



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Confidence in the future and hopelessness – experiences in daily occupations of immigrants with late effects of polio

Interview study with immigrants from East Africa

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Migration

Migration has increased all over the world

Swedish society has a growing number of immigrants

1,4 million habitants in Sweden are immigrants,
15% of the total population

(Ebbeson U, 1997; Statistics Sweden 2010)

Immigrant



A person who migrates into a country as a settler

Oxford English Dictionary

Immigrants life situation

Immigrants seem to have poorer health than native-born Swedes

Immigrants health appears to be influenced by a variety of factors:

Unemployment

Inferior position in the labour market

Social conditions

Lack of social support

Discrimination

Poor knowledge of Swedish

(Sundquist J. 1995; Report SOU 1998:139; SoS- report 2003:3; Akhavan 2004)

Culture

A part of the environment

Defined as socially learned consciousness which is held in common and transmitted and preserved thought communication

Culture is neither constant or static nor as timeless, but more as a shared and negotiated system about meaning that people learn by acting and interpreting behaviour

(Kielhofner 2007, Sachs 1987, Lassiter 2002)

Immigrant with disability

Number of immigrants with disability in Sweden about 80 000 – 90 000 persons

Life conditions for immigrants with disability are unfavourable implying a “double vulnerability”

Polio in Sweden

The last epidemic of polio in Sweden was 1953

Prevalence of polio sequelae 186/100,000 inhabitants

The number of polio survivors in Sweden is estimated to be about 15 000 – 20 000

(Ahlström G. et al 1993)

Aim

To explore and describe how immigrants with late effects of polio experience their daily occupations

Method

Qualitative research method – Grounded Theory

Data were collected by means of tape-recorded interview

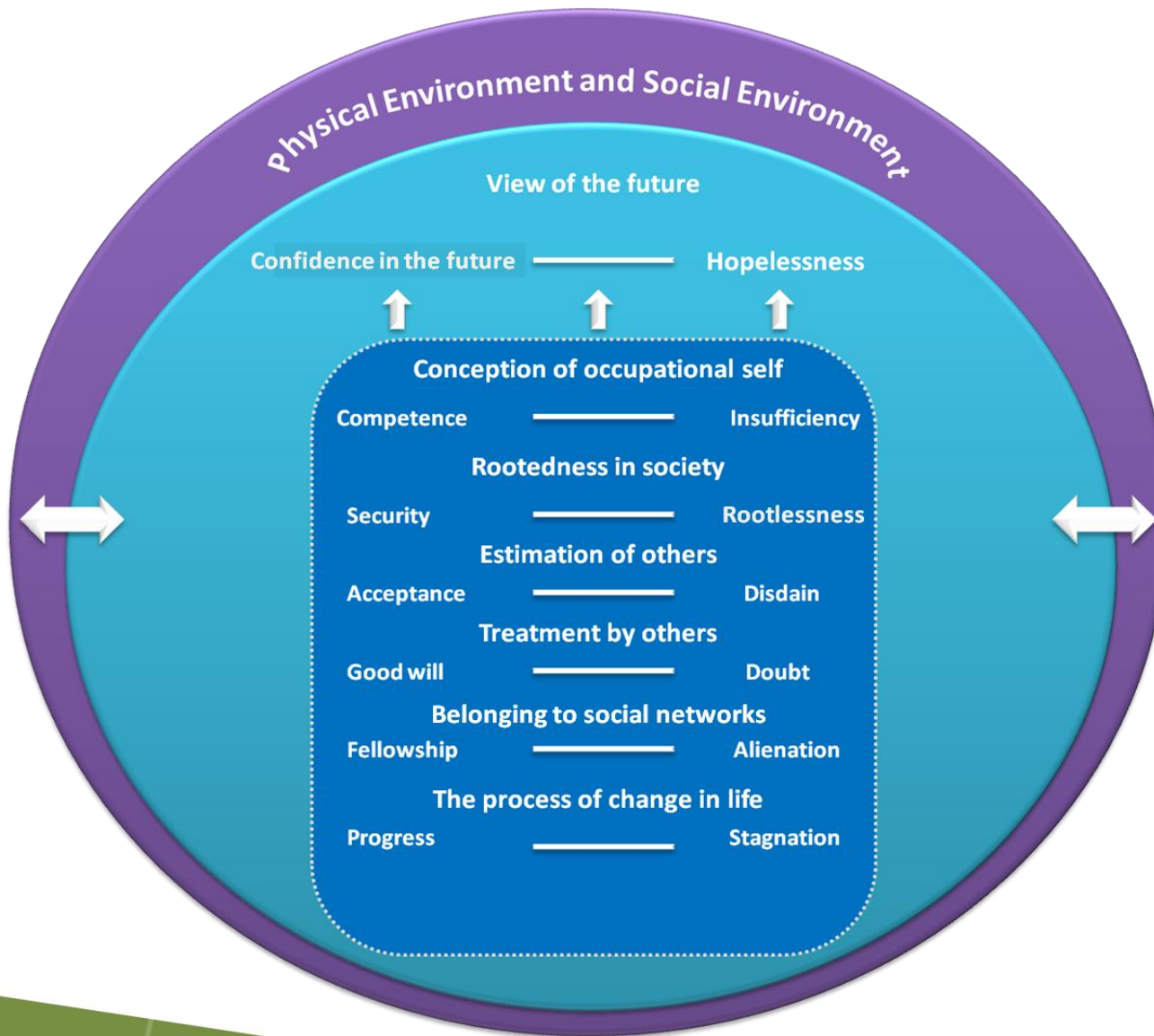
Questionnaire was used for socio-demographic data, housing conditions and assistive devices

Participants

- 12 persons with late effects of polio
- Aged 20 – 42 years (mean 36)
- Countries of origin: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda
- Migration to Sweden: 1978 - 2001



The participants' experiences in daily occupations



Physical environment

- Climate limitations

Slippery surfaces, snow and cold

- Compensatory arrangements

Assistive devices, transportation and homecare services

- The difficulties related primarily to their own disability

Social environment

Private sphere



Public sphere



Rootedness in society

Security

Basic living conditions

- Peace
- Democracy
- Justice

Access to public services

Rootlessness

Poor knowledge of Swedish

Poor understanding of the social system

Estimation of others

Acceptance

Disability and equality

Treatment as equal and healthy

Disdain

Lack of trust

Concealed belittlement

Treatment by others

Good will

Understanding, helpfulness

Good contact, support

Doubt

Lack of comprehension

Poor knowledge of polio
and its consequences

Belonging to social networks

Fellowship

Sense of togetherness

Alienation

Feeling of loneliness and
of being outside

The process of change in life

Progress

New occupational possibilities

Stagnation

Disruption of life cycle

Conception of occupational self

Competence

Live like everybody else

Self-esteem

Insufficiency

Impairment and
limitations in daily
occupations

Need of help

View of the future



Confidence in the future

Hopelessness

Conclusions

- Individual treatment
- Cultural consciousness and sensitivity to cultural diversity
- The importance of participating in daily occupations
- The importance of being part of social network
- Structural changes are required in society, in order to allow continuity of contacts and cooperation between different institutions and authorities

Thank You!



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