Inclusion as opening of the school towards a child and deinstitutionalisation

Aleksandar Chordikj 1
Slavica Markovikj 2

Faculty for Special Education Teachers-Belgrade 1
School for Special Education "Milan Petrovikj"-Novi Sad 2

Abstract

Inclusion requires the school to follow the development levels, quality of development harmony and forms of handicap in development of children and adolescents that are included in the process of education. This implies that it requires reorganisation of training of teachers and establishment of a multi-disciplinary team: teachers, special education teachers, pedagogues and psychologists.

At the same time it requires the gradual transfer of handicapped persons from the huge system of centres into day care centres that are going to be in the vicinity of necessary health care institutions and school centres that these children can get included into depending on the level of their capabilities. Special attention is paid to the work with parents, as extremely significant members of a team, in deciding on the profile of education, vocational training and accommodation of these children and adolescents.
Vo vojnom vo tekot na poslednite deset godini i smestuvawe vo dnevni centri vo pogolemite gradski sredini. So ova rabotata so licata so hendikep 1 se odviva{e odvoeno od procesot na vospituvawe, obrazovanie i stru~no ospobo~uva~e na masovnata populacija.

Spored najnovite istra`uvawa, 2003 godina, vrz osnova na pleriminarni rezultati na primerot od 345 u~enici od II, III i IV odelenie vo belgradske redovni osnovni u~ili{ta, spored rezultatite na AKADIA-testot, za-teknuvame sli~na situacija – okolo 10% u~enici so te{kotii vo u~eweto. (4)

According to the latest researches (carried out in 2003) and based on preliminary results of AKADA test carried out on the sample of 345 pupils of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades of regular elementary schools in Belgrade, we find the similar situation – about 10% of pupils with difficulties in learning. (4)

1 Licata so hendikep vo ovoj trud se odnesuva~ na segmentot na lica so posebni potrebi, no ne i za licata so o{teten vid, sluh i telesna invalidnost

1 For the purpose of this paper persons with handicaps are mainly referring to the segment of persons with special needs, and not for persons with damaged sigh, hearing and physical disabilities
We should also add that out of the total elementary and secondary school population only far less than 1% of them are included in special education. We can compare this with the situation in Europe based on the publication titled “Education of Pupils With Special Needs in Europe” 2 (8) for the year 2003.

Under the influence of modern trends within the humanistic thought on this issue we are trying to adapt our system of work with persons with special needs to modern scientific findings and modern tendencies that intersect with our cultural circle. In that sense we shall point out the theoretical foundations and background that are the starting points in our work, the problems that we are facing and basic assumptions that we wish to achieve.

Theoretical background

All human beings, regardless the possible handicap, have the need to express themselves in the social field up to the maximum extent of capacities that they dispose with. For example, persons with senso-motoric handicaps and preserved intelligence understand the reality just as others do, but communication of mental and emotional contents is frustrated at the level of mere communication through a glance, hearing and speech. Their basic need is to get included in the dynamics of social relations at all levels with their surroundings, but this is made significantly more difficult to them by the capacity of expressing of their own attitudes, mental concepts and needs in relations with others.

---

2 European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, January 2003, with the contribution of EURYDICE, The Information Network on Education in Europe
На тој начин, не остварувајќи рамноправен дијалог, овие лица не се прифаќаат во институциите на општеството нито од институциите на општеството што дејствува фрустрирачки на нивниот ментален склоп и развивање на самовеста, толку важна за секој од нас. Изолирани во групи со исти проблеми, тие ризикуваат да развijат одредени обрасци на субкултура што не ги поврзува како определена заедница на лица со хендикеп, туку ги категоризира според видот на хендикепот.

Друга група проблеми ја чинат лицата со дисхармоничен развој; како на пример, лица со дисцогнезија, диспраксија, слабовидност или наглувост, со гранична состојба на интелигенција или лица со минимално церебрално оштетување. Овие лица се прифатени од пошироката општествена заедница, но поради неразбиране на проблемот поради кои нивните одговори на барањата што ги поставува средината не се секогаш совршени или вообичаено успешно. Тој неуспех криво го толкуваат. На тој начин лицата со дисхармоничен развој пред другите се јавуваат како „неспособни“, „мразеливи“, „намкори“, значи како лица со помалата вредност.

Тој став често делува субјективно, така што овие личности за себе стекнуваат мислење што ги обезвреднува пред себе. Тоа прави личностите со дисхармоничен развој, особено во детството и адолесценцијата, многу повеќе да страдаат од депресивен синдром во однос на другите личности во развојот на масовната популација.

In this way, being unable to establish an equal dialogue, these persons are not accepted either into the institutions of a community or by institutions of a community. This has a frustrating impact onto their mental setup and development of self-conscious that is so significant for all of us. Being isolated into groups of persons with the same problems they risk developing certain patterns of sub-culture that does not link even themselves as certain community of persons with a handicap but divides them according to the type of handicap.

The second group of problems are persons with disharmonic development; such as persons with discognition, dispraxia, poor eyesight or hearing, limited intelligence or persons with the minimum cerebral damage. These persons are being accepted by a wider social community, but because of the lack of understanding of a problem due to which their replies to demands set by a community are not always perfect or equally successful, this failure is being wrongly evaluated. In this way persons with disharmonic development appear in front of others as “incapable”, “lazy”, “ill tempered”, namely as less valuable persons. This attitude has often got a subjective effect and such persons start thinking about themselves in the way that undermines them in their own eyes. This results with the fact that persons with disharmonic development, during their childhood and adolescence in particular, suffer more often from depression syndrome in comparison to other members of general population.
И покрај грижата и материјалното ан-
гажирање на општествената заедница
за развивање на паралелниот систем на
работа со лицата со хендикеп, таа ра-
бота не ја постигнува крајната цел.

Инклузијата, што доаѓа по досегаш-
ните болни искуства на интегралната
рехабилитација, изгледа дека ја отвора
вистинската врата на иднот поставен
меѓу лицата од масовната популација и
оние со хендикеп. Мора да прегледеме од
проблемите што се јавуваат поединечно,
а не од фронталниот пристап. Ин-
tелегенцијата, емоциите и практиката
организираност одат здружено, кои
мегусебно се независни, речиси сосема
сепарирани појави што го остваруваат
човековото опстојување. Емоционал-
ното прифаќање и мотивација може да
имаат свои причини кои секогаш не се
исти со причините или способностите
на интелигенцијата и моториката.

Исто така, знаеме дека има, на пример,
клиничка слика на "моторен дебили-
tет" при што дебилна е моториката, а
не интелигенцијата. Според тоа, иако
знаеме дека во повеќето случаи мент-
алната ретардација ја следи мотори-
ната невештост, тоа не значи дека е
некое правило кон кое може да се
поставиме фронтално.

Кога имаме намера стручно да се по-
stавиме кон лицата со хендикеп во сфе-
рата на современите научни сознанија,
tогаш, истовремено се поставуваат и
хуманистички. Хуманистичкиот прин-
cип бара да се поставиме "хумано", а
tоа значи апдекватно на човечката по-
треба на секоја личност одделно.

Со ова институциите за воспитување и
образование се најдоа пред правното
прашање:
how to adapt themselves to a developing personality as this requires the final departure from the idea that a developing personality should adapt itself to a school. This principle was set and written in Czech in 1628 already and in 1638 in Latin by Jan Komensky, pointing to the fact that children are not required to give much more than what they are capable of and that they are not given more than what they want. (3) Maria Montessori operationally set such an approach in 1907. These principles are actually the basis of modern inclusion. Unfortunately, no one mentions its true scientific origin. In our community we have been aware of that and we have tried to implement it, but it was certainly not sufficient. Still, we have managed to include the special education teachers into the teams of some regular schools as the carriers of these early ideas and methods of inclusion.

The task of pre-school institutions and elementary schools

We start from the assumption that parents themselves recognise more difficult forms of handicap and that they direct their children into special education kindergartens or schools. At the same time they direct children with lighter forms of handicaps, as they see them, towards the institutions for general population.

During those first meetings with parents the experts teams of any of those institutions have to accept all the enrolled children with the same kindness and they must not act as judges in their contacts with parents but as accomplices in diagnosticating of problems of their children, inviting them to participate equally in the process.
Во првите години, две се откриваат способностите на учесниците во овие институции, нивното ниво на потреби, нивните емоционални капацитети за прифаќање на реалитетот во кој живеат и да организираат прикладни одговори на поставените барања. Родителите треба да присуствуваат и во наставата и во играта при проценка на знаењето и обносувањето и, заедно со тимот од стручњаци, да решат каде детето ќе посетува настава од некој предмет според своите способности. Така, некое дете ќе посетува часови по математика во рамките на специјалните методи за работа, а часовите по уметност (штапање, пеене, физичко воспитување) на часовите од редовната настава. Или часовите по читање и пишување ќе ги посетува во рамките на специјалната настава (слепи, глуви), а математика, јазик, во рамките на редовната настава итн.

За децата од предучилишните установи и во текот на основното училиште важно е да не се одвојуваат најспособните за спорт, атлетика, пливање, игри со топка од оние "неспособните". Таквите "неспсобни" може да се покажат способни како известуваши ("новинари"), навивачи и некакви технички лица за подготовка на кошаркарски, фудбалски и други натпревари мегу одделенија и училишта.

Особено е важно за децата со диспраксија и дишгнозија што не се снаоѓаат во колективните игри со топка или атлетика, да може сосема успешно да ја совладаат способноста за пливање и во тоа да откриват особено задоволство или дури и натпреварувачки способности. Спортот й припаѓа на културата на една средина, а исто така и се околу тоа.

During the first year or two the capacities of students of these institutions are being revealed, and so is their level of needs, their emotional capacities for accepting the reality the live in and organising the appropriate replies to the set demands. Parents should be present both during the classes and during the play time and evaluation of knowledge and behaviour and to decide together with the team of experts whether their child should continue to attend classes in certain subjects depending on their capacities. This means that a child can attend classes in mathematics within special methods of work and classes in art (painting, singing, physical culture) within regular methods of work. A child could also attend reading and writing classes within special education (blind, deaf) and mathematics within regular education etc.

As far as children at the pre-school and elementary school levels are concerned it is important not to divide the most capable among them for sports, athletics, swimming or ball games from those who are “incapable”. Those who are “incapable” could prove to be capable as reporters (“journalists”), cheering group and technical support - personnel that prepares basketball or football matches between different classes and schools.

It is of special significance to point out that children with dispraxias and dignosias that can not do very well in games with ball or athletics, can nicely be taught how to swim and develop a specific enjoyment in that and their competition capacities. It is true that sports belong to culture of a certain community but they also represent everything around them.
Organisation of joint brakes, or trips and excursions, cultural and art manifestations and programmes for children from regular and special education schools can create a unique ambience where they can equally recognise each other and learn how to spend time together and respect each other, those with disharmonic development and those with handicap as well as those belonging to the general population. Authentic friendship relations could also develop among them by means of expression at the level of artistic and social involvement in joint programmes, which has not been the case in previous everyday practice. Positive examples in that sense have been the organised art colonies within the School of Special Education “Milan Petrovic” in Novi Sad where certain form of friendship between young painters with handicaps and those from regular schools is being established. Based on the systematic work on individualisation of education process in both the currently existing special and regular schools, the curricula of both institutions are joining in order to adapt to the needs of children. This is the way in which a unique school system is established in which children attend classes “according to their needs and capacities”.

Problems related to training of staff for this form of education

In order to implement this form of education it is necessary for both special education teachers and teachers in regular schools to get included in the forms of systematic permanent education in the fields that they are dealing with in the education process.

Problem za obuka na kadrite za vakov vid obrazovanie i vospituvawe

In order to implement this form of education it is necessary for both special education teachers and teachers in regular schools to get included in the forms of systematic permanent education in the fields that they are dealing with in the education process.
This definitely includes following of basic knowledge in the fields of development psychology, special education and basic novelties on the way of transferring knowledge in subjects they teach. Special education teachers should follow in particular the development of rehabilitation techniques and scientific thoughts related to the approach to rehabilitation in general and specifically to the narrow field they are dealing with.

We have to know that motorics is the way to model the experiences that are important for recognition of relations in reality and to express through it the contents of personality that accomplish its vital needs and creative capacities. This is what Segen recognised completely intuitively, Maria Montessori defined at the level of scientific though of her time and Piage recognised in the activities of senso-motorics the first integrative schemes of intellectual development and nature of man’s mere intelligence.

There were others who could read the motives and quality of emotions in movement as well as differentiation of sensitivity of a person during the development process. This means that in the work with children of pre-school and elementary age the behaviour of children, their motivation, capacity of co-ordination. of activities and integration of experiences we can discover directions towards which our pedagogical work should be directed either within rehabilitation or within learning.

Apart from following the novelties in relation to knowing about movement in life of each individual child the staff of pre-school institutions and elementary schools should learn about novelties in the field of group
work with children and parents. The dynamics of relations in the group of children attending the same class, in the group of parents at the parents’ meeting, the need of consultation with children who show poor success or deranged behaviour at school as well as consultation with parents of such pupils must not be brought down to the mere “domestic upbringing” of teachers and his/her private attitudes. Similarly, the teacher who is burdened with his/her personal and family problems could “burn down” through such work. This is also the technical term for laymen who are involved in providing assistance to others and are unprotected, meaning untrained within theoretical skill of the job. Approaching this task with an open heart and best intentions can throw them into the emotional vortex of families with a number of unsolved problems that could bring them down. After several such strong experiences people could feel exhausted and develop resent for any consultative procedure as a possibility of providing assistance to someone else. This is how they turn from recently well-intentioned people into aggressive “uncompromising”, “righteous” lesson and demand issuers. Some, however, become disinterested and ill tempered at work. This means that permanent work of experts in education system with emotional problems of children and their parents at the level of permanent modification of programme of work with children and assisting parents to understand certain problems that their children show, requires both a somewhat different primary training for work in education and permanent improvement of their expertise and attitudes.
Without waiting for specific staff schools to restructure we can rely on permanent education that can assist a lot.

The school team that should be included in all forms of specialised training related to the work they do comprises of: teachers, pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers and social workers, not matter if they are the employees of the school, centres for social work, day care centres or residential institutions. (1, 2, 6, 7, 9)

**Deinstitutionalisation**

The term deinstitutionalisation itself may not be completely correct. We certainly wish to liberate ourselves from the residential type of accommodation and to transfer it largely into day care centre type. However, day care centres are also the institutions of the department for protection of mental health of young people. We actually wish to liberate ourselves from enormous residential centres that are far away from families of children who are accommodated in them and often far away from health care institutions that are indispensable for children with serious handicaps.

The distance of centres and their residents from their families results with gradual giving up of families as far as visits are concerned and this disturbs significantly the emotional status of these abandoned children and adolescents accommodated in centres.

They lose the interest for their surroundings more and more, they stop waiting for, give in to vestibular satisfactions (swinging, rocking) they fall ill and get ill more frequently.
Accommodation in residential centres is usually far away from settlements and if it is not people accommodated in them do not establish contacts with the community. This means they are left without the experience of interaction expressed through a smile, speech, activity with the general population and that their contacts are brought down to the stereotype of behaviour of people who are similar to them. This impoverishes their sensitivity and sociability.

Day care centres that are located at the distance of maximum one hour ride by the available means of transport (in one direction) from the families mean that children remain constantly in contact with their families and get the maximum number of interventions that they need for treatment and rehabilitation. Day care centres have been planned and designed with the intention to organise weekly or monthly meetings with parents, meetings with children and adolescents of similar age from the nearby schools, with charity institutions from the closest local communities etc. This is the way to maintain the constant actual contact between handicapped persons, their families and the direct surroundings.

This also fosters constantly their socialisation capacities and maintains their mental status in the optimum condition. Only in this way each of these persons can accept, up the maximum possible extent for them, all necessary therapeutic and rehabilitation treatments.
Семејство, инклюзивно образование и деинституционализација

Семејствата со хендикепирани деца претставуваат посебен проблем во стручната работа на воспитување и образование на овие лица. Јасната појава на хендикепот што се забележува во првите месеци по порођање ја дава голема травматична ефикасност на семејната целина. Поголем дел од времето за грижа на детето со тежок хендикеп се однесува на семејството со помагање за истото по-добро да ги разберат проблемите и по-прикладно да се постави кон нив. Беке кон крајот на раното детство и потребата на детето да тргне во училиште овие семејства се подготвени дека децата ќе им бидат опфатени со специјалните облици на работа кон нив.

Децата со гранична состојба на хендикеп и оние со потешки форми на дискретизациярање, иако благовремено укажуваат на определени проблеми, не се прифакаат од родителите како деца со проблем. Голем број родители оваа идеја ја потиснуваат од самите себе и ја кријат пред другите. Со вклучување на децата во редовна настава, тие се изненадени од фактот дека нивните деца не се „детинести“ или „мрзеливи“, туку дека нивното неуспех пред редовните барања на училиштето и пред методите на работа на училиштето претставува определено ниво на неспособност што го доживуваат драматично. Училиштата пак од друга страна, немајќи инструменти да го разберат проблемот на овие деца, не може ни да им го приспособи методот на работа, ни да ги информираат родителите на вистински начин за и тие да го модифицираат своето обносирање кон децата и кон своето ниво на барања.

Family, inclusive education and deinstitutionalisation

Families of handicapped children are a specific problem in specialised work in education of these persons.

A clear appearance of handicap that is noticed during the first months after birth affects deeply traumatic the family on the whole. A significant portion of time in dealing with children with deep handicaps is dedicated to the family and providing assistance to them so that they can understand problems in the best possible way and act in the most appropriate way. By the end of early childhood already and with the need for a child to start attending school these families are prepared for the fact that their children are going to be included in special education.

Parents do not accept problems of children with the limited handicap status and those with serious forms of disharmonic development although they point to certain problems in due time. A large number of parents reject this thought and hide it from others. Including their children into regular schools they get surprised by the fact that their children are not just "childish" or "lazy" but that their failure to fulfil the regular demands and methods of work at regular schools represents a certain level of incapability and they accept it dramatically. On the other hand, as the school has no instruments to understand problems of these children and it cannot and does not know how to adapt methods of work to them or to inform parents in the right way and to include them so that they can also modify their relation towards children and level of their demands.
The task of inclusive education is to remove this misunderstanding and to help parents to adapt the curricula, education method and type of education to their children.

Separation of children from their homes and sending them to a boarding type of schools evokes in many parents the feeling of guilt and their own helplessness to do anything for the benefit of their children. As it gets older and new children are being born in the family this feeling of guilt is being suppressed deeper and separates parents from their abandoned child through all the more complex layers of forgetfulness. The system of day care centres resolves this problem in the way that it helps parents to accept the natural state of affairs gradually and to harmonise their needs and emotional giving with the given situation. This is the way to resolve the feeling of guilt and to experience one’s own life in a more appropriate way and to give a child as much as it can understand and as much as it needs from his family.

When the period of adolescence passes and when handicapped persons experience certain needs for independence, a smaller number of accommodation premises are organised also in the relative vicinity of a family that they belong to.

The boarding type of accommodation gets the form of certain commune where economic activities and division according to mental and physical capacities are organised for these persons, with the constant expert care through certain services.
На таков начин ним им се овозможува да се грижат за себе онолку колку што можат и постано се воведуваат во староста со постојано стручно водење и грижа.

За лица што страдаат од повеќе форми на ментален, сензорен и моторен хенди kep класичното интернатско сместување треба да се сведе на минимум. Ваквото сместување треба да е во близината на поголемите здравствени центри, каде што има услови за давање посложени интервенции што често се потребни за оваа популации.

Social community, inclusion and deinstitutionalisation

Social community should carry out decentralisation of direct activities in this field according to the presence of a problem in municipalities and regions. However, it is necessary for a specialised service to be integrated towards the central institution that disposes with the possibility of primary and permanent education of staff and resources that could be allocated to the communities that need them the most. First of all it is necessary to fill the gaps in staff for expert teams in relation to a number of handicapped children, regardless the material resources of a municipality or region.

The quality of accommodation, which should be taken care of, is in filling the gaps in staff that is certainly to be given the priority in relation to construction and other conditions of accommodation. Hygienic conditions are also important, and so are the heating systems in these institutions.
We emphasise this as we can find handicapped persons accommodated in modern buildings with carpentry and other facilities but without a sufficient number of special education teachers and other experts that should work with them.

University centres that educate staff and are in charge of innovation of knowledge of all members of multi-disciplinary teams working at site are responsible for evaluation of work in co-operation with the competent ministries and specialised associations.

Литература / References

5. Чордиќ А, Бојанин С. Организовање специјално образовног редовним основним школама "Дефектолошка теорија и пракса", Београд, 1979, бр. 9-10, стр. 241-252.