

Abstract

Title: Influence of guide dog ownership on physical activity and quality of life of people with visual impairments

Objectives: The main objective of the thesis was to examine differences in quality of life and volume of physical activity in persons with visual impairments who own/do not own a guide dog.

Methods: It is theoretically empirical work. A quantitative form of questioning was used for the research part of this thesis. The method chosen for data collection was the standardised IPAQ questionnaire and the revised SF-36 questionnaire. The research group consisted of people with visual impairments who own/do not own guide dogs. The survey involved 15 people with visual impairments (7 women, 8 men), out of this number 8 respondents own a guide dog (5 women, 3 men) and 7 respondents do not own a guide dog (3 women, 4 men). The average age of respondents with a guide dog was – women 32 years, men 31 years. In respondents without a dog – women 32 years, males 38 years.

Results: The results showed up to twice the time devoted to regular physical activity in a group of visually impaired individuals who own a guide dog, compared to individuals without a dog. Individuals with dogs were measured at 17995 MET-min/week, compared to individuals without a dog who had 5368 MET-min/week. Necessary walking supports dog owners physical activity, which in turn has a positive impact on the physical but mental side of their lives and positively affects their quality of life. From this measurement it can be judged that guide dogs have a positive effect on improving the movement functions of their owners, as well as on their psychological side. Last but not least, a higher degree of socialization of the owner can be observed. For quality of life, respondents with a guide dog achieved better results. The overall quality of life is lower for women compared to men – 75 % for women and 78 % for men. In respondents without a guide dog, men again achieve better results than women – women 66 %, men 71 %.

Keywords: Guide dog, visual impairment, health, movement, physical activity, quality of life, compensatory aid, independent movement