

АКТИВИРАНЕ НА ДЕЦА СЪС СПЕЦИАЛНИ НУЖДИ
ПОД ВЪЗДЕЙСТВИЕ НА ФИЗИЧЕСКО ВЪЗПИТАНИЕ

Едмонд Бичоку

ACTIVATING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS DURING
THE COURSE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Edmond Bicoku

***Abstract:** Children with special abilities despite the efforts made to integrate into the education system in our country are still not fully integrated. This phenomenon is noticed with the small number of these children in ordinary schools.*

This study aims at analyzing the current situation in the inclusion of children with special needs at the course of physical education while analyzing the factors that affect them.

Focus will be on implementing the model of inclusion of children with special needs in ordinary schools by listing all the issues so that the situation improves.

We have referred to secondary data on literature review as well as primary data extracted from data processing obtained from structured questionnaire by open and closed questions to teachers and parents with special abilities.

***Key words:** Physical Education course, Special Needs, Inclusion Model, Teaching, Parent.*

Inclusion as a concept has the advantage of creating all students the opportunity to belong to the school system and to be educated within a framework in which the differences between students are well-known and accepted. It consists precisely in the upbringing of children with special needs in ordinary schools. If it is to be accomplished, the academic environment, the classroom environment must meet in all its components to the needs of children with special abilities. On the other hand, the social component requires that children placed in these common classes should be absorbed by the social environment and be accepted by their peers (Salend, 1998: pp. 7-8). It should also be emphasized the difference between the concept of integration and that of inclusiveness. The concept of integration consists in placing children with special needs in ordinary classes and unaccompanied by complementary services in their assistance. Unlike the concept of inclusiveness consisting in the fact that although children with special needs are placed in common classes to attend the school program, they are assisted by support teachers and other specialized services.

Methodology and research techniques

For the realization of this study, the methods used are: analysis of the primary data obtained from the study, as well as the processing of secondary data based on the revision of the literature.

Inclusion in the perspective of parents of children with disabilities. Their role in this process.

Parents of children with disabilities are another major factor, which greatly affects the education of their children. In addition to working with the school, in the inclusive processes of children with disabilities in ordinary schools, it is important to work with parents of these children. Informing parents about the needs of

children and their alternative educational opportunities helps them make the right choice. Parents should be evaluated as important teachers collaborators in the implementation of inclusive practices. They must understand that the knowledge that their children receive at school should be manifested in the home as well as vice versa. For example, a child taught to do independent work at school should do it at home. In this case the role of parents as collaborators is important. Parents of children with disabilities have different opinions about inclusion. Green & Shinn (1994), cited in Salend (1998: 29), have come to the conclusion that parents of children with disabilities are afraid of inclusion in ordinary schools because they think their children will lose a lot of specialized services, which they currently benefit. Also some of them are suspicious of inclusion values as they look at them as environments where their children will feel in trouble and anxious to learn like other children without disabilities. They suspect that inclusion in ordinary schools will put their children in the focus of labeling and ridicule. This, according to them, will create negative impacts on self-assessment of children. They often links skepticism for inclusion to the inadequacy of teachers' time to deal with their children in particular. Not too often the surrounding environment in schools is not hospitable for these children. Parents in many cases suffer from refusal and labeling of children with disabilities.

Special physical education. Sports activities for children with disabilities

– Sports activities for children with disabilities are no longer represented in organized work, although there are occasional meetings and gatherings with some forms of recreational competitions.

– Sports programs for children with disabilities are very important for their full rehabilitation, independence and mobility. – Appropriate sports activity positively affects the restoration and rehabilitation of children with disabilities and young people in the development of athletic achievements that give people encouragement and confidence in their abilities and thus enrich their lives and make them more complete, and better.

– The type of flaws in development decides which sport the child may be involved in, for example, children with a slight deviation can be included in educational sports, children with bodily deformities in sports for the disabled, and children with disabilities to therapeutic and rehabilitative sports.

Attitudes of the parents of other students towards the process of inclusiveness

Positive are considered in the study, in view of the inclusion process, and the attitudes that the parents' community of other students has created towards the disabled students who teach in the same classes with their children. Perceptions from them are positive for the socialization of their children with children with disabilities, both in class and outside. They don't think that students with disabilities hinder the progress of other children in the classroom. These parents see the inclusion of the children with disabilities as a right for the children to be educated and that the education system should guarantee them through ordinary schools.

School Institution

The following section reflects data on the changes that are proposed and needed to be made in the ordinary school in order to return it to a comprehensive school both in its physical and organizational aspect. In the focus of the changes are evidenced: – full school building accessibility to enable free and barrier movement, – creation of resource facilities in support of individual work with disabled students and provision of information services for all school staff, – adapted transport for children with mobility difficulties, – didactic tools and information materials to assist teachers, – support teachers as part of the school staff structure, – collaboration with other professionals to facilitate teachers and assist children in meeting the objectives of the individual educational plan.

The role of the teacher

Teachers have also been identified as key players in the process of inclusiveness. Their role is determinant in the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum for students with disabilities in ordinary schools. Two of the components identified by this study as the most priority for intervention, in order to increase the quality of teaching for children with disabilities: – capacity building of teachers; and – their stimulation to individual specific work to children with special skills.

Supporting infrastructure

The section presents data that show how ordinary school infrastructure corresponds to the inclusive education of students with disabilities. To address this issue are highlighted: Education Issues: Inclusion of Children with Special Needs (Disabilities) in the Albanian School. Supporting elements that should have an ordinary school in order to teach children with disabilities. The data then provides an answer to whether or not the usual elementary schooling of such elements as: the class organization, the number of students in

them, the resources provided by teachers, didactic and informational materials for teachers and parents of students with special skills. Data on this part is provided mainly by school directors and teachers.

Individual Educational Plan. Methods and tools tailored to teach students with limited skills.

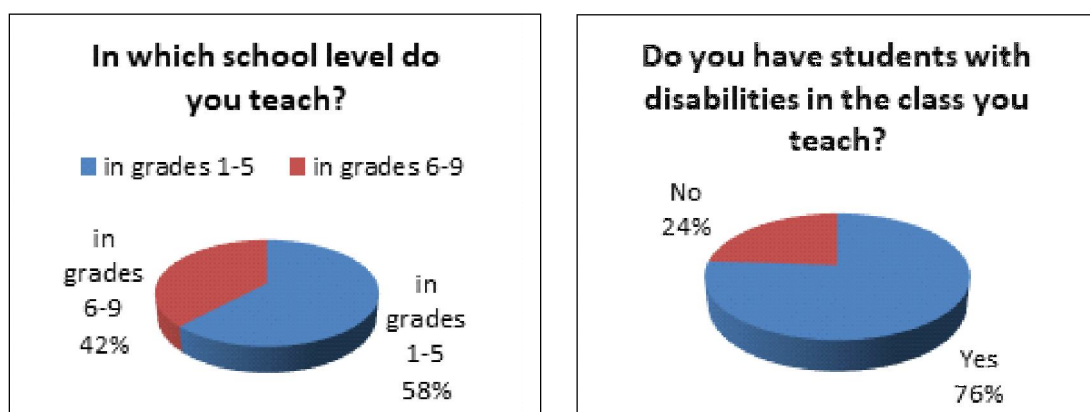
Individual Educational Plan (IEP) provides support to students with disabilities and is a very good guide for teachers and support teachers to assist the specific learning needs that these children have. Teachers have the leadership role in implementing IEP in the school environment. They collaborate with the parents, guiding them for their implementation while the child is in the family environment. IEP, as it is designed by a group of specialists with the involvement of parents of children with disabilities, is implemented by teachers in co-operation with parents. They are the direct evaluators and followers of the child's progress during and outside the learning process. IEP in its basic structure contains: – a definition of the current child's development; – a definition of why the child should be placed in a ordinary school; – a list of annual objectives and short-term objectives linked to each other for the child's education; – a list of the necessary specialized assistance that the child should take during the education process; – a list of criteria to assess the child's progress in the education process against the previously set objectives and timeframes.

Participants

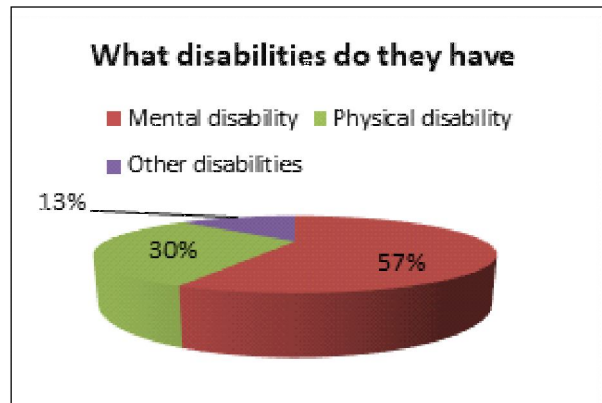
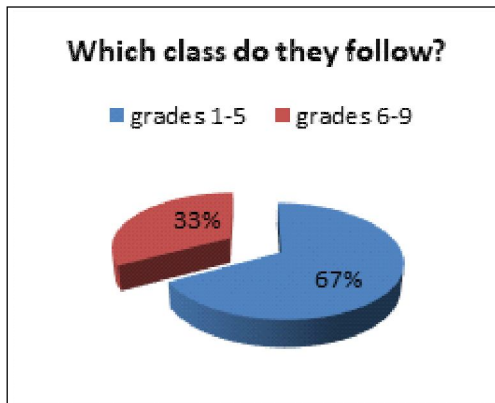
The study was carried out with the participation of stakeholders, part of the piloting process of inclusive education in the Elbasan region, which carries the attributes of a primary importance to the practice of inclusion of children with disabilities in ordinary schools as well as high contribution to the issues raised in this study. The main participants of the study were teachers of three 9-year schools, "Ptoleme Xhuvani", "Pedagogical" and "Ali Agjahu" in Elbasan. Questionnaires were attended by 58 teachers working directly with children with disabilities. As inclusive education in ordinary school is being implemented in both school cycles, it was kept in mind that teachers belonged to both cycles: the primary cycle and the 9-year cycle. 42% of teachers belonged to the 9-year cycle and 58% belonged to the primary cycle. Also for the effect of certain issues raised in the study, it was important to take into account the category of limiting ability of the students with disabilities with whom the teachers had worked. This is important because students belonging to certain categories of disability exhibit special needs, different from one another, during the learning process. As such, they require: certain teachers' pedagogical approaches, specific conditions for the suitability of the environment, assistance with tailor-made tools, counseling with professionals from other fields. All these should be considered as they affect in the attitudes of teachers on the issues raised in the discussion.

Results

This chapter provides the study data, which were obtained through the instruments used, based on the methodology followed for its realization. These qualitative and quantitative data have been processed and grouped in response to the three main questions of the study. Quantitative data obtained through questionnaires by teachers, parents of students with disabilities. The graphical presentation is used to illustrate and reflect in structured form some of the data collected from the case study.



The largest number of teachers involved in the study teach in the primary cycle, respectively 62%, and the rest 38% in grades 6–9. Currently, 76% of them have students with special needs in their classes who have chosen to attend school at an ordinary school.

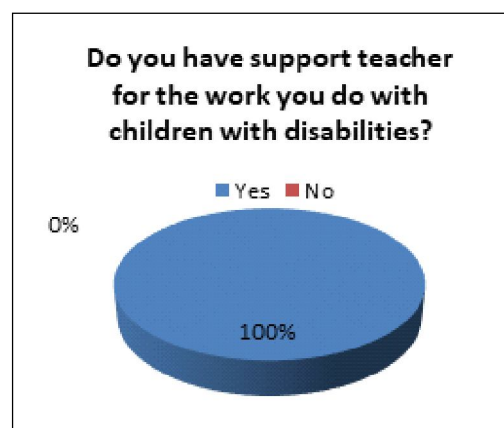
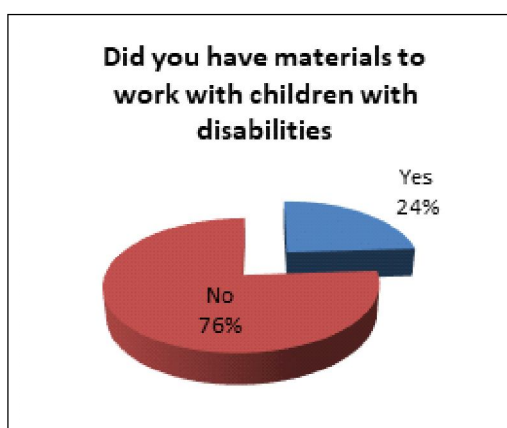


The most significant are classes 1-5, 67% versus students who are in 6-9 classes who were 33%. Regarding the disability these students have, 57% are the spectrum of mental disorder, 30% physical disorder, and 13% are with other disorders.



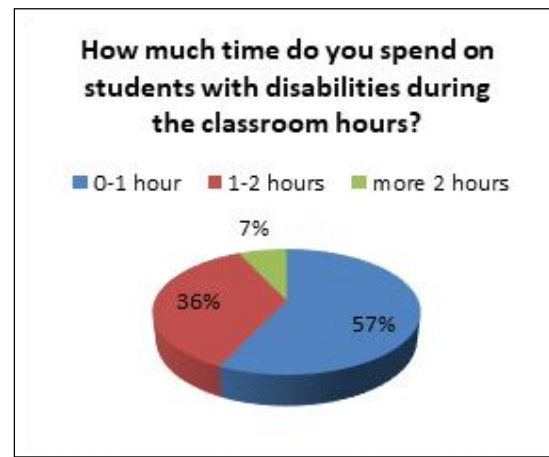
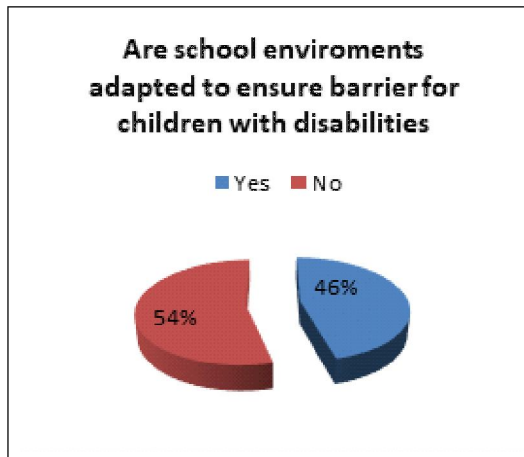
Almost all teachers were trained, or had received special knowledge about the teaching process, including children with special needs.

There is a lack of material available for special needs students where 76% were missing and only 24% of teaching materials had material to complete the lesson.

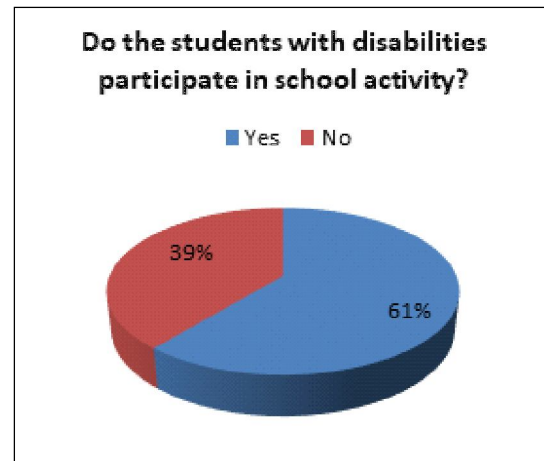
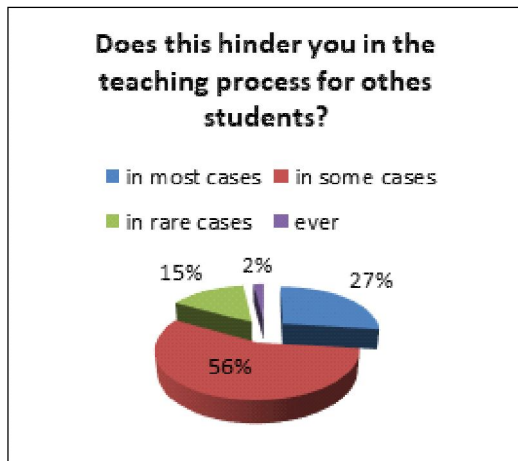


Supporting teachers were not absent from any of the schools studied, in each classroom where were students with special needs, they were present and assisted during the teaching process.

However, what is to be mentioned is the fact that school grounds, sports facilities, and classes are not particularly favorable for students with disabilities. This aspect needs to be improved to integrate these students with special needs into the school system.

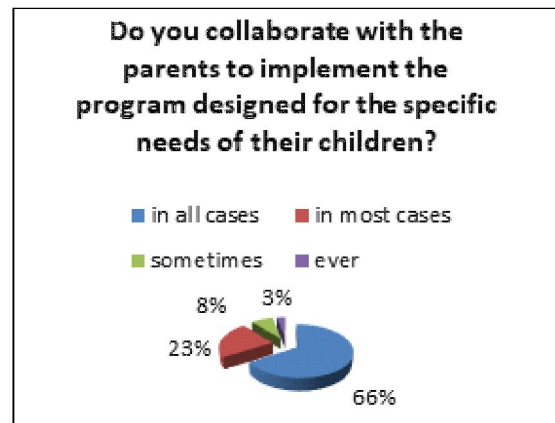
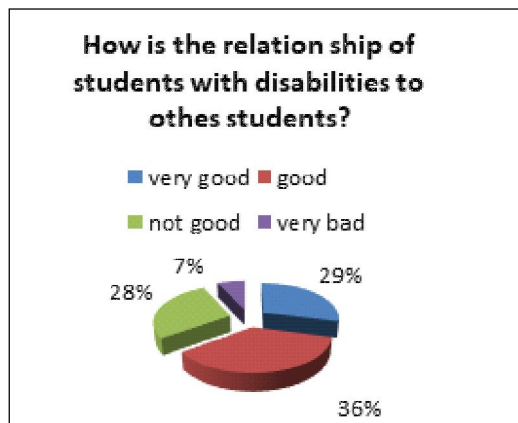


Because in every classroom with children with special needs there were supportive teachers to help, the others were respectively 57% that spent up to 1 hour during the day, 36% to two hours, and 7% spent the most, more than two hours in particular for students with special needs.



However, the inclusion of students with special needs in ordinary classes causes problems for the other students in most instances, few are the cases that the teaching process closes without concern and in normality.

Also, participation in various school activities and especially sports, 61% participate in activities, and 31% don't participate in school activities due to unwanted desire or physical disturbances.



What is noticeable is the friendly behavior of class students towards students with special skills, where in many cases they help them. But there are also cases when behavior is hostile and not good to them.

Parent-teacher involvement in children with special abilities is very important, and according to 66% answers, parents are involved in any situation to help their children, and only 3% are not cooperative with teachers for their children.

Conclusions

Through the model, the study clearly evidenced the tendency that serious efforts for inclusion of children with disabilities in ordinary schools are being made in Albania. Seeing this in terms of positive added elements that the practical implementation of the inclusive model for students with special skills brings both to the education system as a whole as well as to the actors that are part of its implementation.

In this context, this impact is assessed as important for: (1) raising awareness of all actors involved, but also wider about the rights of children with disabilities to be educated in ordinary schools; (2) identifying the need for radical change in the education system, with the aim of creating the necessary infrastructure to enable inclusive education to be realized, and encouraging and orienting the most necessary interventions; (3) initiating new working practices with the education of the disabled; (3) initiating new employment practices with students with disabilities in normal classes; (4) Creating a positive ,social, receptive climate in the school community, increasing the chances of constructing ordinary schools as inclusive institutions, and significantly influencing the attitudes of stakeholders and the community in general; (5) re-dimensioning the role of parents in the process of inclusiveness; (6) the tendency towards a better quality of teaching for disabled students through new pedagogical approaches to teachers; (7) increasing the chances for students with disabilities to appear in common areas with their friends and to acquire new social skills. But the implementation of the inclusive model of students with disabilities in ordinary schools is being implemented in the absence of a number of important elements that must necessarily accompany it. These are evidenced both in terms of the general framework of macro and exo systems in which comprehensive education is introduced and is concerned with the necessary political, legal, institutional infrastructure that the education system in Albania currently offers to enable inclusion of students with limited capacities in ordinary schools, as well as at the more limited, macro and micro level, which is related to the usual school itself and all the systems built between it and the actors involved in the process. Still in Albania there is no national strategy for the education of children with disabilities as well as a full legal framework to guarantee institutional and financial support for new practices that require inclusive education of students with disabilities in ordinary schools. The model of inclusion of students with disabilities in ordinary schools is not yet complete in our country.

LITERATURE

Turku, Ardian. (2002). *Hyrje në edukimin special*, Elbasan.

Haxhiymeri, V. (2003). Mbi Veprimtarine dhe Arritjet e Projekti “Asimit Special i Integruar”: Arritje, Sugjerime, Sfi da për të Ardhmen në Kuadër të Arsimit Gjithpërfshirës. Dorëshkrim.

World Vision, UK. (2006). Philippa Lei, Teachers and inclusion-A disability perspective.

OKB. (1989). Convention on Children’s Rights.

Teacher Learning for Inclusive Education: A Framework for Embracing Diversity. Potchefstroom, South Africa: North West University.

Closs, A., Nano, V., Ikonomi, E. (2003). I am like you. Save the Children Edition. Tiranë.

OKB. (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Kluth. P. (2009) Is Your School Inclusive.

Kozleski, E. B., Waitoller, F. R., (2009). Good Practice in Caring for Young Children with Special Needs, second edition, Nelson Thornes.

Цонкова, Д. (2006). *Съвременни аспекти на професионалната подготовка на спортния педагог*. Велико Търново: Унив. изд. „Св. св. Кирил и Методий“. // **Tsonkova, D. (2006).** Savremenni aspekti na profesionalnata podgotovka na sportniya pedagog. Veliko Tarnovo: Univ. izd. „Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodiy“.