

**BALKAN SOCIETY
FOR PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATION**

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ers who don't use different methods consider that there is no need for any adjustments, because of the very good feedback from the child. This is the case with subjects like art, gym, and technical education.

Theme 6

Concept	Quotations from the teachers
Equal treatment as the other peers	- It wouldn't have any reforms. I have the same treatment with all pupils, it's the same responsibility.
Different treatment compared to the peers	/

Our research has shown that all the teachers (13) believe that the child with cochlear implant has an equal treatment by his teachers and his peers.

Conclusions

Beside interviews, we analysed the recorded observations and together with teachers we discussed situations in classroom, pointing to the good and bad examples of behaviour. We had also provided professional support to the regular teachers in planning, implementing and assessing individual educational plan related to the child and the class that he attended. With these in one way we overtook the role of state institutions in upgrading a regular school for an inclusive practice. Educational intervention in this action research also contribute to better cooperation between the teachers, and with the parents of the child as well.

This year 2009 is final year of the project when we can summarise our results and join them in a valuable comparative study. Even when the project ends, we plan to go further in building capacity of higher education to offer regular and in-service education towards inclusion for the regular teachers and educators.

Current Issues about SEN Practice

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Abstract

We have a practice named "Inclusion of children with SEN in our schools". It is not a practice with a long tradition, but it is the right time to open some questions about that practice. Obviously, there are some problems and that is not something which surprises us, simply because we expected to have some problems from different origin and different reasons. But we have to know what are those problems, which factors causes them, what should be done to overcome problems, and much more: what should be done to prevent some of them. Our paper is just one small step to one great project which state bodies should take: there must be one great project about collecting data in order to see real picture about this important intervention in educational system. This is something which has to be done if we are sustaining on our serious goal: to offer support for every pupil and it's parents.

The evolution of the idea as well as the practice of SEN children treatment in educational system in R. Macedonia shows us a very interesting picture. The well structured and developed system of education does not have a long history. This means that our practice of treating children with SEN is not very well structured or developed. Yet, we are not pessimistic and we believe that we will succeed in our mission - to create meaningful, rich, and helpful practice for children and their parents. We have an obligation to do so as professionals,

and as a country. We have an obligation towards the other children who spend their days in a classroom with those children who desperately need help.

Not so long ago, our educational system had separate classrooms for different kind of children or even separate schools for some of them. Those classrooms and those schools were for children with some kind of light mental retardation, or disorders in hearing and sight. Thus, we have educated professionals to work with those categories of children. This means that we didn't offer any special treatment for other categories of children. This means that we didn't pay any attention to the questions posed by teachers which were in touch with those children. They had a hard time, but they didn't know where to ask for help and where to find any.

In order to be in touch with the world tendencies in this area, but mostly because of the results gained with the analysis of our above stated educational practice we made a new plan for this issue. The analysis shows that we have a lot of weak points, and that treatment of children with SEN is far away from being a qualitative one. We choose to make a comparison with many practices in other countries and to find out what kind of practice will be appropriate to our needs and circumstances. We need much more time to make an evaluation of the results that we have managed to achieve.

First of all we would like to point out to all who are interested in this area which category of children is named children with SEN: *Children who have problems in learning communication, behavior sensory or hearing, moving.* Neretina points out the children with SEN as the main problem of the so called Special Pedagogy as a pedagogical discipline. In those frames she speaks about different areas of this discipline which is dedicated to problems of special groups of children. She speaks about children with problems of seeing, listening, combination of difficulties in seeing and hearing, children with deficit in their mental development, children with language disorder, children with motorical problems, children with psihopaty,

with some kind of obstacles in their normal psychical development, some kind of affect ional and emotional disorders.

In this context, few years ago, we started to make some changes in order to be serious in our treatment of different kind of groups of our young population through our educational system. So we developed a *Project named Inclusion of children with SEN in schools in R. Macedonia.* The main paper of this Project was published in 2002 and in the same year started the practical preparation of teachers to implement these project activities. The frames of this project are really wide: they include children with difficulties in seeing, blind children, with mental disorders, deaf, with hearing problems, with language disorders, invalidity, with chronically diseases, children with behavioral problems, with learning problems, talented and gifted children, emotional problems, abandoned children, children from dysfunctional families, from culturally deprived families, children whose mother language is not the language spoken in school, refugees.

We have an opportunity to analyze a manual which contains many aspects of practical approach. So we are satisfied with its context, but the real problems are in its operationalization and implementation. There are many issues that could be criticized because we did not offer necessary prepositions to guarantee quality practice and results. It is fact that all teachers could not be well prepared to work with all these categories of children. Also there are problems with the specific supporting materials needed for learning and teaching. We must be aware of the lack of teams and equipment to have qualitative practice. Teachers are lost if they work alone. The weakest links of this system are the parents, as well as the weak procedures for complementary approach in treating various problems with institutions and individuals out of school. The project is focusing on individual treatment of every child with different SEN. It is the right one, but in the same times the hardest one. Especially for the teacher. The teacher has an obligation to identify and to develop specific learning practice for every one of them. This means that they have an obligation to establish good diagnose, but that is not enough. They have to know how

to deal with different problems in learning. This means that they have to have knowledge and skills for developing an individual educational plan for every unique child and problem.

One aspect of SEN is related to EBD problems: *inability to achieve academic progress, which could not be explained by intellectual, health or sensory problems; inability to achieve or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teacher; inappropriate types of behavior or feeling under the normal conditions; in global pervasive mood, feeling of unhappiness or depression*. This is a specific aspect of the educational need and most teachers in our schools don't have preparation to deal with it, even more there is a project of inclusion of children which means that they have an obligation to do so. There are many indicators to show us that a child has SEN caused by some kind of emotional, affective and behavioral difficulties. Usually when we talk about them we mean *aggressive behavior, depressive one, withdrawn, and self-injurious tendencies*. The most common and frequently detected causes of EBD are: *heredity; family and society; schools*.

In the recent years there is one specific problem which causes a lot of troubles to teachers. Many of the pupils belong to the SEN group caused by one difficult reason: pupils demonstrate a great problems in their behavior, difficulties in learning because they have been victims of family violence. Every week through mass media we can hear about children which are victims of violence in family. Those are the so called light numbers which are part of state statistic, but we are not aware of the real intensity of the problem. School and their teachers are in front of a serious challenge: they have to recognize children which have been, or are victims of family violence, they have to be part of the team work to help those children to overcome problem situation. This means that they have to know how to recognize children under the family violence, also to have developed competences for team work strategies in order to help those children.

There is no doubt that children who have been family violence victims will develop inappropriate behavior. Teacher should expect to

see *emotional and behavioral difficulties* among those children. The results of many researches into this matter show that those children have emotional and behavioral disorders which cause difficulties in the normal process of learning and socialization, as well as health problems. Maybe the first signals that something is wrong with the pupil could be discerned in the area of learning and communication with peers and teacher. This category of children is very important for one more reason: they could develop and demonstrate delinquent behavior if deviant behavior lasts for a period of time, if no one recognizes the problem, if no one tries to offer help to open and overcome problem. If that happens, it means that the problem manages to escalate, that the problem is spreading out of family, classroom, school. This is a difficult situation, because this means that those children are in a conflict with law. This stage is dangerous one, both for child and society, and it is very hard to overcome the problem at this stage. This means that teacher has an obligation and responsibility to offer some help before the escalation of problem, as soon as s/he notices some changes in child's behavior.

The first step in the process of detecting a child who has been a victim of family violence is to collect information through observing its behavior and changes in the way that the child acts. Usually those children demonstrate emotional and behavioral disorder and the most efficient way to see that something is wrong is to observe how children act in classroom. There are two possibilities: to have a child without this kind of problems in class at the start, and to have a child with problems of this nature i.e. with a problem before getting to be a part from class. Teachers are in front of the challenge in both cases. Also it is utopia to consider that teachers are responsible for overcoming the problem or that they are the only ones who are responsible for the success in overcoming the problem. Complexity of problem requires a complex approach.

The most important task for the teacher is to recognize the nature of the reasons that cause emotional and behavioral disorders. The first thing that should be noticed is problems in communication with peers

and teacher. Also there are many situations of demonstrating learning underachievement. But teacher should collect many more information about the way that children act in especially out of school and thus make a whole picture about the problem situation. This means that teachers should have some information on how the child acts out of school. The most difficult point is to make a conclusion about the causes of the family violence problem only because in our culture people are not open when they talk about family violence. Usually people are not aware what should be considered as a demonstration of family violence. Especially when we talk about *psychical (emotional) violence*. Parents, teachers, and children could say much more about the physical one, but when they are in a situation to recognize psychological one they fail to do so. Tradition and cultural values which were a long period of time the part of our life style made those consequences. Much of the information should be collected through direct communication with parents. This approach complicated the situation. The main risk factors which lead to violence in family are: *low material incomes; many children I family; conflict family; incomplete family; family with adopted child; mental diseases at parent; parent alcoholic; aggressive parent; parent who wants to dominate; low self-control at parent; neurosis; low self-esteem at parent; high expectation from children; considering that physical punishment is the most effective tool for educating children.*

There are some tools which are recognized as helpful for teachers to make a relevant conclusion that the child has an EBD and thus recommended.

Behaviour Assessment							
Name		class		date		/ /	
EMOTIONAL	1	2	3	4	5		scores
Happy and contented						Unhappy and anxious	
Copes easily with new situations/people						Difficult with new situations/people	

Even tempered and easy going						Irritable or quarrelsome	
Positive self-image						Negative self-image	
total							
LEARNING	1	2	3	4	5		scores
Concentrates well, not easily distracted						Can not to concentrate on task, distractible	
Eager to learn, curious to learn						Shows little curiosity, no work motivation	
Perseveres if work is difficult/challenging						Lacks perseverance with work	
Can work independently						Needs constant help and encouragement	
total							
CONDUCT	1	2	3	4	5		scores
Helpful, considerate towards others						Bullies or is spiteful towards others	
Sociable and friendly						Solitary and withdrawn	
Readily accepts discipline and control						Generally disruptive or disobedient	
Can ignore difficult behaviour						Joins in disruption	
total							
COMMENTS?							

Behaviour Assessment Tool

This tool helps teachers to assess child's behavior and to make a conclusion about presence of EBD. Generally teachers should know about the agreement among knowledgeable professionals that pupils with EBD caused by any factor demonstrate: *low self-esteem, depressive conditions, crime behavior, suicide behavior, alcohol and drugs*

consummation, violence, aggressive behavior, drop out, poor communication with peers and teacher, conflict with peers and teacher. And here comes the hardest step - how to prove family violence as causes of those problems. Every school should have a whole-school approach politic about this matter, but inspite of this teacher must do the hardest part of this phase. S/he should talk with the child and the child's parents. This means that s/he should have well developed communication skills in order to make conclusions, but right one. The most important thing is to offer a good diagnose: this pupil is a victim of family violence. Indicators of being a victim of this kind of violence are three dimensional: *indicators of physical violence; indicators of sexual violence; indicators of psychical (emotional) violence.* This is a very delicate question, just because teacher may unintentionally make a mistake and stigmatize the parent or the child. But teacher should always have on mind: last word, conclusion about family situation, and child exposition of some kind of family violence should be result of a team approach.

But the main concern and the most responsible part of teachers' work is how to act to help the child overcome the problem, especially the consequences which arise from this difficult problem. The first question is: is teacher in a position to offer help, in which aspect of the problem he could offer real help. The nature of causes of EBD when we talk about family violence and children as victims of that kind of violence, there's not much space left for teacher' reaction. This is a complex problem which could not be overcome by teachers' intervention only. Prepositions to teachers that they should offer Individual Educational Plan for Intervention, are not enough for solving the problem. The teacher should make an effort in order to help the pupil to overcome EBD, but s/he could not do much in order to deal with factors which cause EBD. Especially when we talk about violence in family as a risk factor for developing EBD at pupil. For example: pupil should demonstrate aggressive behavior as a manifestation of being a victim of family violence. Teacher should use some of

the techniques for managing aggressive behavior, but is not in a position to eliminate causes of the aggressive behavior.

This is the main reason to act by using team work, and teacher should be one of the few team members. The team should consist of *teacher, specialists from professional institutions such as social workers, psychologists, doctors.* The team should develop a consistent plan for action. This means that the plan should be coordinated between two sub teams: *the first one will work with the child, and the second one will work with the parents.* In this team the teacher will have an obligation to develop competences which are the main base for successful work with this category of children. This means that s/he should adopt many techniques for diagnosing the situation, to collect information, to communicate with team partners, to communicate with parents, to implement techniques for overcoming EBD. Teachers should know that overcoming the problem situation is a process, it doesn't happen suddenly. Also s/he has to be aware that successful overcoming of the problem depends on each team member. His/her role is significant and very important, so s/he has a great responsibility in helping children from this category. If s/he leaves the problem aside, he is helping the problem to escalate. If he tries to help the pupil on his own, that help will be partial, unsatisfactory, and insufficient.

To make this strategy and school practice part of the real school work, few steps must be taken: first of all each team member should be educated to develop competences necessary for work with this children. Second step is to construct legal bases necessary to build an institutional network for equipping working teams for prevention and correction of the consequences of family violence. Those efforts must be focused on the strengthening of teacher's role. S/he is the most important figure. So we have to develop specific programs for his/her initiative, as well as further education which will help him/her to be a successful participant in the protection and cure of the child.

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Reform of Education for Children with Special Needs

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Abstract

Countries and agencies differ in how they define children with special needs. To clarify the situation, OECD has developed a three-part, cross-national classification that assigns children to one of three categories: (A) disabilities, (B) difficulties, or (C) disadvantages. In this report, the term 'children with special needs' is used to cover all three categories, although the problems specific to each category will also be addressed.

Category Definition

A. Disabilities Students with disabilities or impairments viewed in medical terms as organic disorders attributable to organic pathologies (e.g. in relation to sensory, motor or neurological defects). The educational need is considered to arise primarily from problems attributable to these difficulties.

B. Difficulties Students with behavioural or emotional disorders, or specific difficulties in learning. The educational need is considered to arise primarily from problems in the interaction between the student and the educational context.

C. Disadvantages Students with disadvantages arising primarily from socio-economic, cultural and/ or linguistic factors. The educational need is to compensate for the disadvantages attributable to these factors.