

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN THE EDUCATION PROCESS

Adelina Haskaj<sup>1\*</sup>, Natasa Cicevska Jovanova<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Faculty of Pedagogy*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Special Education, Faculty of Philosophy*

*\*Corresponding author e-mail: adelina.haskaj@unite.edu.mk*

---

### Abstract

The cooperation of the school with parents begins in the early years of schooling and accompanies the student throughout their school experience. The purpose of this research is to analyze the impact of different characteristics of parents and teachers on the involvement of parents in the educational process of their children. The research included 142 teachers of students aged 6 to 15 years, i.e. students from I-IX grades, and 115 parents of children with typical development and parents of children with special educational needs. According to the research, students with special educational needs should study in special elementary schools, the academic performance of children with special educational needs is better in special elementary schools, compared to children who study in regular schools. Both teachers and parents should have good cooperation, make efforts to get the best of children with special educational needs, no matter if they study in special elementary school or regular school.

*Keywords:* parents, teachers, school, student, cooperation

---

### 1. Introduction

Family is an irreplaceable environment in which the child is formed as a person, in which it lives satisfying some of his most important needs that can only be met in the family (Чичевска-Јованова Н., Димитрова-Радојичиќ Д., 2013).

The constant, continuous cooperation in the relation family - educational institution, parent-teacher, contributes to the development of the child / student, to the advancement of the teacher's work, strengthens the role that parents have in the development, upbringing and education of their own child. The need for active involvement of parents, in the partnership with the educational institution, arises from the fact that parents are the first educators, teachers, who can provide teachers with the most useful information that is the basis for directing and undertaking future joint actions for the best of each child. The partnership, fostering cooperation is a challenge for every teacher who is trying to pave the way for creating conditions, forms, means to achieve constructive cooperation.

Establishing good cooperation with the family that has a child with special needs requires a lot of individual contact, knowledge of their functioning, a lot of time and patience, as well as relations with experts from different fields. Families and schools are places where children show various forms of behavior, some of which are incomprehensible to both, teachers and parents. Many parents do not fully understand their role at work, they want to help, but they do not know how, so the timely support of a family with children with special needs is very important (Karic J., Medenica C., Milicevic, 2013).

Families with a child with special needs show many similarities to other families, although their difficulties get worse due to child's disability. On the other hand, the needs of the child with special needs, as well as numerous meetings with specialists, obviously take much more time than under normal circumstances (Pelchat D., Lefebvre H., Perreault M., 2003).

Parents of children with special needs face care requirements that are more challenging and quite different from the care requirements of a child with typical development. The quality of care and parental sensitivity are often lower in families of children with special needs than in families of typically developed children, resulting in a higher incidence of insecurity. One possible explanation lies in the assumption that there are many psychological and socio-demographic factors that affect parents' ability to take care of the child (Rajic M., Mihic I., Kopunovic Torma D., 2015).

The impact of difficulties on child's development also affects the partnership of the parents. In some families, difficulties with the child may be an element of cohesion, while in other families it may be an element that will strengthen the distance between the partners and the dysfunction, which can end in divorce (Матијевић Д., 2010).

The cooperation between the school and the family where the student comes from is of great importance in the educational process of the children. We say that school and family are two important factors in the upbringing and education of the younger generation. Despite the differences between these two factors of education, it should be noted that school plays an important role in preparing the family for the upbringing of the child. The relationship established between school and family depends on many factors, but there should still be willingness to cooperate, which is the key to educating the younger generation. Children are the most successful at school, if their parents get involved in school activities and encourage learning at home, regardless of their educational or social background.

The cooperation between the school and the family is performed through various forms, including: individual contacts, parent meetings, educational lectures, different performances, exhibitions, workshops, counseling, etc. Changes in education and the high quality of educational activities impose the need for frequent communication on the relationship: teacher-parent-school or family. Many teachers with greater commitment and responsibility approach working with parents by visiting families in order to get directly acquainted with the living conditions of their students' families (material conditions, health, cultural, social, educational conditions, etc.).

## **2. Methodology**

The subject of this research is to make an analysis of the questionnaire of teachers and parents.

### **Purpose of the research**

The aim of the study is to analyze the impact of different characteristics of parents and teachers on the involvement of parents in the educational process of their children.

### **Research hypothesis**

1. It is assumed that the achievement of students with typical development is higher compared to the achievement of students with special educational needs.

2. It is assumed that the achievement of students with special educational needs who attend classes at special elementary school is higher compared to the achievement of students with special educational needs who attend classes in regular schools.
3. It is assumed that both the parents of the children with typical development and the parents of the children with special educational needs believe that the students with special educational needs should study in special elementary school.
4. It is assumed that parents are allowed to stay in class.
5. It is assumed that parents are less familiar with inclusion than teachers.
6. It is assumed that students with special educational needs sit alone on a bench during class.
7. It is assumed that students with special educational needs are absent more often than students with typical development.
8. It is assumed that most students with special education needs are absent from school due to illness.

### **Research methods, techniques and instruments**

- Descriptive method
- Method of comparative analysis

### **Research instruments:**

- questionnaire for teachers and parents

### **Research sample**

The research included 142 teachers of students aged 6 to 15 years, i.e. students from I-IX grades, from several schools, teachers from regular schools in whose classes there are students with special educational needs, special educators from special primary schools, as well as special educators working in combined classes in regular schools; and 115 parents of children with typical development and parents of children with special educational needs.

## **3. Analysis of research and results**

### **1) Parent 2) teacher**

|       |         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | parent  | 115       | 44.7    | 44.7          | 44.7               |
|       | teacher | 142       | 55.3    | 55.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total   | 257       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Table 1.** Parents and teachers: (chi square test)

|   |          | N   | $\chi^2$ | df | p     |
|---|----------|-----|----------|----|-------|
| Age   | Parents  | 114 | 10,777   | 3  | 0,013 |
|   | teachers | 142 |          |    |       |
| Education   | Parents  | 113 | 163,288  | 5  | 0,000 |
|   | teachers | 142 |          |    |       |
| Work status   | Parents  | 112 | 254,000  | 4  | 0,000 |
|   | teachers | 142 |          |    |       |
| Knowledge of inclusion  | Parents  | 100 | 242,000  | 4  | 0,000 |
|   | teachers | 142 |          |    |       |
| With whom do students with special educational needs sit in class | Parents  | 113 | 24,625   | 2  | 0,000 |
|   | teachers | 140 |          |    |       |
| Absence of students   | Parents  | 86  | 19,220   | 2  | 0,000 |
|   | teachers | 130 |          |    |       |

Statistical testing, given the nominal nature of the two arrays of data, is calculated using a standard chi-square test (Table 1). The results show that the differences in estimates between parents on the one hand and teachers on the other are statistically significant. More specifically, the level of education ( $\chi^2 = 163,288$ ,  $df = 5$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), the working status of ( $\chi^2 = 254,000$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), knowledge of the area of inclusion ( $\chi^2 = 242,000$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) absence of students, ( $\chi^2 = 19,220$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

This means that the attitudes and opinions of teachers and parents differ from each other in terms of the absence of students, with whom students with special educational needs share the desk, knowledge about inclusion, the employment status, level of education and age.

**Table 2.** Parents of children with typical development and parents of children with special educational needs: (chi-square test)

|  |  | N  | $\chi^2$ | df | p     |
|--|--|----|----------|----|-------|
| Academic performance                                       | Students with TD                                   | 44 | 11,713   | 3  | 0,008 |
|  | Students with special educational needs            | 48 |          |    |       |
| Where should students with special educational needs study | Parents of children with TD                        | 49 | 5,301    | 2  | 0,070 |
|  | Parents of children with special educational needs | 66 |          |    |       |

The chi square test shows statistical significance in terms of student achievement. Given this, the achievement of students with special educational needs is lower than students with typical development ( $\chi^2 = 11,713$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

There is no statistical significance in relation to the stand where should students with special educational needs study ( $\chi^2 = 5,301$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < 0.070$ ).

Which means that the attitude and opinion of the parents of children with typical development and the parents of children with special educational needs do not differ from each other in terms of where students with special educational needs should study; while in

terms of achievement, there is a difference between the achievement of students with typical development and special educational needs students.

### 3. Discussion and conclusion

1. The hypothesis according to which the achievement of students with typical development is assumed to be higher compared to the achievement of special educational needs students is confirmed.
2. The hypothesis according to which the achievement of students with special educational needs attending classes in special elementary schools is assumed to be higher compared to the achievement of students with special educational needs who attend classes in a regular school is rejected.
3. The third hypothesis according to which it is assumed that both parents of the children with typical development and parents of the children with special educational needs believe that the students with special educational needs should study in special elementary school is confirmed.
4. The hypothesis according to which parents are allowed to stay in class is rejected.
5. The hypothesis according to which parents are less familiar with inclusion than teachers is confirmed.
6. The hypothesis according to which students with special educational needs sit alone on the desk during classes is confirmed.
7. The hypothesis according to which students with special educational needs are absent more often than students with typical development is confirmed.
8. The hypothesis according to which students with special educational needs are usually absent from school due to illness is rejected.

Achieving parental commitment in the educational process requires "investment" of both sides, but teachers remain the main protagonists of this process. The teachers are the ones who can and should organize, structure and develop this relationship in a professional context.

Parental involvement in the learning process should be identified as one of the indicators used to assess the quality of educational service, at system level and especially at school and teacher level. There is a need for professional development and training of teachers for the development of relationships with parents, with a focus on their engagement in the learning process.

### References

- [1]. Karic J., Medenica C., Milicevic I. 2013. *Teskocesa kojima se susrecu porodice dece sa posebnim potrebama u sadanjem trenutku*. Beograd: Biomedicinska istrazivanja.
- [2]. Матијевић Д. 2010. *Приручник за рад у заједници са породицама деце са сметњама у развоју*. Београд: Градски завод за јавно здравље.
- [3]. Pelchat D., Lefebvre H., Perreault M. 2003. *Differences and similarities between mothers' and fathers' experiences of parenting a child with a disability*, Journal of Child Health Care.
- [4]. Rajic M., Mihic I., Kopunovic Torma, D., 2015. *Socioemocionalna posvecenost parentjadesasmetnjama u razvoju: razlike izmedu majki i oceva*. Annual Review of the Faculty of Philosophy, Volume XL-2, Novi Sad: 2015.
- [5]. Чичевска-Јованова Н., Димитрова-Радојичић Д., 2013. *Родители на деца со пречки во развојот: стрес и поддршка*. Скопје: Дефектолошка теорија и практика, 14 (1-2), pp. 7-19.