

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on adults with Asperger syndrome, more specifically on parenthood. As these people, just like everyone else, have a right to have children and become parents, this thesis deals with how people with Asperger syndrome themselves view this issue.

The theoretical part first presents a description of Asperger syndrome, how it manifests and the process of diagnosis. Then the period of adolescence and adulthood is described. Finally, the thesis deals with the issue of supporting people with Asperger syndrome.

The research part states the objective of the thesis which is to find out what parenthood and family means to people with Asperger's, and whether in the Czech Republic there is any form of support offered to these people regarding parenthood and raising children. The qualitative research method was selected for this thesis and the specific method of questioning, or more specifically, interviewing. The interviews were conducted remotely per the request of the respondents. Subsequently, the thesis presents a characteristic of the sample group which comprised adults with Asperger syndrome, then the process of data processing during which each statement was given a code which was then assigned to a specific category.

The final part of the thesis presents the results. It has been determined that to people with Asperger syndrome, family means close individuals, parents and children. Furthermore, family offers them a safe haven, support, mutual respect, a sense of stability, and understanding. Some of the respondents also associate family with dependency and a burden. Regarding the question of parenthood, the research showed that for people with Asperger's it means a gift, commitment, a responsibility. One must reevaluate one's life, be a friend to one's child, to raise the child and provide the child with an education, all of which requires a great effort. In regards to the support potentially provided to people with Asperger's by the government, the research shows that these people are not provided with services focused on adults, for example communication training for adults. Some of the respondents would welcome courses or workshops which would explain the thinking of the "intact" population to people with Asperger's. Furthermore, the majority of respondents would welcome services focused on raising children.

KEY WORDS

Asperger syndrome, parenthood, autism spectrum disorders, family, support