then a particular student and lecturers are able to know what kind of support an individual needs and how learner can receive it.

In fact, one university, participating in this research, has revealed, that there is a specific procedure in order to provide support. Firstly, disability and dyslexia support team assess students' needs, and only then they make recommendations of how to support these needs. However, disability team does not provide support by themselves but instead they provide Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) funding to the student directly. Which means, it is deaf and hard of hearing students' responsibility to find necessary tools and equipment in order to get support in the class as university is able to provide only government's funding and to give a list of agencies where student could possibly find support. For example, if a learner needs an interpreter – the student would need to find one and then pay for its service with DSA money.

Therefore, not all students are able to find necessary support by themselves. As Busby (2019) article in the newspaper reveals, not every student receives high quality support even if they find agency which agrees to provide support at universities. Students were complaining about interpreters and note takers who were employed by agencies and sent to work at universities. According to them, learners were forced to wait for a very long time until they could use support of interpreters and note takers, and worst of all, students could never be certain if they would get support during all their classes. Looks like agency staff members are unreliable as one day they might appear in the classroom and another – they would be gone without even giving notice (Busby, 2019). So, if interpreting and note taking services are so unregular, how can student succeed with his/ her studies? Although higher education institution staff members, who participated in the research, complained about lack of funding given for teacher training related with deaf and hard of hearing support it seems that students are not satisfied even when they receive funding from government because

of supporting staff shortage. Perhaps universities should consider employing supporting staff by themselves, not only provide government funding and give advice where students could find the required help. Or perhaps it would be better to invest more money in staff training so that they could support students in the classroom even without interpreter or note taker. After all, as the research data demonstrates, all courses and sessions are being held in the same groups, together with hearing and other deaf and/ or hard of hearing students. All 10 respondents have confirmed this. But does inclusion mean only gathering all students in the same room? Full inclusion is supposed to be involving extra support, equipment and resources as well, that learners with additional needs would be able to study and communicate with colleagues and lecturers.

Communication might often become an issue during most classes, either in group discussions, peer discussions and also listening to the lecture. All 10 respondents claim that communication barriers exist. However, 4 out of 10 participants confirm that any barriers are managed locally with additional support from interpreter. Otherwise, as the rest of the participants' notice, barriers most likely might arise where discussions and feedback are taken from around the room. So, deaf and hard of hearing students are unable to use lip reading skills and often lecturer at the front would need to repeat a comment which he/ she made being behind a student who is deaf or hard of hearing. Consequently, it slows the pace of session considerably and it might negatively affect the rest of the students. As the respondents notice, it is important to reflect on the learning and seating to ensure that it is sensible and helpful and that all parties can collaborate well. In addition, according to other respondents from this research project, in order to reduce such inconvenience, deaf and hard of hearing students usually inform hearing students of their impairment and ask their classmates/ colleagues speak clearly and face them so they can lip-read, because mostly communication in the class is verbal with lip reading. But then how do students, with hearing loss or deafness, become engaged in group work activities and tasks together with hearing students? 2 out of 10 participants point out that group work is part of higher education learning and students with any or no disability are expected to work together. Moreover, respondents notice that deaf and hard of hearing students often prefer working with their chosen peers, as any other student would. In fact, participant adds that sometimes additional support worker, such as note taker, is seen as inhibiting student discussion, so group work often relies on the students being accommodating of difference and willing to be 'observed' by outsider. Yet, not every student can get such support because some universities do not have enough resources or they have other reasons mentioned before anyway.

Therefore, what other challenges deaf and hard of hearing students might be facing while studying and how potential problems are being solved?

Although one respondent does not have an answer to this question, the rest of the participants have similar thoughts. They believe that one of the most challenging things at university is ability of fully understanding what is being taught. Apparently, interpreters – sign language users - are unable to translate every word, all full information given verbally by the lecturer. But then - what is the reason for that? Is it because lecturers are talking too fast or because interpreter is incompetent to translate everything related with specific subject? One of the respondents suggests it might depend upon the skills and motivation of the interpreter. However, we do not have evidence about possible causes of poor translation. In order to find real reasons, there should be another research made which would pay more attention towards interpreters' skills, motivation and sign language knowledge. Moreover, one of the participants suggests overcoming problems by ensuring that whatever is said appears in print for them, nevertheless, this would depend upon the lecturer itself as there are no facilities at the university to do this (or at least in some universities).

Another problem, which has been noticed by the respondents is the sense of exclusion and isolation because of unreliable support services or reliance on verbal communication. Such problems are difficult to resolve, however, creating a climate where advocacy for the rights of students with disabilities is seen as central is crucial. Additionally, one respondent suggests providing written materials as well as verbal instructions, and keeping discussion points up on the PowerPoint slide or somewhere visibly on the blackboard. However, not all information can be transcribed in writing, for example, audio recordings, podcasts or/ and some video clips on specific topics and subjects. Some resources are being inaccessible if there are no subtitles what leads to missing nuances of discussions in sessions and seminars. It might trigger deaf and hard of hearing people's anxiety of having to ask for adjustments and adjustments being made grudgingly or not effectively.

When it comes to exclusion and isolation at university we should think if it is because learners, with deafness or hearing loss, are unable to receive all necessary support or also because that their peers/ colleagues are excluding them. Do deaf and hard of hearing students become outcasts? The research project demonstrates quite positive attitudes towards deaf and hard of hearing learners (and even towards deaf or hard of hearing teachers). All respondents claim that the majority of hearing students are very supportive and helpful towards such students with special needs. 2 out of 10 participants notice that even when most hearing students are supportive, nevertheless, it is possible to notice that some students like to keep distance from students with special needs, but this can be limited to the social groups that a deaf student might take part in. Consequently, can it influence deaf and hard of hearing students' social life? Are they excluded from students' social life? 9 out of 10 participants

are not sure about students' social life and 1 out of 10 respondents thinks that all students treat each other equally, nobody excludes deaf and hard of hearing people. However, keeping in mind that most of the respondents could not answer the question for sure, there should be wider research made which could involve students with deafness or hearing loss as well that they could share their experiences in order to find out the real situation.

This research project tried to reveal if higher education institutions provide enough resources necessary for full deaf and hard of hearing people inclusion, however, results are disappointing. 8 out of 10 respondents claim that higher education institutions have not enough resources, and they are providing not enough of training related with supporting students. The rest of the participants (2 out of 10) are not sure about the answer to this dilemma. One participant has shared his experience and revealed that higher education institutions heavily rely on DSA funding for all provision for deaf students and that they have not become very inclusive environments. Seems like the DSA funding resources are a bolt which reinforces a dependency or deficit model rather than a social model of disability support. Furthermore, other respondent indicates structural challenges in supporting deaf and hard of hearing students as universities are more focused on cost of running course. Unfortunately, only 'richer' universities, or the ones whose population exhibits less additional needs seem to have a better resourced support for disability or additional needs generally. Nowadays, higher education institutions which require higher entry tariffs tend to attract students who have already successfully found strategies to engage with their studies, and therefore have fewer students who might strongly rely on the support services. According to the research respondent's opinion, it is more likely to see deaf and hard of hearing students struggle in finding right support while studying at university than those students who have different, more 'common' additional needs because of dyslexia or physical disabilities.

Then what is a good practice after all? And what is not working so well? All participants have similar thoughts and point out various different comments on how these practitioners understand what good practice is. Half of the participants claim that good practice is when higher education institution provides training to as many staff members as possible about the same changes, they can make to their teaching delivery because even small changes are making a lot of impact. Other respondent adds that it can be difficult to ensure that all taught courses receive equal level of provision as this is due to local reasons in each course, and also the attitude of the provider. One of the respondents believes that good practice is when each deaf and hard of hearing student has an interpreter, at the same time ensuring that learners get full support with the use of technology as well as receiving additional notes and tutorials in class. However, at the moment it seems that students only get a signer for the actual

lecture and sometimes for a tutorial but there are times when students might need support outside the classroom as well, for example, while preparing group presentations or completing group tasks. Therefore, support after class time might be needed but not practically accessible.

There are many ways how inclusion of students with hearing loss or deafness can be improved in higher education institutions. Research project respondents suggest to practitioners firstly asking the students what they need because staff members need to hear and listen to the learner and know what his/ her special needs are so that the staff could improve in providing support. And then make recommendations based on medical evidence and student input. Furthermore, more training for staff would be very useful as well as if lecturers could learn more inclusive lecturing techniques. Additionally, half of the respondents believe that full-time interpreter at university could remarkably make difference in learning and teaching process. However, full inclusion might cause great challenges in higher education institution as not every matter can be fixed or depending on university and its staff. For example, it might be difficult to ensure regular support from note takers or interpreters as usually they come from agencies. Consequently, it might be irregular because universities are unable to control other institution staff and their service quality and provision. Therefore, one of the most challenging things which respondents notice in higher education is time and knowledge at universities is a very demanding environment with competing deadlines on a daily basis as it can be easy to side-line fewer demanding tasks, unless it becomes an institutional priority it is likely to get side-lined student voice being heard. Next most threatening challenge, according to the respondents, is social isolation because of communication barriers when students cannot express all of their thoughts and when there is huge risk of receiving only partial interpretation of lecturer's words.

Conclusion

This research project has uncovered many issues of inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education institutions (universities). Although during the past few years' situation has gotten better, unfortunately there still are many things that could be made differently.

The research has demonstrated how in most cases theory comes apart from practice. In theory inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing students seems idealistic. These days' technology and support methods are impressive. However, most recourses are not accessible to the students as universities cannot provide them and mostly because of low funding. Lack of resources disables learners grow and learn and receive high quality studies and support.

Deficiency of resources usually has a negative impact to educators' work as well. Lecturers are unable to make all necessary adjustments during their sessions by themselves as only a few of them have student support training.

All in all, the main inferences of the research are: deaf and hard of hearing students often face difficulties while studying at universities because institutions are not fully accessible to such learners because of lack of resources and necessary tools and equipment which could be used while learning. Lecturers are unable to provide all additional support to vulnerable students by themselves, educators need more training and support from their workplace. Curriculum remains the same for all students but sometimes there might be exceptions related with time. Usually deaf and hard of hearing student is able to have more time to complete given tasks.

There are few recommendations on how teaching and studying could become more effective: communication with deaf and hard of hearing person should be only face to face as deaf person might use lip reading. In addition, educators should explain discussions visually, use visual examples and written explanations. Deaf and hard of hearing students should get extra time for completing tasks.

References

- Alexander, R. J. (2008). *Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking Classroom Talk*. 4th edition. Cambridge: Dialogos.
- Brown, M. P., & Cornes, A. (2015). Mental Health of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adolescents: What the Students Say. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education. Empirical Manuscript*, 20(1), 75-81. <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enu031>
- Busby, E. (2019). Lack of Support in Universities Drives Deaf Students to Consider Leaving Degrees. *The Independent Newspaper*. Retrieved from: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/deaf-students-university-support-national-deaf-childrens-society-disability-degrees-a8949266.html?fbclid=IwAR17p1DR20liZkMXqUOoi4K2_Ove72wwI4Tjb7K9nJJqosWT_wO1NQAZsMc
- Daniel, B. K. & Harland, T. (2018) *Higher Education Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Research Process*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2017). *Higher Education and Research Act: detailed impact assessments*. December 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/29/impacts>

- Ekins, A. (2017) *Reconsidering Inclusion: Sustaining and Building Inclusive Practices in Schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Frederickson, N. & Cline T. (2015) *Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Third edition. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Government Equalities Office. *Equality Act (2010)*. UK Public General Acts. Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Hrastinski, I. & Wilbur, R. B. (2016) Academic Achievement of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in ASL. English Bilingual Program. *The Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 21, 2,156-170, <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/env072>
- Hultqvist, E., Lindblad, S., & Popkewitz, T., S. (Eds.) (2018) *Critical analyses of Educational Reforms in an Era of Transnational Governance. Series: Educational governance research (7)*. Switzerland: Springer Nature, Springer International Publishing AG.
- Knors, H. & Marschark, H. (2014) *Teaching Deaf Learners: Psychological and Developmental Foundations*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Knors H. & Marschark, M. (2015). *Educating Deaf Learners: Creating a Global Evidence Base. Perspectives on deafness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lederberg, A. R., Schick, B., & Spencer, P., E. (2013). Language and literacy development of deaf and hard of hearing children: Successes and Challenges. *Developmental Psychology*, 49 (1), 15-30. Doi:10.1037/a0029558
- Marschark, M., & Hauser, P. (2012). *How Deaf Children Learn*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M., Lampropoulou, V., & Skordilis, E. K. (2016). *Diversity in Deaf Education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M., Lang, H.G., & Albertini, J. A. (2002). *Educating Deaf Students: from Research to Practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marschark, M. & Wauters, L. (2008). Language Comprehension and Learning by Deaf Children. In M. Marschark and P. C. Hauser (Eds.), *Deaf cognition: Foundations and overcomes* (pp. 309-350). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Moores, D. (2001). *Educating the Deaf: Psychology, Principles, and Practices (Vol. 5)*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *A System in Crisis: The Daily Battle for Specialist Teachers*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/a-system-in-crisis-the-daily-battle-for-specialist-teachers/>

- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *Almost Half of Deaf Students Start University Without Support*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/almost-half-of-deaf-students-start-university-without-support/>
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *More Than Half of Adults Don't Feel Confident Talking to Deaf People*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/more-than-half-of-adults-don-t-feel-confident-talking-to-deaf-people/>
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *Stolen Futures*. Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: https://www.ndcs.org.uk/get-involved/campaigning/campaigns-england/stolen-futures/?fbclid=IwAR3sD_Ye7T6aSi7LkvoDzly8LOtjq21JjiKpgubBBORink6b86N6v-vPs
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2019). *What is deafness?* Registered charity: England, Wales, Scotland. Retrieved from: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/childhood-deafness/what-is-deafness/>
- Price, G. & Skinner, J. (2007). *Support for Learning Differences in Higher Education: The Essential Practitioners' Manual*. Staffordshire: Trentham Books.
- Reid, G. & Peer, L. (2016). *Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Inclusive Practice*. Second edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Ruairc, G. (2013). Including Who? Deconstructing the Discourse. In: G. Ruairc, E. Ottesen, & R. Precey (Eds.), *Leadership for Inclusive Education: Values, Vision and Voices* (pp.9-18). The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Rumrill, P., D., Cook, B.G., & Wiley, A.L. (2011). *Research in Special Education: Design, Methods, and Applications*. Second edition. Springfield, Illinois, USA: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd.
- Scheetz, N., A. (2012). *Deaf Education in the 21st Century: Topics and Trends*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Spencer, P. & Marschak M. (2010). *Evidence-based Practice in Educating Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Students*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swanwick, R. (2017). *Languages and Languaging in Deaf Education: A Framework for Pedagogy. Professional perspectives on deafness: evidence and applications*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- The National Archives. UK Public General Acts. Disability Discrimination Act (1995)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>

- Thomas, G. (2017). *How To Do Your Research Project: A Guide For Students*. Third edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2009). *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. World Conference on Special Education: access and quality*. Spain: Ministry of Education and Science.
- Warnock, M. & Norwich, B. (2010). *Special Educational Needs: A New Look*. London: Continuum.
- Wearmouth, J. (2016). *Special Educational Needs and Disability: The Basics*. Second edition. Updated with UK SEND law and SEND Code of Practice in England. New York, NY: Routledge.

INCLUSION OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES: EXPERIENCE OF UNITED KINGDOM

Stefanija Ališauskienė, Indrė Ungeitytė,
Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Summary

The research project is about the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education (universities) and it is focused on what is being done, and what more could be done, to support staff in assisting students. In regard, a review of literature is addressed to research, policy and empirical findings in relation to widening access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and are studying in higher education institutions.

Nowadays the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education is a very sensitive matter which should be considered more often. As there is little information given, and a small number of researches made on higher education provision for adults. Usually researchers pay more attention to deaf children's education within early years, primary or secondary school but higher education is important as well. As graduating from university and getting a degree can produce significant benefits in deaf and/ or hard of hearing person's life, including the increase of employment possibilities and broader career alternatives, together with increased earnings (Marschark,

Lampropoulou, & Skordilis, 2016). However, sometimes deafness and hearing loss can cause additional difficulties while studying at universities because not every higher education institution is able to provide required support to such vulnerable learners.

The aim and the objectives of the research were formulated to address the problem questions as follow: *Is the higher university education available and accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing learners? What necessary means, tools, and support are applied to ensure inclusive studies for deaf and hard of hearing students? How the study needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners are met at universities? How study curricula are adjusted to the additional study needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners?*

Taking into consideration the main aim of the research to reveal a possibilities of deaf and hard of hearing students to be included into university studies, there were foreseen the following objectives: to enquire the accessibility to higher education (universities) and research about the availability of necessary tools and equipment for inclusion and how disabilities are caused by hearing loss or deafness offset or compensated for. The last but not the least objective is to investigate how the curriculum is adapted to meet the additional learning needs of such students.

Data for this project is collected by using a qualitative approach. Several universities of London were invited to participate in this research. However, only three universities agreed to participate. In total there were 10 volunteers from university additional learning support staff and teaching staff members (educators) participating.

This research project has uncovered many issues of inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education institutions (universities). Although during the past few years' situation has gotten better, unfortunately there still are many things that could be made differently.

The research has demonstrated how in most cases theory comes apart from practice. In theory inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing students seems idealistic. These days' technology and support methods are impressive. However, most recourses are not accessible to the students as universities cannot provide them and mostly because of low funding. Lack of resources disables learners grow and learn and receive high quality studies and support.

Deficiency of resources usually has a negative impact to educators' work as well. Lecturers are unable to make all necessary adjustments during their sessions by themselves as only a few of them have student support training.

All in all, the main inferences of the research are: deaf and hard of hearing students often face difficulties while studying at universities because institu-

tions are not fully accessible to such learners because of lack of resources and necessary tools and equipment which could be used while learning. Lecturers are unable to provide all additional support to vulnerable students by themselves, educators need more training and support from their workplace. Curriculum remains the same for all students but sometimes there might be exceptions related with time. Usually deaf and hard of hearing student is able to have more time to complete given tasks.

There are few recommendations on how teaching and studying could become more effective: communication with deaf and hard of hearing person should be only face to face as deaf person might use lip reading. In addition, educators should explain discussions visually, use visual examples and written explanations. Deaf and hard of hearing students should get extra time for completing tasks.

Corresponding Author's E-mail: stefanija.alisauskiene@vdu.lt