

Abstrakt:

This thesis is concerned with compensatory mechanisms used by people with a lighter form of autism spectrum disorder (shortly ASD) in social situations. In terms of ASD, compensatory mechanisms are labeled as camouflage, because they hide symptoms of autism. Camouflage can, according to research results, complicate the diagnostic process and lead to ASD not being recognized, especially in women. The theoretical part of this thesis deals with the description of today's understanding of ASD. It shows information about the diagnostic process and the symptomatics of ASD. It also describes the differences in the severity of ASD and the different symptoms of autism in men and women. The last chapter is concerned with the issue of compensatory mechanisms and camouflage in people with ASD. The empirical part of this thesis includes a quantitative research that explored the level of camouflage in 170 respondents using a translated version of CAT-Q (*Camouflaging Autistic Traits Questionnaire*), that was distributed online. The results show a higher level of camouflage in people with a mild form of ASD, compared to people without ASD. The research also shows that the level of camouflage in people with ASD is higher in female respondents than in male respondents. The research found a positive correlation between the level of camouflage and age when determining the diagnosis. These findings correspond with the hypothesis that camouflage can affect the diagnostics of mild forms of ASD, especially in women.

Keywords:

Autism, autism spectrum disorders, camouflage, compensatory mechanisms