

**ERFCON2017.0281 The Use of Beekeeping and Apitherapy in Improving the  
Quality of Life in Elderly and Persons with Disabilities**

R. Martinec\*, J. Luketa-Marković , R. Pinjatela , M. Dobranović , J. Šarčević

Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia; Association for  
Promotion of Equal Opportunities, Croatia; University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and  
Rehabilitation Sciences, Croatia; Faculty of Education and Rehabi

\* renata.martinec@erf.hr

**ABSTRACT**

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Although the use of beekeeping and apitherapy have been presented since ancient times the therapeutic effect of dealing with bees in the field of education and rehabilitation is still poorly considered. Therefore, the aim of this study was to determine the influence of beekeeping and apitherapy on quality of life in elderly and persons with disabilities. For this purpose, a survey was applied that included assessment of demographic data, health status and different kind of benefits that are related to beekeeping and apitherapy. The survey was carried out on a sample of 104 respondents (men 83%, women 17%), average age 51.6 years (range 25-93 years). 63% of respondents had some kind of disabilities, such as visually impairments, hearing disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic diseases or mental disorders. Results obtained in this investigation showed that respondents assessed beekeeping relaxing (89 %), as form of physical activity (75%), or like escape from everyday problems (81 %). 82 % of respondents use own bee products in preventive or curative purpose. Also, 73% of respondents stressed that beekeeping support their social communication. Some respondents (29%) were included in beekeeping because of financial reasons. Respondents younger than 40 years were significantly more involved in beekeeping because of financial reasons than respondents aged 41-55 years ( $p = 0.003$ ). Descriptive analysis of results indicated that beekeeping could improve relaxation, satisfaction, social benefits, financial income, social contacts and physical activity in elderly and persons with disabilities. Further investigation should be done directed to recognition of specific needs of participants included in beekeeping, as well to adjustment specific approaches and tools needed to work in the apiary. In accordance with these findings an appropriate education program could be provided contributing better inclusion of elderly and persons with disabilities in the world of beekeeping and apitherapy. These areas of activity can improve the psychological, physical and health status of the participants that also can be reflected in the improvement of the quality of life in this population.

**ERFCON2017.0292 Run, Forest, Run! – the Assessment of Inclusiveness of a  
Literary Work**