Poster

SELF ESTEEM AND PERSONAL WELLBEING IN EMERGING ADULTHOOD, A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Federica Gullo, Laura García-Alba and Jorge F. Del Valle

University of Oviedo

Introduction

International research indicates that young people who come of age in the childcare system, being in an out-of-home placement (residential or family foster care), are at a disadvantage compared to the general population. Care leavers are a vulnerable population due to its history of abuse, neglect and family adversities and, when they became of age, they are forced to make a compressed and accelerated transition to adulthood. In fact, they are discharged from the system and most of the time they haven't the support of their families. Therefore, this immediate adulthood puts them at serious risk of social exclusion.

Objective

The aim of this work was to explore the levels of self-esteem and well-being of these young people, as well as to examine the relationship between these constructs and other variables of interest, especially gender.

Method

The study has been carried out in different regions of Spain, on the population of care leavers aged 18 to 25 years which remain linked to the protection system due to the aftercare support they receive in their transition to adult life from local authorities.

They were interviewed to collect information on different aspects of their current and past situations. In addition, two standardized tests were applied: the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE), which is one of the most used scales for the global measurement of self-esteem, with items focused on feelings of respect and acceptance of oneself, and the Cummins Perceived Personal Well-being Scale (PWI), which evaluate satisfaction with different areas of life.

Results

Results show that women have lower levels of self-esteem and perceived wellbeing than men, and that there is a positive correlation between these two constructs.

Conclusion

This is consistent with what international research has demonstrated, that girls have specific characteristics and difficulties that must be approached appropriately. Thus, it is important to take these differences into account by adopting a gender perspective in intervention with young people, when they are still in the protection system but also when they leave it.