

**АКТУАЛЬНІ
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ПРАКТИЧНОЇ
ПСИХОЛОГІЇ**

Збірник наукових праць

Міжнародної науково-практичної інтернет-конференції

17 травня 2024 р., м. Одеса

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May 17, 2024

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Одеса – 2024

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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TWO SCHOOLS: A LONGITUDINAL QUALITATIVE STUDY ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF THE GAP YEAR

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It is well known that globalization is leading more and more people to choose not only to take a holiday abroad or to live in another country but also to spend a year traveling around the world. This phenomenon, also known as a gap year, is not uncommon for graduates after leaving school before entering another educational institution. Although the phenomenon is becoming increasingly popular, there is hardly any published research conducted in Lithuania in line with the qualitative paradigm. In particular, there is a lack of research examining the long-term experience of taking a year off from studies. Therefore, we present a qualitative study that interviewed 4 participants at three stages: when they were preparing for the gap year (while still in the twelfth grade), 3 and 6 months after the start the year off from studies. The study followed a constructivist philosophical paradigm, using reflexive thematic analysis. The 12 main interviews included in the study, as well as the pilot interviews, were conducted. Four participants are from different cities in Lithuania, aged 18-20 at the time of the study, of whom two identify as female, one as male, and one as non-binary. During their free time from studies, they were in different countries, engaged in different activities such as work, volunteering, and traveling. They found that while looking forward to the gap year, they felt a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others, a sense of excitement about the expectations they had for the year ahead, and the importance of support. Young people feel a sense of responsibility towards themselves in terms of finances, planning for the gap year and sticking to it, balancing the last year of school with the planning for the gap year, and a sense of guilt towards others. For graduates, the anticipation is exhilarating because of the expectation of self-discovery, of an easy, carefree time that is often seen in an idealized way. Participants in the study identify the importance of support: from within and from without. A preliminary analysis of the results on the experience of the time free from studies reveals a wide range of experiences, the search for strategies to overcome difficulties, and the (mis)correspondence between expectations and reality. This study provides a better understanding of the possible experiences of young Lithuanians during their gap year, which is valuable new knowledge in the current scientific discourse on mobility and young people's self-realization in modern society.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT VITALITY, DIFFERENT PERFECTIONISM DIMENSIONS, TRAIT MINDFULNESS AND SELF-COMPASSION

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Subjective vitality is defined as a positive feeling of aliveness and energy and it is a crucial aspect of well-being [1]. Previous studies indicate that mindfulness and self-compassion enhance subjective vitality, while perfectionism is a significant risk factor for student well-being. However, various empirical research exploring the link between perfectionism and vitality reveals conflicting results. These inconsistent findings could be linked with the differentiation of adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism subtypes and with factors that could potentially mitigate the harmful consequences of perfectionism. The purpose of this research was to evaluate the relationship between university students' subjective vitality and perfectionism along with two protective factors – trait mindfulness and self-compassion.

105 students participated in this research. Their age ranged from 18 to 33 years ($M = 21.9$; $SD = 2.35$). The majority of participants were female (73%) and undergraduate students (81%). Respondents filled out self – report scales that measured perfectionism [5], subjective vitality [4], trait mindfulness [2] and self-compassion [3]. The data were analyzed using cluster analysis, analysis of variance and regression analysis.

The findings of this research showed significant differences in subjective vitality, self-compassion and trait mindfulness between all participant groups, which were established according to perfectionism subtypes. All of the aforementioned constructs were highest among adaptive perfectionists. Non-perfectionists exhibited a fewer of these traits, while maladaptive perfectionists were characterized by the lowest scores of vitality, self-compassion, and trait mindfulness. Regression analysis showed that trait mindfulness and self-compassion independently predicted subjective vitality even when taking the effects of perfectionism traits into consideration.

The findings of this research suggest that trait mindfulness and self-compassion might be important factors in relation to higher student vitality, while maladaptive perfectionism is a risk factor for subjective vitality. These results could be used in creation of practical interventions for nurturing student well-being and enhancing vitality.

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