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PREPARING THE REGULAR PRIMARY SCHOOLS WITH INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Abstract: With the transformation of the special schools into resource centers and the transfer of all students with disabilities to the regular primary schools, we come to a very important question; is our country ready for the whole process of inclusion of all students with disabilities?

The subject of this research is the determination of the preparedness of the educational system for implementation of inclusion for all students with disabilities in the regular primary schools in the Municipality of Resen. For this purpose, a research was conducted in all regular primary schools in the Municipality of Resen and it involved 129 teachers and professional associates.

The purpose of the research is to determine whether has been created a inclusive climate and inclusive policy for the inclusion of all students with disabilities in the educational process in the regular primary schools, as well as to determine whether the educational system is ready for inclusive education.

The research enabled us to see the overall state in which the regular primary schools are. The results of this research are that the regular primary schools in the Municipality of Resen are not prepared for the inclusion of all students with disabilities, and we still need to work on removing the architectural barriers and reinforce the capacities of the professional associates and train the teachers to work with students with special needs.

Keywords: Inclusive education, Students with special needs, Preparedness for inclusion of all students with disabilities

Introduction

Inclusive education represents flexible and individualized support for children and young people with special educational needs within the regular school (Ture Jonson, 1994).

Inclusion in education represents an opportunity for education reforms to direct their attention to creating schools that will meet the needs of all students and society as a whole, i.e., the focus of inclusion is the necessity of adapting schools to educational needs of the student (Bartolo, P., 2004).

According to Farrell, complete inclusion should mean that the included children are an active part of life in the regular school that they are valued as members of the school community and are observed as its integral members (Farrell, 2000).

The law for primary education provides making a special document – Concept for inclusive education, which should provide specific guidelines on how inclusive education will be implemented in practice in our social system. The concept proposes measures and strategies that should remove the barriers that hinder the implementation of inclusive education and its sustainability. (Concept for inclusive education, 2019).

According to the Primary Education Law of 2019, special schools are transformed into schools with a resource center, and special classes into learning support centers, with the purpose of ensuring quality education for all students with special educational needs (Concept for inclusive education, 2019).

With the inclusion of all the students with disabilities in the regular primary schools, it is necessary to make an analysis regarding the preparedness of the regular primary schools to implement the entire process of inclusion.

Research Methodology

The subject of this research is the preparedness determination of the country and the educational system to implement inclusion for all students with disabilities in regular primary schools in Resen Municipality.

The purpose of the research is to determine whether a positive inclusive climate and inclusive policy has been created for the inclusion of all students with disabilities in the educational process in regular primary schools, as well as determining whether the educational system is ready for the implementation of inclusive education.

In this research, a total of five regular primary schools are covered, which are on the territory of the Municipality of Resen. The research was conducted on the inclusive school team and teachers in regular elementary schools. Teachers who are currently employed in the schools were included, and the principals of the schools were discussed regarding full inclusion and how prepared they are for that challenge. A total of 129 respondents were included in the research.

The method of descriptive analysis, method of concretization, comparison and the method of generalization were used for the research. The technique that was used in this research is a survey. A survey questionnaire was used as an instrument of this research. The survey questionnaire was composed of twenty-one closed type questions with two answers offered, i.e., the answers were yes or no, which were intended for teachers and professional services in regular primary schools. The research was conducted in the five regular elementary schools in the territory of the Municipality of Resen during the second half of the academic year 2020/2021, that is, in the month of May, 2021. Descriptive statistics were used for data processing, with which

the data were summarized, presented graphically and tabularly. The hypotheses were tested using the Chi-square test, which determined the existence of a statistically significant difference between the variables.

Hypotheses

General Hypothesis

X_0 – It is assumed that regular elementary schools are not prepared to implement inclusion for all students with disabilities.

Auxiliary Hypotheses

X_1 – It is assumed that a special educator and a rehabilitator are employed in regular primary schools.

X_2- It is assumed that in regular elementary schools there are sufficient didactic means and visual materials and that teachers use them when working with students with disabilities

X_3- It is assumed that assistive devices and assistive technology are used in regular elementary schools and that teachers with a higher level of education use them when working with students with disabilities.

X_4 – It is assumed that teachers with less work experience have not attended training for working with students with disabilities, so they are not sufficiently prepared to work with them.

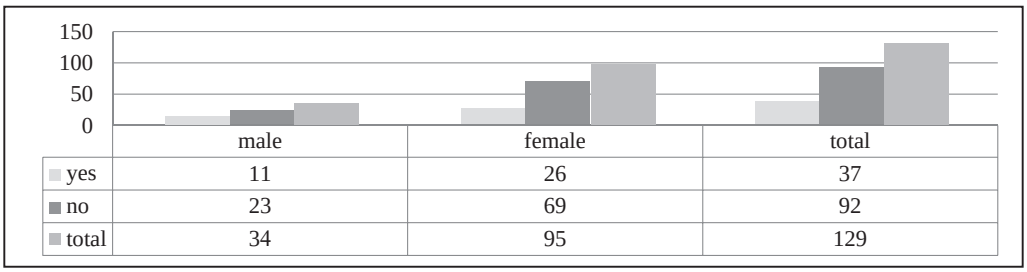
Analysis of the Results

This is an analysis of only a part of the results that we processed in our research on the preparedness of the regular elementary schools for inclusion of all students with disabilities in the Municipality of Resen (Stefanovska D., Ajdinski G., 2022).

From Graph number 1, we can see that 92 respondents or 71% of the respondents answered that their school does not have a regularly employed special educator and rehabilitator, while only 37 respondents or 29% answered that a special educator and rehabilitator works in their school.

Graph 1

Do you have a regularly employed special educator and rehabilitator in your school?

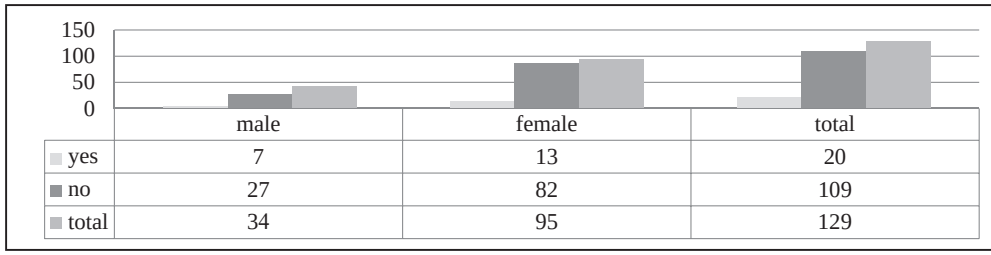


	male	female	total
yes	11	26	37
no	23	69	92
total	34	95	129

According to the actual situation in the regular elementary schools in the Municipality of Resen, only one elementary school has a special educator and rehabilitator employed, who performs the service of a mobile special education teacher and visits all the regular elementary schools in the municipality.

Graph 2

Does your school have the visual aids and materials necessary to work with students with disabilities?



	male	female	total
yes	7	13	20
no	27	82	109
total	34	95	129

As we can see from Graph number 2 of the total number of respondents, 109 respondents or 84% answered that their school does not have visual aids and materials that are necessary when working with students with disabilities. Only 20 respondents or 16% answered that their school has visual aids and materials necessary to work with students with disabilities.

Table 1

The level of education of the respondents and the use of assistive devices and technology

The level of education of the respondents and the use of assistive devices and technology		**Are assistive devices and assistive technology used?**					**Pearson Chi-Square**	**Df.**	**P**
		Yes		**No**		**Total:**			
		N	%	N	%				
Level of education	H.P.S.	0	0%	3	3%	3	32.825	37	0.657
	H.S.	0	0%	7	5%	7			
	H.P.A.	0	0%	1	1%	1			
	P.A.	0	0%	1	1%	1			
	H.S.P.	0	0%	16	12%	16			
	VII[1]	10	7%	88	68%	98			
	VII[2]	1	1%	2	2%	3			
Total:		11	8%	118	92%	129			

From Table 1, it can be noted that respondents with the highest level of education, respondents with completed postgraduate studies, included in this research do not use assistive technologies and aids when working with students with disabilities, they amount to 2% of the total number of respondents. Out of the total number of respondents, only 10 respondents or 8% who have completed higher education use assistive technology and assistive aids when working with students with disabilities. From the table we can notice that the level of education of the teachers is not related to the use of assistive technology and aids when working with students with disabilities, there is no statistically significant difference because p= 0.657

Table 2

The work experience of the respondents and attended trainings for working with students with disabilities

The work experience of the respondents and attended trainings for working with students with disabilities		Have you attended training for working with students with disabilities?					Pearson Chi-Square	Df.	P
		Yes		No		Total:			
		N	%	N	%				
work experience of the respondents	4 months-10 years	22	17%	25	19%	47	35.894	37	0,568
	11 years- 21 years	12	9%	15	12%	24			
	22 years- 32 years	13	10%	14	11%	27			
	above 33 years	12	9%	16	12%	28			
Total:		59	45%	70	54%	129			

From Table 2, it can be noted that the majority of respondents have not attended training for working with students with disabilities. Of the respondents with less work experience, only 22 teachers have attended training for working with students with disabilities, while 25 teachers or 19% have not attended such training. Of the respondents who have work experience from 11 to 21 years, only 12 respondents have attended appropriate trainings, while 15 respondents have not attended training for working with students with special needs. Respondents who have work experience from 22 to 32 years, 14 respondents have not attended training, while 13 teachers have attended training. Respondents with the most work experience, starting with over 33 years of work experience, only 12 respondents attended trainings for working with students with disabilities, while 16 respondents did not attend this type of training. Regarding work experience and attendance at trainings for working with students with disabilities, we can see from the table that there is no statistically significant difference because p= 0.568

Verification of Hypotheses

According to the hypotheses of this research, we can determine the following:

- **The first hypothesis** is rejected because the majority of the respondents, ie 71% answered that they do not have a regularly employed special educator and rehabilitator in their school. According to the actual situation, only one primary school in the Municipality of Resen has a special educator and a rehabilitator employed.
- **The second hypothesis** is rejected because the majority of respondents answered that their schools do not have didactic means and visual materials needed to work with students with disabilities.
- **The third hypothesis** is rejected because p=.657.
- **The fourth hypothesis** is confirmed because p=.568.
- **The general hypothesis** is confirmed based on the analysis of the questions from the conducted questionnaire.

The results of this research indicate a great need for investment in schools and training of teaching staff in order to improve the entire situation in regular elementary schools, which would

make it easier to implement the full process of inclusion and create a positive inclusive climate. It is necessary to overcome more barriers in the whole process of inclusion, starting from the architectural barriers to the social barriers that we face every day.

Research Conclusions

In this research, a total of 129 respondents from regular elementary schools in the territory of the Municipality of Resen were included. In the research, a survey was conducted in order to see if regular elementary schools are ready to implement the inclusion of all students with disabilities.

According to the tasks and purpose of the questionnaire and based on the processing and analysis of the data, it can be concluded that the regular primary schools in Resen Municipality are not fully prepared to implement the process of inclusion of all children with disabilities. Regarding the infrastructure of the schools, the architectural barriers have not yet been overcome. From the conducted questionnaire, we can come to the conclusion that access ramps are installed only at the entrance of the school building, while the architectural barriers have not been resolved in the school building. In the regular elementary schools in the Municipality of Resen, there are no adapted toilets for students with special needs, there is no elevator for easier movement between the floors in the school building. Regarding the preparedness of teachers for the whole process of inclusion, according to the questionnaire that was carried out for this research, it can be concluded that teachers are not ready to work with students with disabilities because only a small part of them attended training for working with students with special educational needs, also in most schools there is no permanently employed special educator and rehabilitator who would help teachers throughout the entire work process. Regular primary schools in Resen Municipality do not have a sufficient number of visual aids and materials for working with students with special needs and do not have assistive technology and assistive aids.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this research are related to the detected deficiencies in the process of educational inclusion for people with special educational needs that were presented in the conclusion, thus:

- As in the architectural barriers in regular primary schools, it is recommended building access ramps at the entrance of the school building according to world standards that will be adequate and safe for use by students with special needs, building mobile elevators or procuring electric wheelchairs with tracks that are adapted for climbing stairs, adapting school toilets that are functional for use according to the needs of students with disabilities, leaving enough space for students with disabilities who use a wheelchair or other mobility aid, managing better and not having any obstacles in their movement, adapting the school gyms according to the needs of students with special needs, installing Braille signs, tactile paths and high-contrast yellow stripes, which would facilitated the movement and orientation of visually impaired students through the premises of the school building;
- With regard to the educational process in regular elementary schools, it is recommended that every elementary school has at least one special educator and rehabilitator (defectologist), to form a professional inclusive team that takes care of inclusive policies and practices at the level of the whole school. To make trainings for the teaching staff to work with students with disabilities, to acquire appropriate didactic materials and assistive technology for students with disabilities, to create textbooks and tests adapted to the needs of students with disabilities, to employ more educational assistants as well as personal assistants in schools, it is recommended to constantly cooperate with the families of students with

special educational needs and to organize campaigns and events to raise public awareness more often;

- Based on the analysis from the research done, it is necessary to return a combined model of inclusion, i.e., special schools should continue their educational activity and students with a higher degree of disability should continue their education in special schools (Change in the elementary education act of RSM).

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PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER ORIENTATION OF STUDENTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Abstract: The purpose of professional orientation is to help students decide to continue their education and focus on occupations that would best suit their interests and abilities and in which occupation they would most likely have a good fit. There must be no mistakes in the direction, because a poorly chosen occupation leaves very big consequences in the further life and work. Therefore, as part of the Annual Work Program of the school, a special program has been developed which summarizes the long-term experiences and work, as well as the knowledge and skills acquired through the implementation of international projects in the field of professional and career orientation of students in primary schools.

Also in the direction of this issue, meetings were held with high schools, students and the business community in our city. In this regard, we received support from the employment agency and of course we worked with a certain group of students, who were selected according to criteria prepared by the team for professional and career guidance of students. Then those students had the task to share their experience with their peers.

The result we got was a clear vision of what our students want to be in the future.

Keywords: Professional development of students, Program of Work, Change, Career guidance, Market place