Abstract

The purpose of this study was to test differences in psychological and technological resources, as well as factors of distress, among adults with developmental intellectual disabilities (IDD) in relation to the use of the Zoom application during the time of COVID-19. As part of the study, the following hypotheses were tested: (a) the presence of differences in distress factors (loneliness and stress) among adults with IDD who used Zoom application, and those who did not use Zoom during the time of COVID-19; (b) the presence of differences in psychological resources (hope, optimism and resilience), and in practical-technological resources (attitudes and motivation to use ICT means) between the groups; (c) the contribution of background variables (gender, type of residence, use of Zoom), distress factors and technological, psychological and practical coping resources on the motivation to use ICT means. The sample consisted of 35 adults with IDD (MCA = 40.06, SD = 11.02) of which 57% (N=20) learned how to use Zoom application during COVID-19 period and 43% did not (N=15). Two tools were used to assess mental age and basic cognitive level of the subjects, a tool for testing the degree of use of technology, as well as tools for testing coping resources and distress factors of the subjects. From the findings, it appears that a moderate level of loneliness and stress was found in both groups. However, the group that used the Zoom app showed higher scores on the hope index and in motivation to use the technology. Regression analysis indicated that the level of resilience and the index of positive attitudes towards technology among Zoom users made a significant contribution to the explained variance of the motivation to use technology. The ability of the research findings to shed light about graduates with IDD during the emergency routine such as the one imposed on them during COVID-19 emphasizes the importance of the study. Considering the findings that indicated higher coping resources among graduates with ASD who used the Zoom application, we recommend considering interventions that will include learning ICT tools' usage for graduates with IDD. Limitations, conclusions, and additional implications are discussed in the discussion section.