

Abstract

Education is a tool towards upwards social mobility, and it is therefore essential to ensure equal access to it for all groups in society irrespective of their social standing or state of health. One of the many social groups faced with the risk of worsened access to higher levels of education in particular are the disabled, who, at various phases of their educational careers, face restrictions and barriers that substantially impede the achievement of higher levels of education.

The central theme of the dissertation is the accessibility of university education for the disabled, that is, their chances of fully integrating into academic life and the university environment and successfully complete their studies there. The theoretical part of the thesis creates a broader informational framework for the chosen theme, presents varying concepts of key thematic constructs and places them within the relevant thematic framework – the sociology of education. The theoretical section also deals with the theory of educational inequalities and individual phases of the education process for the disabled.

The quantitative study carried out primarily addressed the motivation of these students to begin studying at university, as well as the factors influencing their selection of field of study. The study was also interested in the barriers that students may encounter in the course of their studies and the resources that they may have at their disposal to overcome them. The outcome of the study was the monitoring of the success of disabled students, expressed in both subjective terms and objectively, on the basis of the re-sitting of exams and length of study period. The theoretical starting-point was Tinto's model of university student retention (Tinto, 1975). The study was carried out at Charles University in Prague and involved the all disabled students at the institution.

Keywords:

Educational inequalities; university study; disabled students; motivation to study and choice of subject; resources and barriers to study; success of study