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International scientific monograph

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

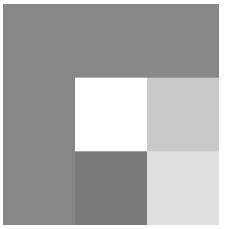
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Preface

Education in agendas, politics and policies at a global level, has been recognized as both a, civil and human right. At this point, there are a vast amount of documents supporting this claim, yet a recent declaration on education, specifically *Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all* explicitly suggests that "education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights" (UNESCO, 2015, iii). In that context, education is a right *per se*, and pillar for other rights in regards to one's well-being. This dual nature in educational rights sometimes leads to misinterpretations, indicating the need for interdisciplinary research which could contribute to emerging social dialogues between individuals (parents, children, teachers etc.) and societal structures, especially politics and law. Therefore, in the last 10 to 15 years, scholars have increasingly shown interest for research in the educational arena, with emphasis on the children's perspective, concluding that children's rights in an educational setting are question of quality of life, not just of particular child, but quality of life of its family, and society in general. In the heart of the educational arena are, children and teachers, which make their interpersonal relationships fundamental quality issues. Relationships with peers, teacher and children interaction, relationship between teachers as co-workers, and quality of partnership with parents and local communities are contexts in which children rights come to life, i.e. education is a real-life context in which children can exercise their rights. To contribute to this issue, Faculty of Education in Osijek and Ombudsman for Children Croatia have prepared a monograph "Children's rights in Educational Settings".

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Introduction

This International scientific monograph "Children's rights in educational setting" is a result of cooperation between Ombudsman's office for children in Croatia and the Faculty of Education in Osijek, and various scholars involved in research with children. The main goal of this monograph is to begin a social dialogue between various institutions and educational systems. Children do spend the majority of the day in educational settings, and that's why the processes in kindergarten, primary and secondary schools should be closely observed, analyzed and upgraded toward the children's perspectives. To achieve the first step towards that, several authors have gathered and contributed to this issue.

In the paper entitled *"Half a century of human rights in education by UNESCO: Advocating one's well-being from society to classroom and vice-versa"* authors from Croatia (Matanović and Romstein), and Albania (Bushati) analyzed UNESCO's agendas on education in the last 50 years suggesting that UNESCO significantly shifted their recommendations from non-discrimination to sustainability and employability, revealing the global tendencies for economic growth of the European Union.

The second paper was supported and supervised by the Children of prisoners Europe (COPE) and Ombudsman for Children in Croatia. Authors from Croatia (Romstein and Gabelica Šupljika) in the paper entitled *"Not my crime, still my sentence: Rights of children of incarcerated parents in education"* conducted a survey with teachers and other educational experts working in schools in Croatia, about their attitudes towards children of incarcerated parents. Their survey revealed a strong presence of social conformism and biases towards these children, as well as a lack of competence amongst teachers when it comes to working with children of incarcerated parents, suggesting that continuous professional education for teachers could address these issues in the near future, so children could receive adequate support in classrooms.

Further, authors from Croatia, Babić Pezo (Ombudsman's office for children Croatia) and Velki (Faculty of Education) and in their paper *"The practice of inclusive education in Croatia"* presented the current situation on inclusive education in Croatia. They suggest that inclusive education should be accompanied with changes in polices and agendas on national level, and with programs of lifelong learning for in-service teachers.

Also from Croatia (Mlinarević, Brust Nemet and Kostić), in the paper *"Students' attitudes on promoting rights in primary education"* presented cross-cultural research conducted in Croatia and Canada. Authors revealed that students in Canada and Croatia didn't differ in their attitudes and knowledge on children's rights. The research results show the need to introduce a systemized education program about human rights in schools because it affects the awareness and attitudes of students about their rights.

The next paper, entitled "*Language rights of children asylum seekers and asylees in the Republic of Croatia"*, Croatian authors, (Berbić Kolar and Gligorić), addressed recent social issues of migrants and asylees, in the context of language rights. The authors discovered an absence of adequate legal regulations, and poor coordination between current policies at the global and local levels. They have put special emphasis on the need to provide adequate agendas for this vulnerable social group.

Authors from Macedonia (Angelkoska and Stankovska) presented the paper *"Specificity of the educational process for children with special educational needs in FYR of Macedonia"* it talked about the current policies and practices in the education of children with special needs. They have discussed the needs for curriculum changes, as well as need for educational reform, for the purpose of meeting educational needs of children with special needs and their families.

The last paper entitled "*What is kindergarten for? The purpose of early education perceived by preschool children and their parents"*, Croatian authors, (Romstein, Vladović and Žagar), presented the results of a qualitative survey with children and parents, revealing the difference in the perception of kindergarten between parents and their children. While parents are oriented towards a structural dimension of early education (e.g. daily routines of care), children are more concerned about peer interaction and play. This indicates that preschool teachers are in-between these perceptions and expectations, suggesting that the quality of early education has many standpoints from which it may be observed.

The editors would like to thank authors and reviewers for their effort and contribution to this monograph.

Original scientific paper

Damir Matanović, Ksenija Romstein & Jozef Bushati

HALF A CENTURY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EDUCATION BY UNESCO: ADVOCATING ONE'S WELL-BEING FROM SOCIETY TO CLASSROOM AND VICE-VERSA

Abstract

Human rights in education has emerged as interdisciplinary study, providing the possibilities for cooperation of experts from diverse academic disciplines such as law, sociology, anthropology, pedagogy, psychology etc. Starting from 1960's UNESCO's Convention against Discrimination in Education, until 2015 UNESCO's document Recommendation concerning technical and vocational education and training, international politics and policies see education as foundation stone for prosper of societies at local and global levels. Vast of documents adopted from UNESCO suggested that education is crucial for one's well-being, and as such represents a starting point for educational experts for their practice of teaching children and adults, and advocating their rights. In this paper the review of goals in the agendas adopted by UNESCO will be presented. The results of qualitative analyze of agendas revealed that during the period of 50 years, goals in UNESCO documents concerning education shifted from non-discrimination to sustainability and employability, suggesting that political and economic conditions at global level dictate the process of advocating human rights for the classroom and societies, and rarely address the children's needs articulated by children themselves.

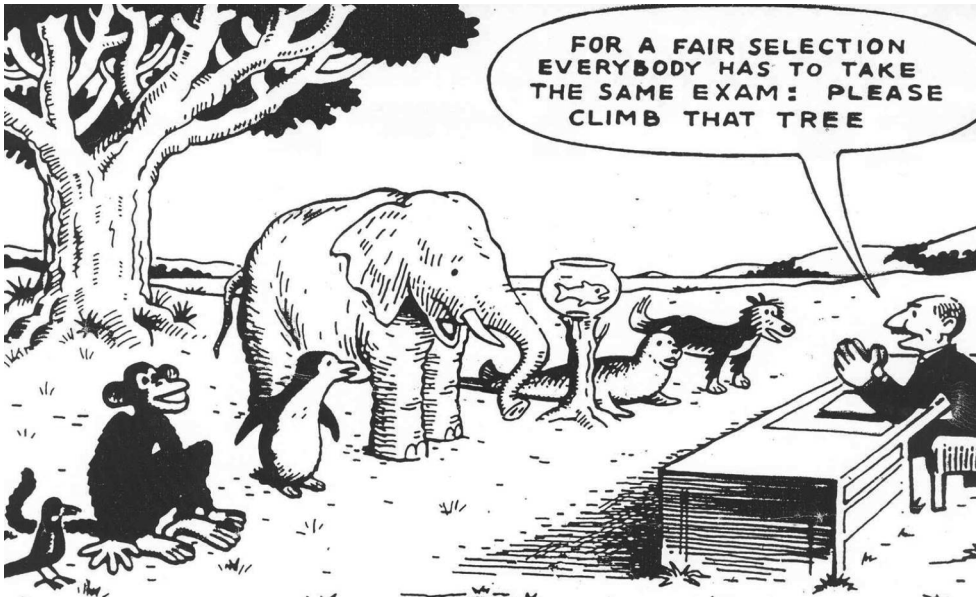
Key words: children's rights, education, children's well-being, international education agendas

INTRODUCTION

For UNESCO, education is a high-priority social field with long-lasting outcomes. While other international institutions like UN, Unicef, etc. also deal with education, UNESCO is recognized as international institution specialized for addressing the challenges in education. As they say, their mission is to promote "a holistic and humanistic vision of quality education worldwide, with the realization of everyone's right to education, and the belief that education plays a fundamental role in human, social and economic development" (UNESCO, 2011, p.7). UNESCO's documents are often recognized as a starting point for construction of agendas, recommendations, strategies, etc. in many other states worldwide. The main idea of UNESCO agendas is to promote education as a social and as a individual value, with the anticipation of a long-lasting effect of education on one's autonomy and well-being.

In general, international agendas on education, at their declarative level, tend to regulate human and civil rights in educational contexts. The main goal in a vast number of agendas is to provide appropriate educational context for children and nowadays adults, and to advocate certain values, depending on the needs of particular society and/or culture. Although these goals seem logical and complement, at first sight, a problem of a dual nature of rights in the educational agendas can be seen. In the one hand, there is explicit push to make education accessible to everyone. This represents the individual perspective on the rights in education, where one's well-being is a priority for politics. On the other hand, there is a push to achieve socially desirable outcomes, and in this perspective "prescription" of values and goals that is present. These two perspectives Foucault (2003a) identified as regulatory actions of government, which are implicitly driven against one's prosper. Authors, (Rawls,1999; Archard, 2005; Delacroix, 2006) also claim that educational agendas are actually driven by politics, and as such represent needs of societies, and not individuals, i.e. children. This issue Rawls (1999) sees as a problem of interpreting rights and needs in agendas, where rights are more about one's prosper, while needs are actually socially desirable outcomes. Also, rights and law (including agendas and policies), as he states, are usually equalized, yet they are two different concepts, and as such should be addressed differently in research. Similarly, Foucault (2003a) states that educational policies and agendas are actually social norms aimed at the regulation of social relations. From his point of view, educational institutions represent a place of controlling one's life, activities, and the regulation of one's social activism. These regulatory social tendencies can be seen in policies diverted towards the education system in which values are externally prescribed and advocated. For instance, the fight against poverty is often mentioned in educational agendas, yet the educational system isn't the arena where poverty is produced and as such cannot be responsible for ending it. There are numerous examples of social problems which are addressed in agendas, and in which educational entities such as students, teachers etc. cannot directly influence.

Alongside the regulatory functions of the education system embedded in agendas and policies, another hidden problem in educational agendas at international level, is the presence of normalized and standardized measures which students should achieve during their formal education. Although standards and norms are presented as indicators of high quality in education, and as such represent an imperative at all levels of education, it is important to scrutinize their influence on individual development from a psychological point of view.



Picture 1. Educational standards and assessment
(retrieved 1st of June 2017 from: http://lskydifferentiatedinstruction.wikispaces.com/file/view/assessment.jpg/173586135/assessment.jpg)

Standards and norms have become integral parts of educational agendas, which are nowadays scrutinized in some scientific fields such as philosophy of education and critical pedagogy, and should be further questioned from different points of views at micro-levels, i.e. in the classrooms. From Rawls' (1999) point of view, normalization has been widely integrated in education and it strongly affects student's position in the classroom. Similarly the author Slee (2006) claims that educational standards actually separate students, because they differ in their abilities, especially in their early years. Authors (Brothers, 2001; Fortin, 2003; Archard, 2005; Delacroix, 2006) noticed that adults create norms and name it competence, and as such are considered socially desirable outcomes in education. However, when a child is expressing its own point of view on desirable competencies, adults often call them wishes. To achieve consensus on desirable outcomes (i.e. standards and norms) in education, it would be important to include students in public debates about this

issue via focus groups, supported by scholars in this field. This kind of practice began some ten years ago and research from classroom suggested that childhood and processes within it, are socially regulated by adults, and that adults and children have different points of view on some issues regarding education. For instance, adults perceive norms and standards as indicators of child's well-being and quality, while students see norms and standards as obligations and demands from adults that should be achieved (Alanen, 2004; Qvortrup 2008; Corsaro, 2011). To support these claims, Cunningham et al. conducted research in 2004, and found out that children prefer exploration and interaction with their peers over academic activities regulated by adults, suggesting that reciprocal processes are in children's focus. This perspective could be named participatory-emancipatory perspective, and as such represent a foundation for self-actualization. In other words, it is questionable how standards and norms in education contribute to a student's positive self-esteem and self-actualization, which are from a psychological point of view perceived as highest goal of one's development. To conclude about external regulation, Archard (2005) emphasized that the majority of educational agendas are based on social perspective, which includes standards, norms and regulations, and as such doesn't actually refer to a child's participation and autonomy. In other words, educational agendas and policies are about external regulation and achieving socially desirable outcomes. In that perspective, a child's individual well-being and self-actualization is subordinated in accordance to social expectations. This dual social perception of students in which they are seen as individuals, both dependent and independent, results with confusion in classrooms: teachers are between social expectations (standards, norms and external assessment), and students' needs (autonomy and self-actualization). The imperative of standards and norms for authors (Chomsky, 1999; Foucault, 2007[a,b]; Cradock, 2007; Harvey, 2007; Torres, 2009; Steger and Roy, 2010) is an indicator of the presence of neoliberal values in education. For instance, Torres (2009) states that norms and standards are directed towards efficiency of the educational system, and not towards pupils' positive learning experiences, suggesting that educational settings have hidden purposes, which are rarely addressed in the research. So it would be important to scrutinize classroom practices and social agendas in advocating human rights in education, with a critical approach to proclaimed values in educational agendas.

Research goal

The purpose was to identify the main goals in the UNESCO educational agendas, along with the responsibilities and outcomes anticipated within each agenda.

METHOD

To find out which priorities were given in the educational agendas in UNESCO over the last 50 years, content analysis of 10 UNESCO educational documents was done.

Research methods

A content analysis of the available UNESCO documents was performed. All of the documents were retrieved from the official UNESCO web-site, in the link to educational documents, English versions. The analysis of the retrieved documents was qualitative, i.e. content analysis was made.

Analyzed UNESCO's documents were as follows:

Convention against discrimination in education (1960),

Recommendation concerning the status of teachers (1966),

Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974),

Recommendation on the development of adult education (1976),

Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989),

Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education (1993),

Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997),

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (1997),

Recommendation on adult learning and education (2015), and

Recommendation concerning technical and vocational education and training (TVET) (2015).

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Hereafter, the presentation of qualitative analysis of UNESCO agendas on education will be presented.

Table 1. Goals and responsibilities within analyzed UNESCO's educational agendas

Nr.	Document	Year	Main goal(s)	Target/ responsibility	Anticipated outcome(s)
1	Convention Against Discrimination in Education	1960	To reduce discrimination in society	Educational administration and law institutions	Access to education for all students.
2	Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers	1966	To achieve adequate formal education for teachers, at every level (preschool, primary school, secondary school)	Governments, high Education area	Professionals (teachers) well educated for assessment of children development and teaching all children.
3	Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms	1974	To introduce human rights in education, at all levels including higher education. To achieve better cooperation between different countries and cultures, including economic trade.	Educational institutions, teachers	Raising awareness on issues of human rights, and needs for cooperation between different countries and cultures.
4	Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education	1976	Achieving better educational access at tertiary level and lifelong learning for everyone, with special emphasis on females.	Educational institutions at tertiary level, administration	Achieving economic and cultural development, social progress, and development of educational system through programs of lifelong learning.
5	Convention on Technical and Vocational Education	1989	To expand and improve the technical and vocational education for pupils and adults, due to technological development of societies at global level.	Educational institutions at tertiary level, market	Exchanging information in the development of technical and vocational education and strengthening international co-operation in this field.

Nr.	Document	Year	Main goal(s)	Target/ responsibility	Anticipated outcome(s)
6	Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education	1993	Recognition of qualifications as a means of increasing mobility of scholars and the exchange of scientific knowledge at international level	Governments, educational institutions at tertiary level	Increasing mobility for teachers, students, researchers and professionals, and achieving better understanding between cultures and peoples, with mutual respect for their diversity.
7	Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel	1997	To maintain and develop knowledge of subject through scholarship and improved pedagogical skills (for higher education teaching staff).	Educational institutions at tertiary level	Higher education contribution to the achievement of the goals of lifelong learning and to the development of other levels of education.
8	Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region	1997	To find common solutions to practical recognition problems in the European region, due to vast number of educational programs at tertiary level.	Educational institutions at tertiary level	To establish common ground for international cooperation and recognition of program at tertiary levels.
9	Recommendation on adult learning and education	2015	To equip people with the necessary capabilities to exercise and realize their rights and take control of their destinies.	Educational institutions at tertiary level	Developing individuals' capacity for critical thinking, autonomy, participation in sustainable development processes and enhancing one's awareness for the protection of the environment.

Nr.	Document	Year	Main goal(s)	Target/ responsibility	Anticipated outcome(s)
10	Recommendation concerning technical and vocational education and training	2015	To empower individuals and promote employment, decent work and lifelong learning.	Educational institutions at secondary and tertiary level, government	Supporting individuals to make transitions between education and the working position, and to sustain employa-bility.

The content analysis reveals UNESCO's several phases in promoting education through international agendas. The first phase is from 1960's until 1970's where UNESCO agendas on education were focused on governments and introduced recommendations for stakeholders, regarding the reduction of discrimination in educational system. This phase could be named *phase of promoting one's basic human rights in education*, and as such represent true effort for achieving one's well-being through access to education at micro-level. In this phase, individual well-being was to be achieved through political action, and individuality was taken into account.

The second phase is between 1970's and 1990's, where UNESCO switched agendas from governments and stakeholders to educational institutions, precisely education institutions at tertiary level, i.e. colleges, faculties and universities. The main goal during these 20 years was to establish external and additional support to preschool education, primary and secondary education, starting from formal education for teachers, to recommendations for life-long learning. This is a start for directing responsibilities from stakeholders towards other social factors, such as educational institutions, suggesting that values and socially desirable outcomes should be routed from one institution to another. In an educational contexts, this re-direction of responsibilities occurs between higher education area and classrooms, especially at the primary and secondary level. Therefore, this phase can be identified as the *phase of directing responsibilities from stakeholders to educational institutions*.

Lastly, the third phase of UNESCO educational agendas is from 1990 until today. This contemporary phase is a *phase of directing responsibilities from educational institutions towards individuals*, in which individuals have the responsibility for achieving one's own well-being. In other words, individuals are solely responsible for outcomes in their life, while educational institutions have obligations to assess externally prescribed standards and norms on their students. Although there is not strong evidence on how these educational agendas influence one's self-actualization, or how they actually address social issues such as poverty, violence, arm conflicts etc., it is clear that (re)direction of responsibilities from social factors to individuals is far from the first of UNESCO's educational agendas from almost 50 years ago.

Table 2. Scheme of UNESCO's (re)direction of responsibilities in its educational agendas

Level	Government	Educational institutions	Classrooms	Individuals
Factor	Stakeholders	Teachers, university professors	Teachers, parents, students	Individuals, their families
Main task	To promote human rights	To educate for human rights	To advocate human rights	To practice human rights
Responsibility	Societal	Societal/Institutional	Institutional/ Individual	Individual
Phase	Promoting one's basic human rights in education (1)	Directing responsibilities from stake-holders to educational institutions (2)	Directing responsibilities from stake-holders to educational institutions (2)	Directing responsibilities from educational institutions towards individuals (3)

As this table suggests, during the last half century, UNESCO's agendas have significantly switched their advocacy paradigm from social responsibilities for promoting human rights in education towards directing these concerns and responsibilities toward individuals. This practice is covered with syntagme social activism, but the true effects of such social practices are to be researched across nations.

DISCUSSION

The content analysis of UNESCO's agenda on education and human rights reveals a switch in responsibilities from social factors to individual factors. After the first phase, in which human rights were addressed, came an era of economic influence in education, which some authors actually refer to as neo-liberalism in education (Chomsky, 1999; Harvey, 2007; Torres, 2009; Steger and Roy, 2010) The presence of a close link between its agendas and political conditions are even explicated in agendas, describing this *education-profit chimera* as a path to one's well-being. As UNESCO (1989, p. 232) themselves states "close collaboration between UNESCO and the International Labor Organization in drawing up their respective instruments so that they pursue harmonious objectives and with a view of continuing fruitful collaboration", suggesting that the 1990s were the years during which neoliberal ideas were introduced to education. This is consistent with authors (Chomsky, 1999; Foucault, 2007[a,b]; Cradock, 2007; Harvey, 2007; Torres, 2009; Steger and Roy, 2010)work, which emphasized the presence of neoliberal values in educational agendas. Later that decade, higher education had been described as an instrument in the pursuit of knowledge and competences for all citizens, and a pillar

of education quality (UNESCO, 1993; UNESCO, 1997), although in reality, high educational institutions cannot meet these requirements by themselves.

Implications for future studies

Analysis revealed that UNESCO agendas have become oriented towards individuals' responsibilities regarding one's own well-being. In other words, there is less social support and social advocacy, suggesting that future studies should be focused on interpretative aspects of quality of life within longitudinal studies and interdisciplinary research. Also, there is a strong need for critical studies in the field of human rights, which has to be driven by the scientific research.

Research limitations

The main limitation in this paper is the analysis of only 10 agendas. The analyzed agendas were retrieved from UNESCO's official web site on education, so the number is limited by the availability of the documents. Actually UNESCO has a vast number of agendas and recommendations closely linked to education, but in other fields, such as trade and economy. These agendas weren't taken into account during this analysis.

Another limitation is the purely theoretical approach to this issue: previous papers concerning educational agendas have only had theoretical contributions, and should be acknowledged as a discursive approach to this issue. In the future, methodology for researching a connection between educational agendas, neoliberal values and one's quality of life should be established.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of UNESCO's agendas on rights in education has revealed a close connection between UNESCO and global politics, mostly western-introduced. Responsibilities (re)directed at different levels (stakeholders → educational institutions → classrooms → individuals), present in agendas are coherent with global politics of maintaining societal power relations. The process of (re)direction of responsibilities only contributes to slow changes in educational systems (education is *limping* after societal change, to be precisely), making the changes in classrooms less efficient than had been expected. So, educational agendas, educational changes and practice of advocating human rights at micro-levels should be conducted simultaneously with advocacy at the macro-level. It means that teachers and students should be acknowledged as partners by stakeholders in the process of constructing educational policies, and not solely as recipients of rights in agendas.

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Original scientific paper

Ksenija Romstein & Maja Gabelica Šupljika

NOT MY CRIME, STILL MY SENTENCE[1]: RIGHTS OF CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS IN EDUCATION

Abstract

In the last decade there is increasing number of children of incarcerated parents worldwide. These children are recognized as a socially vulnerable group and should receive support from their immediate environment, including teachers and peers. Some research suggests that children of incarcerated parents experience biases in the classrooms, and a significant number of them remain invisible to educating professionals. To find out whether biases are present in Croatian classrooms, during June 2017 an online survey was conducted. Overall 94 teachers and other educational professionals (pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers, etc.), in 4 Croatian counties were enrolled. The results showed that educational professionals have a strong sense of social conformism when it comes to children of incarcerated parents: they recognize children's rights in terms of protection, but their support is mainly restricted to academic achievement and preventive actions, while peer mediation is completely ignored. Also, they admit their own incompetence for providing adequate support for children of incarcerated parents. This should be considered as a foundation for establishing lifelong learning programs for teachers and other educational professionals in the field of children's rights in education, including children of incarcerated parents.

Key words: incarcerated parents, classroom, education, biases, support

[1] This paper is a result of cooperation between Ombudsman for Children in Croatia and Faculty of Education in Osijek, during the Children's of Prisoners Europe 2017 campaign „Not my crime, still my sentence". Authors would like to thank all participants in this survey.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade there is increasing number of children of incarcerated parents worldwide. It resulted with interest from different professions concerning the quality of life of these children. They are recognized as a socially vulnerable group and increasingly receive support from their immediate environment, including teachers and peers. However, there are no clear insights into outcomes of that support, especially when it comes to support in the classrooms. Moreover, quality of life of prisoners is nowadays recognized as a social problem and scholars tend to put an effort into researching that issue. Yet, Scharff Smith (2014) points to that less attention is given to the rights of children of incarcerated parents and other family members, especially concerning how incarceration affects their quality of life. He identified four main areas of life in which family members, including children, had problems: (1) damaged relationship between the incarcerated parent and its family, (2) financial problems and poverty, (3) stigmatization of family members, and (4) long term problems in adulthood such as dropping out of school and unemployment. From his data, it can be concluded that educational settings have a great influence on a child's life, because schools are places where children live outside their family. It can be assumed that supportive teachers could positively affect a child's life, i.e. reduce dropout rate and prevent bullying and peer violence which are according to Scharff Smith (2014) often present in the classrooms. Similar findings have other authors (Van der Rakt, Murray and Niewbeera, 2011; Wakesfield and Wildreman, 2014) suggesting that children of incarcerated parents are at a greater risk of becoming less educated, poor and socially isolated. Also, authors (Moore, 2001; Scharff Smith, 2014) suggested that peer violence and the lack of support in the schools, not the parental incarceration itself, leads to the child's criminal behavior and dropping out school. Further, Moore (2001) suggests that children of incarcerated parents have problems with concentrating during class, because they have worries about their incarcerated parents on their mind. So, teachers should support a child, and give them an opportunity to express their own concerns. Although teachers are seen as key people for providing support, there are some problems in the practice, mostly because teachers' support depends on whether information about incarceration is given to the teacher. This is a problem in reality, and as Boswell and Wedge (2002) suggest, up to 90% of children of incarcerated parents in the UK are not known as such to their teacher. Before researching social support for children of incarcerated parents, Morgan et al. (2014) called out schools to participate in their research, but a majority of the schools claimed that they don't have such children in their classes. So the authors concluded that children of incarcerated parents are truly invisible children (ibid). It means that teachers often don't have this information, or information about parental incarceration had never been confirmed to the teacher, yet remained a gossip. Subsequently, teachers cannot provide support, which means that the absence of information for teachers could represent a risk factor. On the other hand, if teachers do know about parental incarceration, the problems could be teachers' mediating skills and communication competence, which are important for

adequate support. Boswell and Wedge (2002) noticed that teachers who know about the parental incarceration are more likely to discuss this issue with other colleagues than with the particular child. This means that parental incarceration is a social issue which should be reconsidered and discussed with educational practitioners, not just with the experts in the field of law or social welfare. Including other experts, such as teachers, in the public discourse about parental incarceration, it is important for the quality of education and for children's rights in particular. Also, communication between different professionals (psychologists, social workers, criminalists, law officers, lawyers etc.) and educational professionals, could lead to a functional social network which a child could fully benefit from. For now, it would be helpful that teachers themselves, through research projects and professional networks, express their own views and expectations about dividing responsibilities, and give suggestions about their own field of engagement on this issue.

At this point, research of the phenomenon of incarcerated parents in education are directed into identifying risk factors, connecting incarceration with conduct problems, emotional problems etc., while the role of school is rarely discussed. For instance, Van der Rakt, Murray and Niewbeera (2011) tried to connect parental incarceration with prevalence of crimes of their children. The found a strong connection if, parental incarceration occurred during 6 - 12 years of a child's life. I.e. school aged children are, according to this finding, they are at high risk for incarceration and becoming like their parents later in life. Also, Wakesfield and Wilderman (2014) pointed out that parental incarceration is closely linked to a child's emotional problems, or health issues, suggesting that every child of an incarcerated parent is potentially a problem for the classroom. Yet, other research from Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) suggested there is no difference in behavior and academic achievement between children of incarcerated parents and their peers. All of these children had regular contacts with their parents, which imposed the conclusion that regular visits and contacts can prevent dropouts and low academic achievement. In this context, teachers are very important because a visiting child can be often absent from school. So, adequate support (academic and non-academic) is one of the key features of adequate classroom support. But, Arditti (2012) described the presence of a stigma in child's educational environment: teachers of children of incarcerated parents have tendencies of describing these children as problematic. Teachers' biases, authors interpret as a presence of a unique social stigmatization, which influences classrooms. Similarly, Robertson (2011) claims that nature and extent of stigma depends on several factors such as the nature of the particular crime and community attitudes about crime in general, the nature of the sentence. Teachers should confront all these in their classes through anti-bias activities, including peer mediation and parent education. So, Arditti (2012) calls on the teachers to become the advocates for socially marginalized children because they have great influence on the quality of a child's life, and claim they have power to change biases in education.

Recent researches about the effects of parental incarceration have offered two different perspectives on this issue: one research approach is driven by biological determinism where criminologist and psychologist continuously look for linkage

between parental incarceration and child's behavioral problems (Dallaire, 2007; Murray and Farrington, 2008; Murray et al., 2009; Van der Rakt, Murray and Niewbeera, 2011). The other perspective is a more moderate one, driven by ecological model of human development (Bronfebrenner, 1979; 2007) where quality of relationships in social contexts at a micro-level have a significant role for regulating children's behavior (Moore, 2001; Lösel and Pugh, 2012; Leeson and Dillon, 2013; Morgan et al., 2014). For instance, biological determinism was shown in research of Murray and Farrington (2008) where they have suggested that children of incarcerated parents are statistically at a greater risk for conduct problems, and addictions later in life. These findings were based on teacher's rating, which is, from the perspective of ethical issues and children's rights, inappropriate. It is well known that ratings and assessments of any kind are implicitly founded and as such embed biases. In the case of children of incarcerated parents, social expectations are driven towards their discipline; otherwise they will be punished – like their parents. Foucault (1995) identifies this social practice as exercising power, and these kinds of scientific findings strengthen biases towards children of incarcerated parents. Consequently, when scientists "measure" the link between incarceration and child's behavior, it is not about social support from their immediate surroundings, or children's rights, but quite the opposite: these kinds of research are implicitly driven against children's rights. Luckily, there is an emerging body of research focused towards identifying social resources for the adequate support for children of incarcerated parents. In this perspective, teachers are seen as partners and important persons in a child's life. Based on research of Lösel and Pugh (2012), in which they have applied the qualitative method (interviews), and directly from children and their incarcerated parents identified characteristics of protective factors, teachers have emerged as potential protective factors. Similar to them, Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) discovered that conduct problems are strongly connected to a child's perception and experiences in their immediate surroundings, such as family, school, neighborhood, alongside with child's coping mechanism and support at the micro-level, and not to a parental incarceration *per se*.

The main goal of research

The main goal of this survey was to find out the attitudes of education professionals toward children of incarcerated parents in Croatia: their perception of children's needs and rights. For that purpose, a short online survey was conducted during June 2017.

METHOD

Participants

The participants were teachers working in primary and secondary education, and other professionals working in schools such as pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers, therapists, university teachers etc. Overall 94 teachers and other professionals from 4 Croatian counties have participated (Osijek-Baranya county, Vukovar-Syrmia county, Brod-Posavina county, and Virovitica-Podravina county). An online questionnaire was offered to all educational professionals, regardless of their working experience and position. It is important to stress that not even one principal participated, and 12,77% other experts participated (such as university teachers), due to public access to online survey.

Table 1. Participants in this survey

Working position	Percentage
Primary school teacher	49,11
Secondary school/ vocational school teacher	9,57
School team expert (psychologist, therapist, etc.)	28,72
Other	12,77%

Majority of participants have 1 to 5 years of teaching experience (45,74%), following by 6 to 10 years of teaching experience (18,09%), 11 to 15 years of teaching experience (9,57%), as well as less than one year of teaching experience (9,57%), 16 to 20 years of teaching experience (8,51%), and more than 20 years of teaching experience (8,51%).

When it comes to previous experience of teaching children of incarcerated parents 55, 91% didn't have any previous experience, and 44,09% claimed they did have previous experience of teaching children of incarcerated parents.

Questionnaire

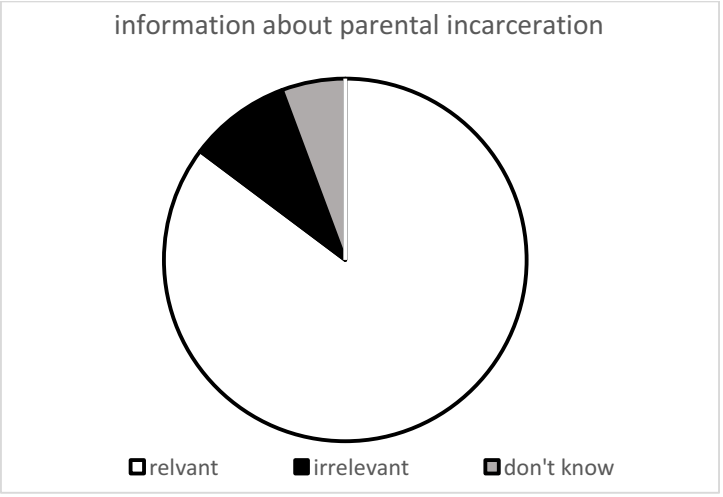
Assuming the novelty of the theme, an online survey was considered the most appropriate tool for gathering this kind of information. The questionnaire consisted of 3 parts: the first part consisted of general information about participants (their teaching experience, working position and previous experiences of teaching children of incarcerated parents), the second part consisted of questions about responsibilities and protocols in education when it comes to children of incarcerated parents, and in the third part, teachers were given an opportunity to assess opinions about children's needs, problems and levels of support which teachers should provide.

Procedures

The online survey was designed and it was sent via email to potential schools and participants. The research platform "Survey Monkey" was used due to low cost and public visibility, both considered to be important in this, preliminary phase of research. The gathered data was analyzed and interpreted in accordance with the mixed method approach. The aim of this survey was to find out the structure of attitudes of teachers and other educational professionals toward children of incarcerated parents. No hypothesis was articulated, due to ethical issues of the theme: at this point it was more important to open up a social dialogue and raise awareness about the needs of children of incarcerated parents in education. However, in the future it will be important to reconsider proper tools and analytic approaches for this issue.

RESULTS

Responsibilities and protocols in education

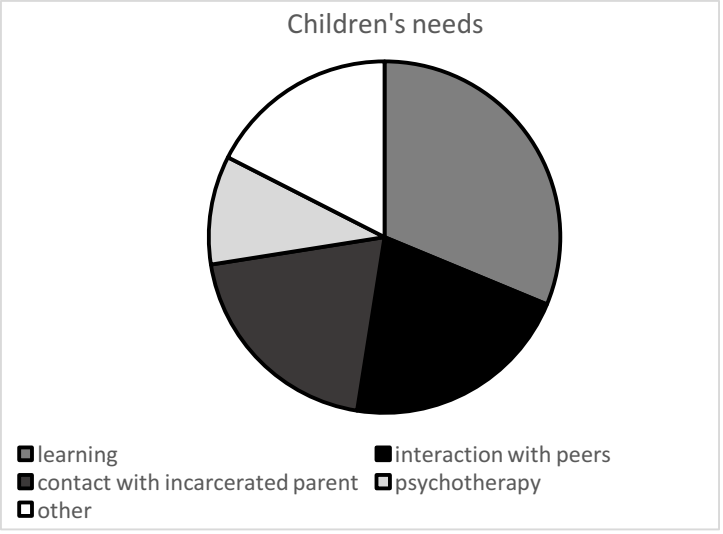


Graph 1. Teachers' perception on relevance about parental incarceration

The majority of teachers and other professionals (85,23%) think that information about parental incarceration is very important, 9,09% think this information is irrelevant, and 5,68% are not sure whether this information is important for teaching children. The reason why this information is important, participants argue as prerequisite for providing peer mediation (57,32%), as prerequisite for including children in the preventive programs (15,85%), and as prerequisite for learning support (7,32%). Also, 19,51% of participants said that everything is equally important, and couldn't give a priority to just one reason.

As far as responsibility for informing teachers and other educational professional about parents' incarceration, they see parents and other members of the family as most responsible (50, 62%), followed by school experts team[2] (24,96%), and social services (22,22%). Interestingly, 2,47% of participants think that someone else should provide such information, for instance neighbors, other parents and other institutions working with incarcerated parents' child.

Teachers' opinions about children's needs



Graph 2. Teachers' perceptions about children of incarcerated parents' needs

Teachers think that children of incarcerated parents primarily have the need to learn in an adequate environment (31,25%), followed by the need to build quality interpersonal relationships with their peers (21,25%). Also, they think children need to maintain relationships with the incarcerated parent(s) (20,00%), to get enrolled into psychotherapy (10%) and other needs (17,50%) such as emotional support, preventive actions and everything mentioned above.

In the next table, teachers and other experts were assessing their own level of agreement about the following statement. There were 4 levels of agreement: 1 - completely agree, 2 - partially agree, 3 - partially disagree, 4 - completely disagree.

[2] In Croatia, schools have teams of experts from the field of pedagogy, psychology and rehabilitation, which provide support for teachers, children with special needs and their parents.

Table 2. Teachers' assessments about children of incarcerated parents

Statement	Level of agreement (%) 1---------- completely agree ---------- 4 completely disagree			
Children of incarcerated parents are at risk to one day become the same as their parent.	33,77	27,27	37,66	1,30
Schools cannot help children of incarcerated parents.	57,69	20,51	19,23	2,56
Children of incarcerated parents have great emotional problems.	1,30	12,99	61,04	24,68
Children should have as less as possible contacts with incarcerated parents.	53,25	40,26	6,49	-
Incarcerated parents are bad role models for their children.	10,39	24,68	59,74	5,19
Children of incarcerated parents should be closely observed, just in case behavioral problems occur.	10,39	14,29	58,44	16,88

Teachers and other experts nourish social conformism and have implicitly negative attitudes towards children of incarcerated parents. It can be seen in a high percentage of agreements in statements "Children of incarcerated parents have great emotional problems." and "Children of incarcerated parents should be closely observed, just in case behavioral problems occur." While teachers and other educational professionals' express socially desirable assessments about incarcerated parents and children relationships, and school as a place for provision of adequate support. They recognize children of incarcerated parents as high risk children for behavioral problems, and they think emotional instability is their biggest problem.

At the end of survey, teachers and other experts assess their own competency for working with children of incarcerated parents as insufficient (64,10%), and just some of them think their competency is adequate (35,90%). If they had an opportunity to learn more about strategies for working with children of incarcerated parents, a majority of them would consider workshops and seminars (41,03%), reflexive working groups and action research in practice (37,18%), literature and exchange of experiences (16,67%), and other forms of lifelong learning (5,13%) such as supervision and group support.

DISSCUSSION

The results in this survey have proven to be coherent with biological determinism, where parental incarceration is interpreted as a high risk factor for conduct problems and incarceration later in life, as suggested by these authors (Dallaire,

2007; Murray and Farrington, 2008; Murray et al., 2009; Van der Rakt, Murray and Niewbeera, 2011). Despite findings of a connection between parental incarceration and a child's behavioral problems, Wakesfield and Wildeman (2014) say they cannot clearly distinguish whether these problems are results of the parent-child relationships prior to incarceration or after incarceration, as a result of high levels of stress experienced during interaction with biased surroundings. As Croatian teachers and other educational professionals claim, children of incarcerated parents suffer from emotional problems, which represent an educational bias towards them. These challenges are confirmed in researches of three authors (Nesmith and Ruhland, 2008; Morgan et al., 2014), suggesting that scholars should divert their interests to quality of interpersonal relations. They point out that quality of interactions at micro-level, including school, should be considered as predictors for future problems. In that context, teachers are considered to be very important people, and in statistical vocabulary, influencing factors.

Implications for practice

Findings in this survey suggested that teachers and other educational professionals (pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers, therapists etc.) have little knowledge about the population of children of incarcerated parents, i.e. their needs in the educational context.

This is consistent with findings of Leeson and Dillon (2013) who identified teachers' knowledge as insufficient due to the absence of information about incarceration, and absence of adequate training in the field of support for these children. These are two separate problems, both to be addressed by educational policies in Croatia. In the practice, information about parental incarceration is either hidden or late, so the question about right-on-time support is at stake. This problem is derived from the absence of protocols for forwarding information and distributing responsibilities when it comes to parental incarceration, which should be considered in the next period. The challenge of teachers' (in)competency should be addressed via training courses and seminars, which academic institutions should offer. It is obvious that teachers cannot change the fact that the parent is incarcerated, but as professionals and individuals they can become a stronghold for children, whom have nothing to do with the parent's deeds.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' perceptions of children of incarcerated parents' needs, suffer from implicit negative attitudes, which should be addressed via adequate training courses in the near future. Giving advantage to academic support prior emotional support, which Croatian teachers have expressed in this survey, also it speaks in favor of present biases. According to teachers, children of incarcerated parents are low-achie-

vers and therefore the priority is making child's environment adequate for learning. This is only partially in the teacher's power, i.e. teachers can (re)arrange classroom environment, but the environment outside the school is difficult to mediate for the teacher. It looks like they are aware of the presence of discontinuity of professional power, and every third teacher thinks school isn't sufficient in helping children of incarcerated parents. Yet, if teachers and other educational professionals engage in social actions and dialogues concerning the rights and needs of children of incarcerated parents, maybe schools could have a protective effect on child's well-being. In that context, researchers should put aside parental incarceration as dominant variable, and focus on identifying and researching the protective factors.

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Ana Babić Pezo & Tena Velki

THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN CROATIA

Abstract

The main goal of this article is to show the actual situation in Croatian schools regarding the problem of educational inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular school systems. The first part of the article will present the current inclusive education system in Croatia, the existing legislation and policies concerning inclusive education. In the second part of the article, we will review some results of the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children, and the emphasis will be on educational rights of children. We will discuss appropriate education for children with developmental disabilities in primary and secondary schools and especially problems with students with behavioral disorders. Finally, we will give some examples of good practices and the efforts made in the last few years regarding the implementation of inclusive education in schools. Also, we will present some guidelines and future directions for a proper inclusion system in Croatia.

Key words: education, inclusion, Croatia

ABOUT TERM INCLUSION

Inclusion, in general terms, is a process or an approach in which we observe someone or something as part of a whole. It is essential that someone or something is equal to others. In narrower sense, inclusion is a process of involving all people in a more active and equal participation in society. Inclusion means the right for everyone to an equal and active life in the community. "Social inclusion is defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights" (United Nations, 2016, pp. 20). Social inclusion ensures greater citizen participation in decision making affecting their lives and their realization of basic human rights.

When we think about educational inclusion, it is primarily a process that helps overcome barriers limiting the presence, participation and achievement of learners, which we must distinguish from equity, is about ensuring that there is a concern with fairness, such that the education of all learners is seen as having equal importance (UNESCO, 2017). Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized and excluded groups of children, from whom are denied their right to quality education (WHO and World Bank, 2011). "Educational inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children" (UNESCO, 2005, pp. 13). UNESCO views inclusion as "a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning."

Today in Croatia education is a fundamental human right (Ministry of science, education and sports, Republic of Croatia). Education in Croatia is a right guaranteed by Article 66 of the Constitution which states that everyone has to have access to free compulsory education under equal conditions and in accordance with their aptitudes (The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia). Education is mandatory for children aged 6 to 15.

CURRENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CROATIA

Today inclusive education is considered as an aspect of the quality of the education system. Because of that the European Union and UNESCO in most of their recommendations provided guidance to ensure that a socio-political issue is well addressed. Although inclusive education is most commonly associated with children with developmental disabilities, it, in fact, concerns all socially marginali-

zed groups of children (ethnic minorities, children from culturally deprived backgrounds, children of displaced persons and refugees, children from disadvantaged socio-economic conditions, etc.).

In order to adequately promote the idea of inclusive education, UNESCO in the last 10 years is leading the project EFA (Education for All), in which they monitor the progress of individual countries regarding the issue of inclusive education. Thus, the Republic of Croatia states that every third child with developmental disabilities has access to regular primary school education (UNESCO, 2008), but this is still insufficient. In comparison with the other countries of the European Union Croatia lags behind. For example, in Bulgaria, Slovenia, Hungary, Ukraine and Romania about 80% of children with developmental disabilities are included in the regular education system. According to statistical indicators and parameters that are taken into account when calculating the index of education quality in relation to socio-economic conditions and the development of society, UNESCO has placed the Republic of Croatia in the so-called Quadrant III - countries that are at risk of failing to achieve objectives[1] by 2015, in the same place with some countries that have subsequently worse socio-political situation, such as Botswana, Iraq, Palestine, Mongolia, Vietnam and Zimbabwe (UNESCO, 2008, 180). According to overall progress in raising the quality of education, Croatia is located in 31st place, far behind Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Finland, Italy, Iceland, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria, Belgium…

In practice, and the statistic data confirm this (DZS 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016), there are a growing number of children with developmental disabilities and children exposed to risk factors that are included in regular institutions of education in Croatia.

Table 1. Number of children with developmental disabilities that are included in regular primary school education*

School year	Number of children with developmental disabilities that are included in regular primary school education
2009/2010	14 098
2010/2011	14 931
2011/2012	15 377
2012/2013	15 592
2013/2014	16 318
2014/2015	16 431

* Information obtained from statistical reports SI 1442, SI 1470, SI 1496, SI 1520, SI 1543 from Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016). For the current school year data are not yet available.

[1] The goals of EFA, which were supposed to be achieved by 2015, are: having access to education for all social groups, having access to education for adults, prevention of dropping out of school, reducing the total number of illiterate population and free education.

It is important to say that in the published statistical reports, relating to the Republic of Croatia, there are no reliable data on the "most vulnerable" areas, i.e. areas where inclusive education is at least present. This implies the existence of a certain neglect of this issue and the need to start a broader social action in terms of raising the quality of life of the most vulnerable members of our community. Also, the published data refers only to primary school, so the assumption is that the numbers of children with developmental disabilities are much higher. Furthermore, these reports have not included children with developmental disabilities and children exposed to risk factors included in regular kindergartens and secondary schools.

It has been estimated that in Croatia 10% to 20% of children have some form of developmental disability. However, only 3% of children with disabilities are being included in the regular educational institutions. This means that approximately 40,000 to 80,000 children are not successfully included in the regular education system without the active involvement of their families and support of schools. The Croatian Register of Persons with Disabilities recorded 32,101 children with developmental disabilities, which is 6.2% of the total number of persons with disabilities (data state at 01/26/2017.). In the total number of children with developmental disabilities, there are more boys (62%) than girls (38%). In relation to the age most children with developmental disabilities are aged between 10-14 years (46.6%), and least range from 0-4 years (3.6%). According to the prevalence of the most common types of disabilities the most frequent are multiple developmental disorders (43.1%) and on the second place are communication disabilities (37.6%).

In accepting the Action plan of the Council of Europe to promote the rights and full participation in the society of people with disabilities: improving the lives of disabled people in Europe from 2006 to 2015, in 2007 the Croatian Government developed the National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities from 2007 to 2015. The Republic of Croatia, in the National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities from 2007 to 2015, highlights the protective role of society and states that "there is a need for taking care of and protecting vulnerable social groups, such as persons with disabilities and children with developmental disabilities" (The Croatian Government, 2007, 1). Legal regulation of the right to protect personal integrity indicates low social sensitivity, which requires the implementation of timely and appropriate action in the direction of improving the general inclusion of people with disabilities in everyday life of the local community. Despite the strengthening of the idea of inclusion, people with disabilities continue to depend on the help from family members and assorted volunteers, i.e. there lacks a systematic social support for this population.

Given the fact that the Republic of Croatia adopted the National Plan for deinstitutionalization and transformation of social welfare homes and other legal entities performing social welfare activities in the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2011 to 2018 (Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2010) it is expected that there will be an increase in the total number of children with developmental disabilities and children exposed to risk factors who will be included in the regular educational system.

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS OF CHILDREN: VIEW OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE OMBUDSPERSON FOR CHILDREN

The institution of the Ombudsperson for children and young people is recognized as a key mechanism for the protection of human rights by the Croatian Government (2007) and has an important role in promoting inclusive values. The institution of the Ombudsperson for children and young people, following the social policy towards children, continuously gives recommendations for improving existing practices against them. Thus, the European Network of Ombudsperson for Children (ENOC) in the Declaration of children and young people with disabilities from 2009 describes inclusion as availability and participation. For the implementation of inclusion it is necessary to establish a social system in a way that for children with developmental disabilities full participation in politics and public life is enabled, as well as in cultural and sports activities. This clearly highlights the necessity of taking into account the variability of social conditions for the implementation of inclusion and, accordingly, directing resources for improving inclusive practices. The institution of the Ombudsperson reports to the public annually on the rights of children, reports are only of descriptive nature - they define the current situation, namely the realization of rights and make recommendations for improving the quality of life of children through the implementation of fundamental rights.

"The main task of the Ombudsperson for Children was defined in the Act as protecting, monitoring and promoting children's rights and interests, pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and international treaties and laws. At the same time, the Act emphasized that the Ombudsperson for Children must act independently and autonomously, as a matter of the highest principle, observing the principles of fairness and morality, and that no one should attempt to instruct the Ombudsperson or give him or her orders, nor should the Ombudsperson be a member of any political party (Articles 2 and 3 of the Act), which is in full agreement at the international level with the principles of organizing this kind of independent institution. In a separate legal act, the implementation of the second key principle was elaborated – the principle of confidentiality (Decision on confidentiality, 2004)" (Vizek Vidović&Žižak, 2009, p. 47).

"These two components of the activities of the Ombudsperson for Children are described in the Ombudsperson for Children Act (OG 96/2003), which defines the Ombudsperson's scope of work in four groups of activities: 1. Monitoring the harmonization of laws with the Convention and other international documents, the implementation of the obligations of the Republic of Croatia, amendments to regulations and violations of individual rights; 2. Analyzing and studying general occurrences and ways in which children's rights are violated; 3. Proposing and taking measures to build an integrated system for promoting children's rights and interests, including children with special needs; 4. Informing the public on the state of children's rights in the country" (Vizek Vidović and Žižak, 2009, p. 47).

"The Ombudsperson for Children's most visible pro-active role is in the area of initiatives concerning amendments to laws and legal acts directed towards protecting the best interests of children. In the period from 2004 until 2012, the Office of the Ombudsman for Children submitted 617 opinions or proposals on the drafting or amendment of a total of 160 regulations. As shown in Table 2, the total number of proposals (617) considerably exceeds the number of regulations (160) as it is very often the case that a large number of amendments are proposed within one regulation. In addition, some proposals are still undergoing the legislative procedure so it cannot be determined whether they are accepted or not. However, the percentage of proposals that were not accepted is obviously very high - as much as 50%." (Ombudsperson for Children, 2013b, pp. 19).

Table 2. Participation of the Office in the drafting of regulations

Period	Number of regulations	Number of individual proposals	Individual proposals			
			Accepted	Partly accepted	Not accepted	Undergoing legislative procedure
2004-2010	97	281	66 (23%)	-	149 (53%)	66
2011	30	150	59 (39%)	3	64 (43%)	24
2012	33	186	36 (19%)	-	97 (52%)	53
Total	160	617	161 (26%)	-	310 (50%)	143

The problem is that children (especially children with developmental disabilities) are not in the focus of social policy makers because they are not an attractive enough a population in political and economic terms – they do not bring profit.

Table 3 shows the statistics of the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children since its founding to the present. Shown in the table is featured data relating to the complaints of violation of educational rights of children, for whom a complaint was submitted to the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children. There are also specifically highlighted complaints of violations of educational rights of children with developmental disabilities, as well as behavioral disorders, which actually indicate problems of inclusive education in practice.

Table 3. Number of children for whom a complaint was made to the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children for violation of educational rights

Year	Educational rights of children				
	Kindergarten (children with deve-lopmental disabilities)	Primary school (children with deve-lopmental disabilities)	Secondary school (children with deve-lopmental disabilities)	Overall (children with developmental disabilities)	Children with behavioral disorders
2004	3	32	8	43	-
2005	9 (1)	19 (11)	3 (2)	31 (16) (for 2 of children there were no data about age)	6
2006	7 (8)	41 (28)	14 (6)	62 (42)	17
2007	-	-	-	105 (85)	-
2008	12	79	30	121 (89)	-
2009	37 (26)	129 (64)	21 (27)	187 (128) (for 11 of children there was no data about age)	72
2010	54 (-)	187 (-)	26 (-)	286 (52)	65
2011	31 (12)	77 (33)	39 (9)	159 (54)	98
2012	36 (17)	81 (35)	44 (10)	161 (62)	52
2013	52 (21)	150 (55)	60 (13)	262 (89)	39
2014	61 (24)	127 (40)	85 (28)	273 (92)	42
2015	51 (23)	113 (36)	75 (19)	239 (78)	36
2016	82 (24)	163 (47)	51 (14)	296 (85)	54

* Information obtained from reports from the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children (2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013a; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017). For the current year data are not yet available.

It is important to say that statistics show only the number of complaints, not the number of true violations of children rights. Some of the complaints are false or ungrounded, and some of the examples of violations of children rights are not reported to the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children and they are not shown in table 3. Nevertheless, regardless of the number of complaints, each violation of children's rights is a big problem and the institution of the Ombudsperson for Children is trying to solve each received complaint and provide help.

The most recent data is from the last year (2016) and it indicates complaints of violations of different types of educational rights of children. Mostly complaints were about transportation and books, e.g. there is no organized transportation to school and there are unavailable free obligatory books for children as well as supplementary education. A significant number of complaints were related to the inappropriate, unprofessional and unethical treatment of children by educational workers and other employees.

In primary and secondary schools most complaints were about supplementary education, unavailability and organization of additional content (such as trips and excursions), the contents of reading materials, lack of programs that would be alternative to religious education in elementary school, the children's participation in religious facilities outside programs of religious education and the use of promotional materials that are not in accordance with the educational objectives.

Comparing data with the previous year (2015), we can see an increase in the number of complaints dealing with the violation of educational rights for children with developmental disabilities. It is important to say that these results can be explained by increasing awareness of parents, teachers and students about their educational rights and also by introducing class assistants in regular schools to help children with developmental disabilities who also become important parts in spreading awareness of this problem.

There are major problems in the educational system when considering the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities. In the system of pre-school education the most common area of complaints of the violation of children's rights refer to the near impossibility of enrolling children with developmental disabilities in kindergartens. Another complaint is, the early release of these children from kindergartens, due to insufficient support for preschool teachers or because class assistants are not provided for these children. Although there are laws about preschool education of children with developmental disabilities, e.g. the Law about Preschool Education (NN 10/97., 107/07., and 94/13.), the Pedagogical standards of the Republic of Croatia for preschool education (NN 63/08. and 90/10.) as well as the decision to adopt the National Curriculum for early and pre-school education (NN 5/15.), they still do not define class assistants as a form of help and support for children with developmental disabilities, and consequently do not provide additional employment of educators and rehabilitators, depending on the specific needs of the child.

There is a better situation concerning children with developmental disabilities in primary schools. This year has brought the long-awaited bylaw - Regulation on Primary and Secondary Education students with developmental disabilities. But in the Regulation the system of class assistant support is not regulated, which is one of the most common areas of complaints of violations of children's rights to education for children with developmental disabilities. Although it was the planned for this year, the adoption of the act about class assistants and communication assistants support in teaching, was not passed. So far there is only a draft proposal of the Regulation about class assistants and communication assistants, and without it the application of the Regulation on Primary and Secondary Education students with developmental disabilities is very difficult. Despite some positive progress, the implementation of educational rights continues to be a problem for children with developmental disabilities. Most complaints in primary schools deal with a lack of educational workers with sufficient competency for working with children with developmental disabilities, lack of accessibility and equipment in schools and still unavailability of class assistants for students with developmental disabilities. Insufficient competencies of educational workers refer to the complaints that teachers do not adapt approaches, methods and forms of work which are specific for children with developmental disabilities, in spite of the decision of the professional commission on appropriate education system for a given child. Although this year there were some significant projects on the state, county and city level about financing class assistants for children with developmental disabilities, this is not a permanent and sustainable model. The absence of a systematic financing model for class assistants leads to the application of different ways of funding, which are not in the best interests of the children. Still, there are children with developmental disabilities that do not have a class assistant or any other kind of educational support.

In comparison with the previous two years, this school year there was a decrease in the number of complaints relating to the enrollment of children with developmental disabilities in the first grade of secondary school. This year, the rights of children with developmental disabilities for enrollment in the first grade were better defined in the existing Regulations on the elements and criteria for enrollment of candidates in the first grade of secondary school (NN 49/15.). According to the existing Regulations, candidates with developmental disabilities are ranked on a separate list, based on the achievement of the total number of points as prescribed during the evaluation process done by professional orientation expert’s opinion. The enrollment in the first grade of secondary school is not guaranteed for candidates with developmental disabilities if the quotas for the individual education program are filled with other candidates with developmental disabilities who had more points. In practice there is still a lack of appropriate educational programs that are compatible with the needs of the labor market for students with developmental disabilities.

An important issue was also the educational rights of children with behavioral disorders, especially in primary schools. Complaints are most often associated with violence, discipline problems, disrespect for authority of teachers and disruption of classes. Most often there are complaints from parents seeking protection for their

children from children with behavioral disorders, and complaints from school teachers, who expressed helplessness in dealing with the problems and have difficulties to cope with the pressure of other parents who expect that the "problematic" child should be removed from the class. Part of the application indicates lack of knowledge and education about students with behavioral disorders. For example, parents of a first grade primary school child signed a petition in which they asked for the exclusion of a “disturbed” 7-year-old boy from the class, only two months after the beginning of the school year, although the children still have not adapted to the school situation and requirements. There are also complaints by parents of children with behavioral disorders dissatisfied with the behavior of other children toward their child (who does not have the social skills to establish peer relationships) who is excluded from peer groups, and often victimized by peers. Parents of these children complain also of "unfair" and frequently inappropriate behavior of teachers with such children, because of disturbing behavior, on a daily basis. Among the complaints, there is also a visible a high degree of frustration of all applicants because of the system inefficiencies and measures which are taking too long and still are not solving the problems.

There is also a big problem regarding the inconsistencies in determining the appropriate form of education for children with behavioral disorders and, consequently, determining support of class assistants in teaching (which, despite the obligation of the law, was also not adopted in the Regulation about class assistants). The reason for discrepancies, among others, lies in an exclusively medical approach to children with behavioral disorders on whom the orientation list with different types of disabilities is applied, which is an integral part of the Regulation on Primary and Secondary Education for students with developmental disabilities. The problem is also easily diagnosed as ADHD, which often is not entirely based on expert knowledge. Another problem is too much psycho and pharmacological treatment of children with behavioral disorders, as indicated by the child psychiatrists themselves. School employees also report that a child with a behavioral disorder needs to be primarily and continuously "treated" because it has "a diagnosis of a behavioral disorder and has to go to the psychiatry ward and take drugs" as if this was on organic disease and the recovery of the child exclusively depends on the doctor’s competence.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The city of Osijek has for a long time been aware of the problems of pupils with developmental disabilities and their ongoing needs for class assistants and better involvement in the educational and social environment. Consequently, for many years the city of Osijek takes care of satisfying those needs and helping to bridge the daily difficulties and build capacities for the implementation of inclusion.

The first projects which had provided class assistants for children with developmental disabilities began its work in 2008 as part of the city of Osijek project, as well as other non-governmental organizations that dealt with specific disabilities, e.g. “Association of Mercury” in the 2008/2009 school year had provided 2 class assistants for children with ADHD (Velki and Cimer, 2011). Greater progress has been made in the school year 2014/2015, when the projects which are dealing with providing class assistants for children with developmental disabilities, were financed by the European Social Fund through the competition for providing class assistant for children with developmental disabilities in primary and secondary schools. The project “Let’s secure them equality” of the city of Osijek this way provided 60 class assistants for children with developmental disabilities. But as the aforementioned project did not meet all the needs for all children with developmental disabilities, the city of Osijek, from his own financial budget, and in partnership with the Croatian Employment Service through the measure "Youth for Youth”, provided additional class assistants for children with developmental disabilities. This way, a total number of 107 class assistants were provided for children with developmental disabilities from the area of Osijek in the school year 2014/2015 (the city of Osijek, 2015). After a successful complementation of the aforementioned project, in the year 2015/2016 another project of providing class assistants funded by the European Social Fund was implemented. Comparing to the previous project in the new one there is an increase in the number of participating students, an additional 22 students, and in the number of class assistants, 13 additional class assistants for children with developmental disabilities were included in the project.

Furthermore, the Osijek-Baranja County in the school year 2014/2015 with financial resources from the European Social Fund provided class assistants for children with developmental disabilities through the project “Learning together” - ensuring class assistants for children with developmental disabilities in the primary schools of the Osijek-Baranja County (OBŽ, 2015). The aim of the project was to improve social inclusion through inclusive education of 61 children, increase the level of knowledge and skills of 60 unemployed people and make them more competitive in the labor market. Publishing the first manual for class assistants in Croatia, by editors Velki, T. and Romstein K.: Learning together "- a manual for class assistants for working with children with developmental disabilities, was also a part of this project. Due to the good results of the aforementioned project, in the school year 2015/2016 also the project for ensuring class assistants funded by the European Social Fund "Learning together 2" was carried out, which was focused on equalization of opportunities for full inclusion of students with developmental disabilities in the life of the community to which they belong, especially in regular classes which children with developmental disabilities successfully attending with the support of class assistants. Some of the goals of the project were to improve the social inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in the regular education system and thus provide class assistants for such children, reduce the number of unemployed persons in Osijek -Baranja county and establish a mechanism for intersectorial cooperation of the key participants at the county level in the implementation

of social inclusion of children and young people. This project provided 68 assistants in the classroom for 87 students with disabilities for 39 primary and 4 secondary schools in the school year 2015/2016, and also it was the first time that children in high school got the opportunity for getting class assistants. Comparing to the previous project, the new project employs an additional 7 people, and an additional 17 students received a support from class assistants.

The Faculty of Education at Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek, has recognized the importance of active professional participation in problems of inclusion, and since 2014 started to actively support the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in regular schools. In accordance with that, the Faculty of Education was an associate expert for the city of Osijek on projects dealing with the ensuring of class assistants for children with developmental disabilities, and with the Osijek-Baranja County a partner in the project "Learning together" and "Learning together 2". In the framework of these projects the Faculty of education participated in class assistant education, supervision of training for class assistants, editing and writing the aforementioned manual for class assistants and maintenance of expert lectures. During the work on these projects, the Faculty of Education noticed the huge lack in the training of staff working with children with developmental disabilities. In accordance with these needs the Faculty of Education created two fully new educational programs intended for education of class assistants and specialists of inclusive education, which are the first systematic educational programs of this type in Croatia. In the academic year 2015/2016 the education started for the first generation of class assistant for children with developmental disabilities in primary and secondary schools, and the academic year 2018/2019 is scheduled for the enrollment of the first generation of specialists of inclusive education.

1) The training program for assistants for children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities (Velki, 2015a)

While working on projects for providing class assistants for children with developmental disabilities an increase of the number of children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia has been observed. The reasons for this are manifold: (1) scientific knowledge and progress in the field of medicine (including health care and nursing) facilitate the survival of critically ill patients, it is now considered one of the leading factors of the occurrence of certain disability and invalidity, such as damage of motor skills, speech deficits, cognitive deficits, etc.; (2) research in the field of sociology, psychology and rehabilitation indicate changes in social and family living conditions and among children an increase in developmental psychopathology is noticed from which (if appropriate preventive and therapeutic measures are not taken) develops juvenile delinquency and behavioral disorders, while in adults a trend of a greater use of antidepressives and anxiolytics has been observed; (3) The sufferings from the war in Eastern Slavonia, also contributed to the increase in the total number of people with disabilities and etc. It should be noted that the causes are often intertwined and connected

to each other, for example, the increase in percentage of survival of life-threatened newborns is associated with an increase in the number of adults with disabilities. Therefore, this issue requires a comprehensive approach and joint actions of different social groups, including the collaboration of the scientific community with the local government, non-governmental organizations and associations, and individuals who can contribute to the de-stigmatization of this population and their full social engagement. Thus, this program puts emphasis on inclusive values and principles by which the Faculty of Education in Osijek is becoming a significant partner to the local administration because with its resources it can actively contribute to the raising of the quality of life of children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities. This concept, of active scientific community, is in line with the recommendations and guidelines of the European Commission (1992), the UN (2006), UNESCO (2001; 2003; 2005) and UNICEF (2007) which are referring to the increase in social inclusion children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities.

In practice, through the continuous cooperation with educational institutions and non-governmental organizations the following is observed: (1) in educational institutions at all levels, there is an unfavorable ratio of children and adults (which is one of the aspects of structural quality) as within the European Union trying to compensate by the employment of class assistants; (2) the absence of a formal and systematic education of assistants for working with children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities, and especially their lack of training in the field of psychology and inclusive pedagogy; (3) non-governmental organizations engaged in non-institutional forms of care for people with disabilities most often depend on volunteers who are often exchanged or, as class assistants, are not sufficiently trained for this area.

The main objective of the training program for assistants for working with children with developmental disabilities and people with disabilities is to provide adequate information about the specifics of this population and ways to meet their needs. The main tasks of the training program for assistants for working with children with disabilities and persons with disabilities are introducing the participants with clinical and social manifestation of particular disability/invalidity, clarifying the functioning of education based on inclusive values with the presentation of appropriate development practices and mastering techniques to facilitate the general social inclusion.

Due to the existence of differences in the needs of children with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities, the program is divided into three modules: 1) Module A: Class assistants (in which the first generation 2015/2016 is enrolled); 2) Module B: Assistants for person with disabilities / personal assistants; 3) Module C: Assistants in kindergartens.

2) Postgraduate specialist study of inclusive education (Velki, 2015b)

The need for continuous professional training for working with socially marginalized groups is directly cited in the European Union and the United States. Thus, in the document "No Child Left Behind" (US Dept. of Education, 2002) it clearly states the vocation of inclusion specialist who is actually a teacher additionally trained to work with children with developmental disabilities and other so-called disadvantaged (underprivileged) children. This is a person who is actively working on the process of inclusion of children in their immediate surroundings, which is why it is necessary to have the appropriate competence. Their professional tasks are monitoring and assessing children's development and academic achievement, creating individual programs and appropriate teaching strategies, providing support in peer interaction and cooperation with parents, which is why the inclusive specialist is seen as an essential participant in the education of the 21st century. Inclusive specialists gain their competence after basic graduate education for teachers, through additional training and direct work with children and receive a certificate (license) for work that must be updated every five years.

In the European Union, the education of teachers for inclusive education is monitored by the *European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education*, which stands for the existence of continuous professional training in this area. The profile, as it is called, of inclusive teachers is characterized by a high level of sensitivity for socially marginalized children, the existence of adequate competence and understanding of the theoretical framework of inclusive education (European Agency for Development in Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2012). The above-mentioned Agency, in the period from 2009 to 2012, conducted a project called "TE4I: Teacher Education for Inclusion" in which they investigated the preparedness of teachers for inclusive education and have implemented certain activities in order to raise the quality of formal education of future teachers. Unfortunately, Croatia has not participated in that project so there is no reliable information on the preparedness of teachers for inclusion in the context of education at the national level. For this reason, and also because it is based on the real needs of society, this program represents a step forward in the practice of higher education.

When we consider the current quality of education for children with developmental disabilities and children with risk factors, the data indicates the existence of certain problems such as negative attitudes of teachers, inappropriate equipment of educational institutions and the lack of specialist with educational and rehabilitation profile that could directly work with children and families. Brajša-Žganec et al. (2011) reported that the Institute of the Ombudsperson for Children is increasingly receiving complaints from parents and caregivers of violation children's rights in the following areas: (1) the availability of education, (2) safety, spatial and organizational conditions in which children are educated, (3) educational programs and facilities, (4) the rights of children in emergency situations, and (5) the relationship between the parents and staff of educational institutions. As a special issue the lack of professional staff and trained professionals is highlighted why this postgraduate

specialist study may help raise the quality of education at all levels. In addition, due to the increase in the total number of children with developmental disabilities and children exposed to risk factors that will be included in the regular educational system, starting postgraduate specialist study of inclusive education is a timely response to current and future demographic and social changes.

The main objective of this program is the adoption of theoretical knowledge necessary for understanding the problems of working with socially marginalized groups (children and young people with developmental disabilities or exposed to risk factors, and persons with disabilities) within different programs of inclusive education and planning counselling and rehabilitation interventions depending on needs of end users (children, young people and adults). The emphasis is on practical and experiential learning and practicing acquired skills which should be applied in direct work with children. The program is mainly designed for all teachers, and people within the educational institutions who are working with children with developmental disabilities.

Future directions

In recent years in Croatia there has been a positive shift regarding the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in regular primary schools. Especially, in the last two years when the European Social Fund started financing the class assistant projects. Also, in Osijek they started two new systematic educational programs for education of class assistants and specialists of inclusive education, carried out by the Faculty of Education.

Nevertheless, there are still some major issues which the Government of the Republic of Croatia needs to resolve: 1) systematic and uniform education of class assistants and inclusive specialists only exists in Osijek and not in other parts of Croatia; 2) there is only a draft proposal of the Regulation about class assistants and communication assistants which still is not adopted; 3) the Government of the Republic of Croatia does not recognize workplaces for class assistants and inclusive teachers; 4) there is no support for children with developmental disabilities in kindergartens.

Although the Ombudsperson for children gave recommendations to the Government: 1) the need for normative regulation of the children's right to a class assistant throughout the whole educational process, as well as defining the criteria and rules for assuring the class assistants and finding solutions for their systematic financing; 2) the need for additional investment in professional development of educational workers in order to promote inclusive education principles; 3) the need to prompt and coordinated assistance and support for children who suffer from the so-called school phobia and also finding appropriate form of their education, 4) enabling higher level of participation of students with developmental disabilities in creating educational programs, as well as during the enrollment in the first grade of secondary school; 5) developing of occupational standards and qualifications which

are acquired through adjusted program and the development of key competencies that children with developmental disabilities should develop in order to acquire certain professions; 6) the need for preparatory and supplementary classes; 7) organizing supplementary classes for students with learning disabilities, regardless of whether the request for supplementary classes set up by the students, parents or teachers; 8) the need to invest in the development of measures and services for increasing the quality level of involvement of children with developmental disabilities in the community; 9) providing funds for assistants for children with developmental disabilities in kindergarten; most of them have not been adopted yet.

CONCLUSION

There are a growing number of children with developmental disabilities in Croatia, who do not have appropriate support during formal education. Although there have been some positive shifts, especially in primary schools, there are still some big issues which the Government of the Republic of Croatia needs to deal with in order to ensure a full inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in the community.

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Review article

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES ON PROMOTING RIGHTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Abstract

A child is a member of a vulnerable group in societs. Children's rights are equal for all children and they cannot be denied, because they are a birthright. The most comprehensive document that deals with children's rights is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Education for human rights, namely issues of human rights, is, in Croatian schools, implemented in an integrative way through a cross-curricular theme of Civic Education. With a review of legal-normative and strategically-developmental documents, and scientific studies on human rights in the Republic of Croatia and Canada, we can see how the legal and normative documents are adopted, but strategically-developmental documents are insufficiently developed and implemented. According to the attitudes of elementary school students, there is no significant difference among students of Croatian and Canadian elementary schools when it comes to knowing their rights. Students know their rights and believe that they have been taken into account. According to the students' self-assessments, the other students are the ones who violate children's rights, and parents are considered most responsible for the protection of children's rights. The research results show the need to introduce a systematic education about human rights in schools because it affects the awareness and attitudes of students toward their rights, also, competent teachers should integrate the content on children's rights in school curricula.

Keywords: students, teachers, students' rights, elementary school, education about children's rights

INTRODUCTION

Human rights are rights or powers that belong to each person, they are universal moral rights that are to be distributed among all human beings (Matulović, 1992). Langlois (2003) believes that human recognition of human rights is shown by conscientious recognition of human rights. Every human has their rights, according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), and children need special and increased protection, care, safety, understanding and love in order to develop in a healthy way. Since they have special needs, children also have special rights. A child has rights as prescribed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) such as the right to health care, adequate nutrition, safe housing, healthy environment, education, playtime, socializing and entertainment, but, mainly, a child has the right to be a child and to know their rights. In order for children to know their rights, every citizen, family, institution and community must promote the rights of the child. Learning about child rights begins at an early age and should be present in family, kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools and in higher education institutions, and also in lifelong learning. Children's rights are insufficiently protected, they require a draw up of specific regulations on children's rights, which would thoroughly regulate this field, which will only be possible when the European Court justifies a specialized court for children's rights, so that the protection of children's rights can be appropriate and effective (Hrabar, 2014, 181). Also, a greater investment in services that promote the well-being of children and provide much needed support to families is necessary, with a special emphasis on the development of high-quality educational institutions and services for children of school age (Hainsworth, 2009).

School, as a social community and educational institution, should, especially, promote children's rights. They should educate students in an atmosphere that reflects a concern for the ideals and practice of human rights and children's rights, in a climate where students feel secure and happy. Knowledge of their rights, taking the same into account and respect are the foundation for the construction of all kinds of relationships in one’s life and, in a broader sense, for creating a better society.

The paper, based on the analysis and comparison of the basic documents on human rights and scientific research in schools, investigated: how many children knew their rights, and if they could link those rights to duties, in what amount were their rights respected in school, and whether there was a correlation between education about human rights in school and students' understandings of their rights.

DEVELOPMENTALLY-NORMATIVE AND STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN CROATIA AND CANADA

A child is a human being and as such has all the rights stipulated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Since children are not fully grown up, and mature enough, they, therefore, belong to a sensitive group of a society. Children are not aware of their rights or do not even understand the concept of rights, but those rights still need to be respected by others. Given their immaturity and dependence on adults, there was a need of asserting the special rights of child to protections. Children need special security, care, love and warmth. They need to grow up in a positive and healthy atmosphere, where they can develop properly in all directions - which is a prerequisite for their future. Children are not small adults, they are beings in the making, and they need environments where they can feel safe, protected and in which they will be able to develop to their full potential. They are not adults' property, even though adults need to help children to develop physically, intellectually, socially and morally and to grow up into adults responsible to exercise their rights, but also respect the rights of others (Males, 2004, 6). Children's rights represent a way of establishing relations of children with all individuals and institutions they come in contact with, such as family and state institutions (Kopić and Korajac, 2010, 45). All adults are obliged to respect the rights of children, to protect them as much as possible in all kinds of situations, regardless of whether the child in saying is their own or somebody else's. For any noticed violation of children's rights, the adults are required to contact the state bodies and institutions. Governments should respect the rights of children, allow the children to participate in decision making in their lives, provide them with conditions for development and protect them from violence and exploitation (Maleš, 2004).

Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child was adopted on September 26 1924, by the League of Nations (LON). This is the first historical document that recognized and confirmed the existence of children rights, and the responsibility of adults towards children through the following rights: the child must have the resources necessary for normal development, both material and spiritual; a hungry child must be fed, an ill child must be treated, a developmentally disabled child must be helped, a delinquent child must be brought up, orphaned and homeless children must be protected and fostered; a child must be the first who will get help and support in times of trouble; a child deserves to be supported and must be protected from all forms of exploitation; a child must be brought up to be aware of their abilities that serve the society (UN Document, 1924). Development of the rights of the child through history has been important, in 1948 the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, which is the fundamental international document on human rights in international law but is not a legally binding treaty because there is no sanction.

The Declaration on children rights was adopted at the UN General Assembly in 1959, and until the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Declaration was the only document to deal with children's rights exclusively and comprehensively (Maleš and Stričević, 1996). The Preamble and its ten principles expressed a determination to isolate children as an especially vulnerable group. A special kind of protection is anticipated by giving a child the opportunities to develop in a normal way, ensuring him the right to his name and nationality, social and health care, family and social care and the right to education. It prohibits child discrimination and requires protection from all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. The Declaration sets forth the rights for child protection in emergencies. It is a document on whose principles the Convention on the Rights of the Child was based, and it applies to the following children's rights: the right to have rights; right to a special kind of protection; name and nationality; right to social, health and any other welfare in order to develop in a healthy and safe way; any other care in case of a disability; love, understanding and family life; schooling; the right of advantage under special conditions; protection from abuse; protection against all forms of discrimination and life in the spirit of tolerance and understanding.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is an international legally binding agreement which regulates the rights of the child, and it represents the most widely accepted international human rights treaty ever adopted. It was accepted and adopted at the 44th session of the United Nations General Assembly on November 20th 1989 in New York. It has been in effect since September 2nd 1990, after being ratified by a sufficient number of countries. The fundamental premise of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is that all children are born with fundamental freedoms and rights that belong to all human beings. Due to the physical and psychological immaturity, the special right to protection is emphasized. According to the Convention, a child is every human being below the age of eighteen years unless the age of majority is legally attained earlier. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first document that treats the child as a subject and a righst holder. The Convention refers to all children and young people in the world, regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, spoken language, religion, political or any other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property condition, disability, birth or other status. The Convention is an instrument that should contribute to the development of optimal conditions for the child's growth and development, so that the child could develop harmoniously in physical, mental, emotional and social terms, freely, and with dignity, acceptance, love and understanding. For a child, The Convention represents an instrument of protection of his or her rights, and for adults an obligation to create the best possible conditions for the child's growth and development and to prevent the violation of his or her rights (Maleš, 2004, 7).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child relates to children, but it was written in legal terms. For children there are simpler, colorfully demonstrated, customized versions, in which they can, themselves, become aware of their rights (Maleš, 2004). The state can fulfill its obligations directly, providing health care or providing education to children, or indirectly, by providing support to parents in the

exercise of parental roles. The Convention does not diminish the role and importance of parents and family, even so, it obliges the states to take care of children. Yet, parents are the ones who decide what is in the best interest of the child, and the governments of some countries are obliged to provide support to parents so that they may provide care and quality education for their children (Guran, 2015). The Convention is comprehensive, universal, unconditional and holistic – and that makes it unique. The Convention is a comprehensive instrument of various rights which, among other things, shows that there is no hierarchy of children's rights, and that the rights are necessary for a child to develop as a whole person.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child identified four general principles underlying all the rights embodied in the Convention on the Rights of the Child: non-discrimination- children must not suffer discrimination regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status of the child, his or her parents or legal guardians; the best interests of the child and parental care - children have a right to live and develop in all aspects of life, including physical, emotional, psycho-social, cognitive, social and cultural; the right to life, survival and development –a child's welfare must be of the most importance in all decisions or execution procedures affecting the child or children as a group. That refers to the decisions made by the government, administrative or legislative bodies, as well as the decisions made by the family; respecting the child's beliefs and opinions - children must be allowed to participate actively in the process of resolving any issues that affect their lives and allow they need to have the freedom to express their opinions. They have the right to express their views, which must be taken into account (Vidović, 2011).

When taking into consideration the types of rights, the Convention can be divided into four areas: survival rights, developmental rights, protection rights and participation rights. Survival rights include the articles of the Convention that ensure the child meets the basic needs of its existence, such as the right to live, the right for an adequate standard of living, right to food, right to housing, right to medical assistance. Everyone must enjoy secured basic living conditions, otherwise their life is threatened. Developmental rights include those articles of the Convention which ensure the best possible development for a child, such as the right to education, right to playtime, right to leisure time, the right for cultural activities, right to information, right to freedom of thought and expression. Everyone must enjoy secured requirements which will help them develop as a whole person! That means a life in an environment which stimulates the overall development of a child, its physical, emotional, social, moral, intellectual and spiritual development. Protective rights include those articles of the Convention which ensure protection of the child, such as the right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, the abolition of child labor, protection of from drugs, alcohol, tobacco, the protection of refugee children, children in armed conflict, and children in prisons. No one should be discriminated against, abused, neglected or exploited! Children and young people must be protected from any kind of threat on their lives and development. The rights to

participation include those articles that allow the child to actively participate in their own environment, regional/national/world, that help prepare the child to become an active citizen in the future, such as the right to express their thoughts and the right of association. Everybody has to play an active role in their life (Maleš, 2004, 10).

States Parties to the Convention are those countries that have accepted, signed and ratified the Convention and pledged to apply it upon membership. The fact that almost all governments of the world have signed and ratified the Convention is proof that the Convention is the most accepted international human rights treaty ever. It has 193 states as members, i.e. parties, and 140 signatories. Today, only two members states have not yet ratified the Convention, those states being the United States of America and Somalia. Nevertheless, in some states parties, the fundamental rights of children are being violated or not respected, and the lives of children are still at risk. Since the Convention is not just a list of rights that children already have, but a list of commitments towards a child that the state must meet, the state is obliged to ensure the implementation of relevant laws, institutions and monitor them. According to legal force and action, the Convention is above the law (Maleš, 2004). Unlike the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959) which has a moral force, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is a legal act which has the force of law and obliges the parties to abide by its provisions, as it includes the right to supervise the application of the mentioned provisions in the countries which have accepted it (Vidović, 2011).

The Republic of Croatia adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in its legal system via a notification of succession on October 8, 1991, and the Convention came into effect on October 12, 1992 after ratification. That process ranked the Republic of Croatia among the countries that have assumed the obligation to ensure and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. Canada ratified the Convention on December 13, 1991 (1991). Respect, protection and the promotion of human rights is a task which stems from the Constitution, but its realization depends on the safety and well-being of today's population, as well as future generations (Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Affairs, 2017).

The first report on the state of children's rights in the Republic of Croatia was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in January of 1996. Croatia incorporated the requirements of the Convention in all laws and regulations pertaining to children and has implemented because of this, a number of measures, and adopted a number of documents aimed at the protection of children and the improvement of the quality of their lives. The most important of the aforementioned being, the National Program of Action for Children in the Republic Croatia (1998); Council for Children; The working group for the rights of the child; The institution of the Ombudsman for Children; Ministry of Family, Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity; Family Law; The National Program of Education for Human Rights (1999) (according to Maleš, 2004, 9). Children's rights can be achieved only if society fully recognizes them. Wall (2008) emphasizes that human rights theories are based on adults and their experiences, which is different from the specificity of a child as a being in development and view of specific experiences in childhood.

In addition, it is necessary to know the foundations of a democratic society, because those rights can be realized, developed and achieved solely in terms of democracy. A democratic society is based on the principles of freedom, justice, equality, diversity, peace and solidarity. A number of international documents on human rights are unenforceable without the presence of conscious and informed people, i.e. citizens (Batarelo, Čulig, Novak, Reškovac, Spajić-Vrkaš, 2010). Introducing and informing the public about human rights and freedoms of an individual is a commitment of every democratic society. Every citizen, family, institution and the whole community must work together to promote the children's rights, and to sensitize the public on the issues of child rights, as well as to disseminate information about the importance of life and the protection of children's rights. They must emphasize the need for an objective investigation into the status of children in society, and commitment to the realization of these rights (Maleš and Stričević, 2003, 14). The society should help the children themselves to become aware of their rights, but also about how to acquire these rights. That is the only way that the children can, themselves, be aware of the fact that their rights are being endangered, and then they can ask for the appropriate protection (Vejić, 2005).

Children should be aware that the other children, as well as the adults, have the same rights. A child is not to abuse their right because it consequently means that somebody else's rights are being threatened. A child needs to know that with rights come responsibilities towards himself and others, i.e. any right that a child has comes with a certain responsibility and duty.

The National Program of Education for Human Rights and Democracy in the Republic of Croatia has been in the making since 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Education on Human Rights on the occasion of the Decade of Education for Human Rights of the United Nations (1995-2004). The Committee was established in 1996 as a special government body for the promotion and coordination of activities in the field of human rights education at the national level, since the development and implementation of the program, monitoring and evaluation of its results until its eventual changes (Spajić-Vrkaš et al., 2004).

The National Curriculum Framework for Preschool Education and General Compulsory and Secondary Education in the Republic of Croatia (2010) is the basic developmental document which presents the objectives, principles, content and general goals of educational areas. The National Curriculum Framework (2010) suggests the principle of respecting human and children's rights, and the principle of democracy, as well as the cross-curricular theme of Civic Education. The purpose of Civic Education is to contribute to strengthening the students' competencies of actively and effectively carrying out their role as citizens (2010, 26/27).

In 2004, the European Commission proposed some key competencies for lifelong learning that is the European Framework of Reference (2007), which considered civic competencies to be one of the keys to creating a society based on knowledge. Since the academic year 2014/2015, the program of interdisciplinary and cross-curricular content of Civic Education was carried out experimentally in

primary and secondary schools, and since the academic year 2015/2016 it has been carried out regularly, as recommended by the Education and Teacher Training Agency of the Republic of Croatia. The adoption of a national curriculum of the cross-curricular topic Civic Education in the framework of a comprehensive curriculum reform in Croatia has been pending since February 2016. Content analysis points out that the development of civic competencies of students in the educational system was supposed to be implemented by the basic European and Croatian legal-normative, but insufficient developmentally-strategic documents that would assist in determining the accuracy, coherence and direction of the educational practice were not available (Brust Nemet, 2014).

Croatian curriculum for elementary schools (2006) cites Education for Human Rights and Democracy as integrative-educational content. It was systematically introduced into the Croatian educational system in 1999 by the decision of the Croatian Government, and the application of the National Program of Education for Human Rights and Democracy. It unites previous experiences gained by conducting such education in our system, as well as the experiences of other countries. The program includes: human rights; education for democratic citizenship; intercultural education; education for peace and non-violent conflict resolution; education for sustainable development; learning to prevent prejudice and discrimination; research of the humanitarian law, etc. The program can be performed in several ways: interdisciplinary, as an optional subject, through extracurricular activities, projects and systematically throughout school curricula. In 1999 programs were published for lower and higher grades of elementary school who were included in the curriculum under Education for human rights and democratic citizenship.

Education for human rights and democratic citizenship in the Republic of Croatia has been unified into curriculum for grades I to IV in the homeroom education curriculum. Education for human rights and democratic citizenship in the context of Science class lists the following tasks for students: learning about their own role, as well as the roles of others in the immediate environment; getting to know their surroundings; exploring and learning about native identity; developing the ability to navigate in space and time; discovering and learning about the living and inanimate nature, its diversity, connections and changeability; creating a positive attitude towards living beings and nature as a whole; developing respect for the natural, cultural and social environment and responsible attitudes towards the environment; developing and systematically improving health and hygiene habits; knowing the rules of behaving in traffic; knowing their rights and duties and rights of others in the immediate environment. Those topics are arranged by the grades: 1st grade: Life in the family; responsible behavior at home; health; cleanliness of the environment; 2nd grade: behavior in school and relationships among students; protection and preservation of the environment; health; mankind; my body.

Subject teaching for grades V to VII made two special programs: human rights education, and civic education. It is desirable that all teachers are familiar with both, so that they could effectively use the method of integration and correlation of the

related educational content. Education for Human Rights and Democracy allows the use of active methods of teaching and learning: project-based learning, cooperative learning, learning in pairs, role-playing, simulations, problem solving, social learning using information and communication technologies and so on. (Croatian National Education Standard, 2006, 24).

The complete curricular reform in the Republic of Croatia (2016) seeks to introduce a cross-curricular theme of Civic Education that includes human rights, democracy and civil society as key domains. The content on sustainable development, personal and social development, entrepreneurship, learning how to learn, use of ICT in health through integrated lessons, homeroom classes, projects, and subject classes curricula, should be permeated and complemented, in order to enable students to become active citizens. The domain of human rights involves the acquisition of knowledge and skills and developing attitudes in the context of understanding and practicing children and human's rights. Students would, through the course of five educational cycles (Table 1) create, in the long-term, a culture that respected diversity based on universal values of human rights, as well as on the development of systems for effective protection (Complete curriculum reform, 2016, 7).

Table 1. The domain of human rights branched into 5 cycles within Civic Education in the Republic of Croatia (Complete curriculum reform, 2016, 6)

HUMAN RIGHTS	1st CYCLE	2nd CYCLE	3rd CYCLE	4th CYCLE	5th CYCLE
	- Behaves responsibly, in accordance with children's rights in everyday life. - Actively advocates children's rights.	- Behaves responsibly, in accordance with human rights in everyday life. - Actively advocates human rights.	- Reflects on the development of human rights. - Understands the role of the basic documents on human rights. - Promotes human rights. - Promotes the right to education. - Promotes gender equality	- Actively participates in the protection of human rights. - Understands the role of institutions and organizations in the protection of human rights. - Promotes human rights. -Promotes gender equality - Promotes the rights of minorities.	- Actively participates in the protection of human rights. - Understands the role of institutions and organizations in the protection of human rights. - Promotes the right to work.

Canada signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child on May 28, 1990 and ratified it on December 13, 1991. Although signed and ratified, the Convention has not yet been fully incorporated into the law, especially with regard to children's rights in criminal cases. In the Canadian province of Ontario of approx. 1.4 million students, 4000 are currently attending public primary schools. Ontario's Ministry of Science has its own educational system and curriculum. The curriculum defines what students are learning in public primary schools in Ontario. It details the knowledge and skills that students need to develop in each subject in every grade. By developing and publishing the curricular documents, for use by of all teachers in Ontario, the Ministry of Education sets the standard for the entire province

Canadian curriculum (2017) broke down the teaching of children's rights into separate units in all Canadian provinces and those units include: Heritage and Citizenship (relations, rules and responsibilities); Canada and World Connections (features of communities in the world); Healthy living (diet, personal safety, injury prevention). In these activities, students explore the idea that people's basic needs include rights and recognize the link between rights and responsibilities. They show understanding of basic personal and family needs and how the basic needs are being met (Canada and World Connections). They also show an understanding of the need for rights and responsibilities, e.g., the need for protection and respect (Heritage and Citizenship). These activities help determine the physical, personal and emotional needs of healthy human beings (Healthy Living). Social Sciences (Social Studies) from grades 1 through 6 seek to examine and understand the community, on local and global levels and their diversity of heritage, systems and nationalities.

The program activities of Heritage and Citizenship introduce students to a variety of topics that will help them understand the links between past and present, the interaction between different cultural groups in Canada, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Students begin to learn with familiar things, such as the rules and responsibilities at home and at school and traditions and celebrations within their local community. Then comes the teachings of the previous arrangement in Northern Canada, characteristics of medieval societies, first civilization and nations and European researchers.

Heritage and Citizenship topics:

1st grade: Relationships, Rules and Responsibilities

2nd grade: Tradition and marking

3rd grade: Previous arrangement of North Canada

4th grade: Middle Ages

5th grade: First civilization

6th grade: First Nations and European researchers (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017).

Program activities Canada and World Connections are focused on Canada and its relations with the rest of the world. Students begin by learning the familiar (their local community) and gradually move on to learning about other communities, provinces, territories and regions of Canada, and Canada's relations with other countries around the world. Students are also introduced to the teachings about the Government (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017).

Canada and world connections topics:

1st grade: The local community

2nd grade: Characteristics of communities around the world

3rd grade: Urban and Rural Communities

4th grade: Canadian province, territory, region

5th grade: Features of citizenship and the Government of Canada

6th grade: Canada's relationships with the world (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017).

Across Canada, schools and their communities are transforming their school environments using an innovative approach called Rights Respecting Schools. The Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) initiative uses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a basis for building an inclusive and respectful school culture. Children's rights form the foundation of a common set of values that create a sense of community and become the lens through which students, teachers, school administrators and parents make decisions, choose behavior, and participate at their school (UNICEF, 2017).

The analysis of the content of the fundamental norms and the development of strategic documents produced a comparative analysis of education for human rights in primary school education in the Republic of Croatia and Canada. There is still no special subject regarding teaching human rights and democratic citizenship in Canada or Croatia. Those topics are integrated in other subjects, and teaching about children's rights has been, by the Canadian curriculum, broken down in the aforementioned special units of the curriculum. The quality of development of civic competences of students in the educational system by the fundamental European and Croatian is a legal-normative, but there are insufficient developmentally-strategic documents. Those European documents outline, for state members, the European framework of reference for the acquisition of basic competences and a series of recommendations and programs for the implementation of civic education in schools. European standards in the area of defining civic competences are included in the Croatian documents governing the field of civic education and its development, but they lack precision and coherence, which does not make them a sufficient guideline for educational practice. There are still questions about the competency of teachers and the mentioned changes needed, for civic education to get its deserved place in the Croatian educational system and create activity amongst citizens. (Brust

Nemet, 2014, 35). The complete curricular reform (2016), which is still in the making, seeks to introduce a cross-curricular theme of Civic Education, which puts an emphasis on human rights, and it plans for students, through the course of 5 cycles, to continuously acquire the knowledge that would enable them to; conduct themselves in accordance with children's rights, actively represent the mentioned, promote and protect children's rights, understand the role of the fundamental documents on human rights and institutions that protect those rights, promote the right to education, work and gender equality, and the rights of national minorities.

EDUCATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

The importance of education in achieving the desired changes in society is tremendous, and the future depends on the kind of knowledge, values, intellectual and social skills that are being provided to children and youth today. A democratic society based on the protection of human rights, tolerance and peace would create citizens who have the necessary knowledge, values and skills needed for a life in a democratic society. Hence the need to prepare children and young people for a society in which human rights are respected (Maleš and Stričević, 2003). Education for human rights is a process of acquiring knowledge, attitudes, values and skills needed for a life in a democratic society based on respecting human rights (Maleš, 2004). Children and young people should be prepared to be active participants in a democratic society in which they live. Education for human rights should take place at all levels of society, but the most important one for the child is, the education in family and school.

Learning about human rights and freedoms, about children’s rights should start from an early age. A child's family affects the formation of a child's life the most, and the parental method of upbringing affects the kind of person the child will grow up to become. The atmosphere needs to be positive and filled with love, warmth and support. Children who never experienced their rights being respected, will find it more difficult to accept and respect other people rights (Maleš, 2004). Parents need to listen to their child, respect their opinion, allow him/her to give and receive information and educate him/her so that the child will learn to respect the rights of others and become a responsible and active member of society with developed critical thinking (Kušević, 2010, 115). During childhood, parents are role models for children, so they need to react to every intolerant behavior in their environment and condemn it, especially when noticing that someone's right are being endangered. Parents' attitudes serve as a model and a guideline for children when encountering the same or similar situations. As the first and primary institution in which the child acquires its first life experiences, family thus became the first institution in which children's rights could be promoted, but also endangered.

When educating the children of primary school age about human rights, one should start with teaching about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The

school should constantly promote human rights, especially the rights of the child. The task of education on children's rights is to learn and to teach about: rights of the child – to enable the acquisition of knowledge about the rights of the child with a special emphasis on the introduction of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; PRO children rights - to develop attitudes on the need of enjoying the and protection of children's rights and meeting the child's developmental needs; The Rights of the Child - to learn in an atmosphere that maintains the sense of care for the ideals and practice of human rights and children's rights, in an atmosphere in which the child feels safe and happy, both in communicating with other children and adults (Maleš and Stričević , 2003, 15).

The right teaching environment is important for the successful education of children's rights. It has to be in the spirit of democracy, with the child and his needs being in the center of the democratic educational direction (Mlinarević, 2005, 30). Teaching should be oriented towards the student, not the teacher, but also organized as a joint effort of both teachers and students, in which students will play the part of active collaborators, and teachers of leaders and moderators. Classes need to be stimulating and open to participation, freedom of presenting thoughts and learning about diversity and accepting diversity. A positive class atmosphere also implies a mutual teacher-student relationship, as well as the emotional tone that prevails in their communication and respect. The teacher should be warm, patient, fair, and impartial, accept individual differences of students, promote and encourage the students, know the interests and hobbies of students and how students feel at school. They should highlight positivity, praise and encourage students. The teacher should encourage students to think critically and allow everyone to express their opinions and views, he/she should teach the students how to peacefully resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner, encourage trust amongst students, perform group work and interactions, teach responsibility, engage students in a variety of activities and motivate them to take action. The teacher should provide students with the opportunity to participate in creating a positive change (Maleš and Stričević, 2003, 17). By performing small tasks in the classroom, school or local environment, students will feel like active participants because their contribution led to these positive changes. Those changes may come in a variety of charitable activities and volunteer work in which children develop empathy. Regular education is very important, as well as encouraging teachers, with the goal of enabling them to focus teaching towards the development of the child's personality, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Teaching children rights can be implemented through the content of certain subjects or during homeroom class. This content is integrated into subjects because learning about children's rights is still not structured into its own subject. This content can be implemented into any class. Themes and literary texts relating to the rights and duties of children, for youth and adults can be implemented in the native language curriculum, as well as texts concerning the equality of all people. It is also necessary to incorporate the themes and texts relating to cultural specifics and traditions of other nations or ethnic minorities in the environment in which the students

live (Maleš and Stričević, 2003). Science class curriculum is open to implementation of content of rights and duties while planning the topic of concern for health and the environment. Homeroom class is open for discussions about events, conflicts, misunderstandings and dissatisfactions. The teacher plays a large and important role in the realization of teaching about rights and their objectives. He/she can conveniently mark the International Human Rights Day, International Day of Children's Rights, Children's Week, International Children's Day and the like. The teacher can, working together with the students, make a list of children's rights and duties, which have to be monitored and enforced, and which have to be placed in a visible spot in the classroom. From the standpoint of respecting children rights in the classroom, and teaching the young about their rights and responsibilities, more time should be spent with the strategies of active and experimental learning. Didactic strategies suitable for achieving the goals of education on children's rights are: project-based learning, the class newspaper; school newspaper; school radio; school bleachers; circle time; didactic games; interclass and interschool cooperation; field trips; elective and extracurricular activities; integrated teaching (Maleš and Stričević, 2003, 23).

REVIEW OF RESEARCH REGARDING TAKING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS INTO PRIMARY EDUCATION

The study examines the importance of a mandatory introduction of education on children's rights in elementary schools. In 2010, a representative sample of 1,074 seventh grade students and their parents (983 mothers and 845 fathers) in Croatia, provided data on measures of a child's rights fulfillment in the family, family governing style, self-esteem, self-control, problem behavior and resistance efficacy. Participants predominantly report respect of all of the examined rights. However, the rights on provision and protection are generally realized more often than the participation rights. Approximately half of the children reported full respect of their right to freely express their opinions and ideas, and the right to influence decision making that affects them. In 9-12% of families' children rarely or never, experience fulfillment of their rights of participation. Parents, in comparison to their children, tend to overestimate the level of fulfillment of children's rights to protection of physical integrity, dignity, participation in decision-making and to receiving loving care (Pećnik, Matić, Tokić Milaković, 2016, 399-400).

A survey of fourth graders (N = 76) in Ontario and Osijek proved that 96% of students of Croatian elementary schools are aware of their rights, and 100% of students of Canadian schools. The research results (Miharija and Kuridža, 2009) regarding second and third graders of elementary schools in Croatia show that 48% of students are familiar with children's rights. Kostić (2011) found in her unpublished graduate thesis that female students of Croatian elementary schools listed 90 rights, while the male students listed 65 rights. In comparison, female students of Canadian schools listed 66 and male students 37 rights. The majority of the rights

listed refer to developmental rights (school/education/learning, playtime/entertainment/laughter, companionship/friendship, family/home/parents, decision-making/choice, proper education and so on.), then survival rights (health care/health safety and protection/health, life/normal life, healthy food etc.), protective rights (safety, help, right not to be abused or forced.) and rights of participation (leisure activities, expressing opinions, etc.). The rights that the students of Croatian and Canadian elementary schools listed, alongside the relationships and the totality of these rights are categorized into four areas: education; leisure time, playtime and friends; family, home, care, protection; the right to opinions and decisions; obligations and duties. The analysis and comparison of the results show that there is no significant difference in the knowledge of children's rights amongst them. The students ranked the right to play, fun and laughter (59%) first, then the right to education, training, learning, homework and reading (42%). Canadian elementary school students more often listed the rights to protection. This may be due to a lower level of security in their environment, and having more time devoted to teaching students about safety and security in Canada's elementary schools than in Croatian elementary schools. The students listed rights relating to their duties, and thus demonstrated a larger social empathy.

In 2004, at elementary school "Mejaši" in Split, research results (Vejić, 2005) showed that most students (90%) listed the developmental rights and the right to education, then the right to play, freedom of thought, and choice of friends. The research results (Miharija and Kuridža, 2009) showed that most of the children's responses regarding the possession of rights, relate to leisure time, playtime and friends. Then follow the rights relating to the family, home, love, happiness, and various forms of protection. Students stated the right to education and, finally, the rights relating to respect for their opinions and the right to information. One research (Jelavić, 2010) showed that primary school students in Split lack, mostly, a space to play and socialize. They have much too schoolwork and not enough time to socialize well with their parents. Meanwhile, the teachers and the professional staff listed the need to promote and respect children's right to leisure time. Based on all these results, it is evident that there are no significant differences in the knowing of the rights between the primary school students in Osijek and Ottawa, also between the said students and the students of the primary school in Split, and other parts of Croatia. It can be concluded that children of a younger school age consider the right to playtime, leisure time and socializing with friends, but also the right to education as the most important rights.

Kostić (2011) stated that 62% of Croatian school students learned about their rights in school, while only 37% of students learned so in Canadian schools. Canadian students learned the most about their rights from family and friends. 0% of Croatian students found out about their rights on the internet or in the newspaper, while 10% of Canadian students cited the Internet and 3% magazines as the source. Miharija and Kuridža (2009) reported that the students learned mostly about their rights in school (52%), then at home (30%), on TV (22%), in kindergarten (7 %), from friends (7%) and the least in the print media (2%). 6% of students could not

remember where they first heard about children's rights. Students of the Split school occasionally (22%) and often (50%) debate the topic of children's rights. 50% of the children in lower grades had heard and knew something about the Convention rights, while 22% of them were well acquainted with the Convention rights. In contrast, children in higher grades had little or no knowledge of the Convention and the children rights (in 78% of responses), most learned about the Convention in school (59%) (Vejić 2005). Based on the self-assessment of Croatian school students, Kostić (2011) determined that friends (30%) parents (26%), and teachers (6%) did not take into account the children's rights. The students of Canadian schools chose other (34%) and teachers (31%) as a response, while friends and parents were chosen in only 17% of the cases. There was a higher percentage of Canadian school students (31%) who listed teachers as those who usually did not respect the children's rights. Studies (Raby, 2008) among Canadian students show that younger students more often estimate that their teachers respect the rights of the child when compared to the older students. The results of a quantitative research (Širanović, 2016) on a sample of 538 students of 13 elementary schools in the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County showed, based on students' evaluation, and generally respected children's rights, where relations with them were assessed as predominantly warm and supportive. When considering the relationship between respecting the children's rights and the quality of the relationship between students and teachers, the results showed that the respecting of children's rights was positively correlated with a positive dimension of relations between students and teachers (with support), and negatively with negative dimensions of this relationship (with a negative interaction, coercion, exclusion and authoritarianism). In other words, the assessment of the surveyed students stated that as long as teachers respected children's rights, their relationship with students was better (Širanović, 2016, 7).

Croatian school students believe that it is mostly other students who violate students' rights (30%). One of the possible causes is bullying. The problem of violence amongst children and adolescents has been recognized in the last few years, as a major social and public health problem, therefore, UNICEF launched a series of trainings for their associates, teachers and students to create a safer and more supportive environment in schools. If wronged, Croatian school students would usually seek the help of parents (76%), the same response was seen with the students of Canadian schools (59%), and many of them would address the police (17%) and school (14%) (Kostić, 2011). The study by Miharija and Kuridža (2009) showed that 3/4 of children would address their parents for the protection of their student rights. 22% of children would entrust that task to teachers. 3% of students spontaneously stated that there should be a person in charge of that problem, such as an ombudsman for children. Children trust their parents the most, and thus consider the parents to be the most responsible for taking care of them and respecting their rights. Croatian school students believe that, out of the ten stated rights, most of them have been realized frequently. They also state that the right to socialize and learn with a person of their choosing, and the right to express their opinions have been less often realized. Canadian school students for a total of five of those rights mostly feel that

they were often realized, while the four listed rights were rarely realized. The most frequently mentioned as rarely realized are, the right to playtime and leisure time, as well as the right to study and socialize with people of their choice (Kostić, 2011). Taking that into account, the participatory rights of the child is an obligation that the Convention on the Rights of the Child placed before adults. In addition to legal obligations and the theory of child development, the developmental well-being of a child's active participation in his/her environment and in relationships with adults has been emphasized. In this respect, any interaction between the child and adults, including the one of cooperation between families and educational institutions, should be imbued with respect for the child's human dignity (Markovinović and Maleš, 2011, 132). The results of the research by Žižak, Nikolić and Koller-Trbović (2001, 127) on 953 children in Zagreb indicated that the estimate of respect for the rights of the child in the family is significantly affected by age, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the family. The most respected are, the participatory rights in families of high school students, and the rights to protection and care in families of elementary school children. Miharija and Kuridža (2009) performed an assessment of the respecting the children's rights in Croatia by elementary school students. The children gave an average score of about 4, i.e. 43% of them gave the grade A, 25% grade of B and 20% grade of C.

It can be concluded that Croatian students are quite satisfied with the respect and appreciation of their rights, while the Canadian students show a little less satisfaction. The right (Kostić, 2011), mentioned most as the one not respected in school among Croatian school students was the right to socialize and learn with whom they want. Among the students of Canadian schools, the most non-respected right was, the right to playtime and leisure time. A quarter of the children had no idea how to get their rights respected in a better manner, and about 46% of them said that they (at this age) could not do anything about that. The rest of the children stated numerous examples of how they could contribute. Children primarily thought that they could help by talking, collecting things for sale, and thus help those in need. They also thought they could help by talking to adults who violated their rights, playing with children whose rights were violated by someone else, and participate in the prevention of violence among children (Miharija and Kuridža, 2009).

26% of Croatian school students and 48% of Canadian school students believed that rights can be deserved by behaving well. 98% of Croatian and 87% of Canadian students considered to have duties every right. However, the percentage of children who considered that they had the right to choose whose rights will be respected was worrisome, 35% of Croatian students and 59% of Canadian students. Most students of the Croatian and Canadian elementary school considered that not all children in the world had the same rights, just by working or being in the military. This suggests that children are not aware that they all have equal rights entitled to them, as human beings, also that those rights are not respected the same everywhere. 72% of Croatian students and 62% of Canadian students (Kostić, 2011) confirmed the claim that they should spread the knowledge of their rights, when they were familiar with them. Pupils should be taught more about children from different parts

of the world and the circumstances in which they live, in order to for them to become more aware of the existence of children who have equal rights, but their rights are threatened. Students should be taught about the duties and obligations that they have, which includes their respect for the rights of all people. Mandatory contents of rights and democratic citizenship should be given more attention in the curriculum, as the extent to which content is covered in human rights and quality of implementation currently solely, depends on the will and competence of teachers themselves.

The analysis of the content of school textbooks (Novak, 2010) showed that the textbooks advocate the values consistent with the principles of human rights, although national minorities are only occasionally mentioned, but they successfully show and promote gender equality. A systematic introduction of civic education in the framework of compulsory education is a possible solution for the education of human rights and democratic citizenship in schools. Croatia is one of the few countries in Europe that does not practice that. However, even though the topic of introducing civic education in the Croatian educational system is more often present, this leads to new problems and concerns. One of the biggest issues is the competence of our teachers and assistants to teach about rights and democratic citizenship. A quality educational program is necessary, that would, in addition to teaching, providing support to students and providing an enabling environment, would also denote the understanding and the promotion of human rights of the child as a precondition for improving children's lives and prosperity of society (Širanović, 2012, 71).

CONCLUSION

The paper deals with human needs and rights, the development of human rights throughout history and pertinent documents, responsibilities and duties of individuals, children's rights and the development of documents regarding children's rights, the obligations of States parties that signed the Convention, and the promotion of children's rights in education of human rights in family and school.

The paper shows the topics that were covered in classes which integrate the content of human rights and children's rights in the Croatian curriculum and the National Curriculum Framework, it also shows the comparison with the identical topics in the Canadian curriculum. Students' attitudes on knowledge and respect for children's rights in the Republic of Croatia and Canada were compared. After examining the results of the research, it can be concluded that students know their rights, their rights have been taken into account, and that the education in schools affects the awareness and attitudes of students of younger school-age concerning their rights.

Education for Human Rights certainly needs more attention concerning the planning, programming and implementation of teaching because that way, education will produce more democratic citizens who would respect other people's rights and

promote children's rights. With the assurance of all preconditions (quality undergraduate and graduate education, professional training, textbooks and manuals, systematic monitoring and evaluation) a continuous and mandatory education of democratic citizenship should be introduced with an emphasis on the culture in schools reflecting the values of human rights and democracy (Novak, 2010). A quality implementation of legal and normative documents that have already been adopted, and further development of strategic documents, with competent teaching of human rights, can build a better society leading to a better tomorrow.

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Professional paper

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LANGUAGE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN ASYLUM SEEKERS AND ASYLEES IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Abstract

This paper deals with the language rights of asylum seekers and asylees in the Republic of Croatia with an emphasis on children. The starting point is defining this social group, reasons of their migrations and conditions awaiting them. Possible progress in legal regulations is detected by analyzing the existing legal framework which regulates language rights of the seekers of international protection. Special emphasis is on the law, decisions and rules enforcement in order to provide this vulnerable group with their guaranteed rights.

Key words: language rights, asylum seekers, asylees, Croatia.

INTRODUCTION

Migrations are, as every spatial movement of people, not to be wondered about: people migrate every day (and continuously) in the world. The kind of migration dealt with in the paper does not refer to daily, monthly, annually, yearly, economic or tourist. It refers to migrations caused by real, life-threatening danger. One must therefore consider the fact that there is a significant segment of a young migrant population within such a migration group.

About migrants

Although it is about the vulnerable group, children asylum seekers and asylees there is basically not much (special) mention of them. It should not be excluded that the very migration caused by the need for the salvation of their existence is per se a traumatic event, that is a series of events. Besides that, the journey that migrants undertake is dangerous and challenging. This fact is evident from the recent migrant wave (culminating in autumn 2015) which passed through the so called Balkan route where migrants (mostly) from Syria passed over Turkey to Greece and further over Macedonia and Serbia to Hungary (until the border was closed) and Croatia. The journey continued over Slovenia to Austria, Germany and Scandinavian countries. Regular media reports enabled the audience making more or less a coherent picture about the migrants and conditions in which migration takes place. Therefore, Berbić Kolar and Gligorić (2017) state that the migrant identity, which includes the identity of asylum seekers and asylees, the identity of the group in which are also children, can be divided into three micro-identities. The first one, which chronologically corresponds to the beginning of the migrant wave in autumn 2015, is constituted around the definition of migrants as war victims with whom Croatian people can relate. The second micro-identity, the one that can be (re)constructed from the texts about migrants published from (approximately) November 2015 to March 2016, is evident in texts which describe migrants, which includes the group observed, as the potential danger. From March 2016 to January 2017 there are primarily texts that (re)produce negative migrant identity, representing that group of people as a real threat to local people. It is interesting that from the end of January to the beginning of February (*ibid*.) new attempts to (re)affirm the guaranteed human rights of migrants arose. Therefore, in such a dominant and negative climate come people who save their existence by migration, not in a material sense, at least not primarily in a material sense.

About Croatia in the migrants' context

From the previous scarce notes two important facts about the context of language rights of asylum seekers and asylees in the Republic of Croatia can be concluded (including children): on one hand there is a vulnerable, traumatized group and on another hand, there is relatively (after all discourse construction of migrant

identity) anti-migrant society. The reason of a mostly closed Croatian society can be found in the fact that the Republic of Croatia is predominantly a country of Croatians (cf. Berbić Kolar and Gligorić 2017). Therefore, the Republic of Croatia is not a migrant country. This thesis is supported by data obtained from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2011 Census) according to which there are 90, 42% Croatians in Croatia and the rest of inhabitants are highly integrated national majorities (Serbians 4,36 %, Bosnians 0,73 %, Italians 0, 42 %, Albanians 0, 41%, Roma 0, 40 % and others). When considering the number of migrants, according to the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Interior data, in 2015, 115 people applied for asylum: four male people under the age of thirteen and four people between the age of fourteen and eighteen; three female people under the age of thirteen and one person between the age of fourteen and eighteen. In the same year, 33 people gained the status of asylee, among which, are two boys and three girls (*Statistical indicators of Asylum Seekers in 2015 by Citizenship and Sex*)[1]. It is interesting that the most of unaccompanied minors were in 2011: 197 of them (194 boys) which is more than in 2010 (138 boys) or in 2012 (69 boys and 1 girl). The significant piece of information is that 393 unaccompanied minors were registered in the asylum seeker system from 2009 to 2015, among which 388 of them were male. The assumption about Croatia as an anti-migrant country (anti-migrant regarding the number of migrants, not the treatment of migrants) is also confirmed by direct experience. Data from 2016 was not accessible at the moment when this article was written. In this sense, statements of the Minister of the Ministry of Interior can help: in 2016 2,230 people asked for international protection (Berbić Kolar and Gligorić 2017). The number significantly increased in 2016, but one should bear in mind that it is about the asylum seekers and not about people who regulated their status in the Republic of Croatia entirely. Besides that, the fact that the Republic of Croatia (as a member of the European Union) obliged to accept more than a thousand migrants by the end of 2017 should not be left out when considering the number of (potential) asylum seekers.

Introducing the language

With the general characteristics of the group mentioned and taking the data about the number of migrants in Croatia into consideration, the information that is important in the context of the language rights of asylum seekers and asylees analysis, is the information about their mother tongue. It is reasonable to assume that the majority of migrants and asylum seekers in the migrant wave in 2015 and 2016 (perhaps in 2017 also, especially if we include migrants in Croatia) come from Syria. The official language in Syria is Arabian, it belongs to Semitic languages, to the Afro-Asiatic language family. Besides Arabian, some Turkic languages that belong to the Altaic language family are also spoken there. Afro-Asiatic and Altaic languages are also dominant in other areas from which migrants might have come to our

[1] The report (*Statistički pokazatelji tražitelja azila u 2015. prema državljanstvu i spolu*) is available at https://www.mup.hr/UserDocsImages/Dokumenti/stranci/2015/azil_1-6.2015.pdf

area (e.g. from the North of Africa). For example, if we include migrants from Afghanistan in the potential asylum seekers, one should also include Iranian languages which as a subgroup of Indo-Iranian languages belonging to (our) Indo-European language family. Here the differences (or similarities) between languages can be possibly presented in a whole is not considered, reminding us about the genetic closeness/similarity (or the distance). The information about the genetic similarity can be useful to some extent, especially in planning and language rights of asylum seekers analysis.

DOCUMENTS THAT PRESCRIBE LANGUAGE RIGHTS[2]

The rights of asylum seekers and asylees before 1st July 2015 were regulated by the *Asylum Act* (*Zakon o azilu*) (Official Gazette 79/07, 88/10, 143/13). From July 2015, the rights and obligations of this group of people have been regulated by the *Act on International and Temporary Protection* (*Zakon o međunarodnoj i privremenoj zaštiti*) (Official Gazette 70/15). From these acts different regulations and decisions are derived, which regulate a certain segment of the rights of asylum seekers. In that sense, taking into consideration the *Act on International and Temporary Protection*, the important documents are the following: the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (*Opća deklaracija o ljudskim pravima*) (1948) and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (*Konvencija o pravima djeteta*) (1989) as prime documents, the *Regulation on the means of implementing programs and assessments of knowledge of asylum seekers, asylees, foreigners under temporary protection and foreigners under subsidiary protection for accessing the Croatian educational system* (*Pravilnik o načinu provođenja programa i provjeri znanja tražitelja azila, azilanata, stranaca pod privremenom zaštitom i stranaca pod supsidijarnom zaštitom radi pristupa obrazovnome sustavu Republike Hrvatske*) (Official Gazette 89/08), the *Decision on the Curriculum of Croatian language for 15+ asylum seekers, asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection for accessing the secondary and adult education* (*Odluka o Nastavnom planu i programu hrvatskoga jezika za tražitelje azila, azilante i strance pod supsidijarnom zaštitom starije od 15 godina radi pristupa srednjoškolskom obrazovnom sustavu i sustavu obrazovanja odraslih*) (Official gazette 100/12), the *Regulation on implementing preparatory and supplementary classes for students who do not know Croatian language, and on teaching language and culture of students' country of origin* (*Pravilnik o provođenju pripremne i dopunske nastave za učenike koji ne znaju ili nedostatno znaju hrvatski jezik i nastave materinskoga jezika i kulture države podrijetla učenika*) (Official gazette 15/13), the *Decision on the Learning Program of Croatian language, history and culture for asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection for inclusion into Croatian society* (*Odluka o Programu učenja hrvatskoga jezika, povijesti i kulture*

[2] The following review is formed regarding chronological criterion, i. e. documents, legal acts, laws are not listed regarding their legal force.

za azilante i strance pod supsidijarnom zaštitom radi uključivanja u hrvatsko društvo) (Official Gazette 154/14).[3]

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

When reflecting on rights from general to specific and from older to younger age wise, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* should be considered first. Language is mentioned in the second article of the *Declaration* where it is stated that everyone is entitled to all the rights set forth in the *Declaration*, without distinction of any kind, language as well. This fundamental right can be seen as the source of all legal norms, which regulates the question of asylum seekers as well: asylum seekers (like anyone else) must have the same rights without distinction, including language too.

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child,* which is important in the context of children asylum seekers and asylees, has appeared in several cases. Together with the rights guaranteed by the *Declaration*, the *Convention* mentions that states parties should encourage media of public communication for giving special attention to children's language needs (in the context of the members of minority and indigenous groups). Article 20 states that when considering the solution for the child who is temporary or permanently deprived of family environment, one must take the child's linguistic origin into account. The Convention also prescribes that education has to be focused on language development, cultural identity, etc. (Article 29), that a child should not be deprived of the language he/she speaks in the countries where there are minorities (Article 30) and that a child has the right to free help from an interpreter if he/she does not know the language (in case of the violation of the law, Article 40). Therefore, the language rights are clearly defined and in the frame of defining the rights of the child.

The Regulation on the means of implementing programs and assessments of knowledge of asylum seekers, asylees, foreigners under temporary protection and foreigners under subsidiary protection for accessing the Croatian educational system

It is necessary to follow the regulations of the *Declaration* and the *Convention* within legal acts of the Republic of Croatia too. Before the *Act on the International and Temporary Protection* preceded the *Regulation on the means of implementing programs and assessments of knowledge of asylum seekers, asylees, foreigners under temporary protection and foreigners under subsidiary protection for accessing the Croatian educational system*. The *Regulation*, which was coined and based on Article 104 of the *Asylum Act*, prescribes that asylum seekers in every category will be provided with the course and the program, to be prescribed by the Ministry

[3] Benčić et al. (2006) talk about the legal framework up to 2006.

(Article 5). Article 6 defines that the educational institutions are obliged to organize a course lasting from three to six months for students in primary schools, and for students in secondary schools or higher education, six months up to one-year course. The following article states that the linguistic knowledge will be examined by the entitled body of the belonging institution, and that the course can be held in a shelter and after the assessment students can be included in the appropriate educational level. It is interesting that, according to Article 8, for people from Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no need to organize Croatian language learning. This regulation can be viewed from the genetic closeness of the languages perspective, but it can also present a problem in the practice, because it is making the state and the languages equal, which is implied by such a regulation. A possible situation is someone seeking protection from one of the aforementioned states, who does not know a language that is genetically close to Croatian. The *Regulation* from 2008 in the Article 9 prescribes that due to the efficient integration of students into the educational system, individual and (or) group forms of educational work should be organized. This way, students can acquire Croatian and other subjects much efficiently. The *Regulation* in a certain sense puts Croatian in the center of the integration process. In this way, the role and the importance of the language are acknowledged in the context of man's social life, legitimization and equal participation in the community life he/she is being included in or wants to be included in.

Act on international and temporary protection

As mentioned, the acts of the *Regulation* from 2008 are based on the *Asylum Act* which expired in July 2015. From July 2015 the *Act on the international and temporary protection* mentions the language in different contexts. This is the way Croatian language and the Latin script are defined as a language and a script in the process, and if the seeker does not understand the language, he/she will recieve a translator; the same is for unaccompanied children in the process. Article 58 is especially important in this context. It prescribes that a child asylum seeker will be enabled to have preparatory or additional Croatian language lessons, if a child seeker does not know Croatian well. The next important article is Article 64. According to which, an asylee and a foreigner are obliged to attend Croatian language, history and culture courses. This regulation is elaborated more thorough in Article 74 according to which, the above mentioned, are obliged to attend the course in order to be included in Croatian society, and the state budget covers it. The *Act* assumes the *Curriculum of Croatian language for 15+ asylum seekers, asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection for the purpose of accessing secondary and higher education system* and the *Decision on the Program of Croatian language, history and culture for asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection for inclusion into Croatian society*. Therefore, the *Act* prescribes the legal frame, which includes language rights as well, which protects asylum seekers entirely (children as well).

Decision on the Curriculum of Croatian language for 15+ asylum seekers, asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection, for the purpose of accessing secondary and higher education system

This *Decision* prescribes contents and forms of Croatian language teaching based on the *Act on international and temporary protection*. The method of teaching the Croatian language is oral and written competences in Croatian, expanded with the parts of social-cultural, intercultural and reading competences. In further text, in the *Decision*, the knowledge of Croatian as a second language is defined as a key competence through which an individual improves his/her mobility, employability, using sources of knowledge, etc. A second language refers to any language that is not the first / the mother tongue (L1) (cf. Jelaska 2005, Jelaska 2014b): Croatian is a foreign language to course participants, and later on it can become their second language. The *Decision* prescribes duration of the course from six to nine months and anticipates an A1.2 language level that enables basic communication. In the text of the *Decision* it is stated that the speed of language acquisition is influenced by numerous factors (the knowledge of some other Slavic language, the mother tongue, learning environment, motivation, personality traits and others; cf. Jelaska 2015). Therefore, for a nine-month program 40 to 48 classes monthly are needed, and for a six-month program 60 to 70 classes. Weekly around ten (up to fifteen) classes of language teaching are considered to be enough to realize these two-part programs. However, a question arises whether it is possible to compensate difficulties that particularities may cause when acquiring a language in a default number of classes. Two parts of the program should be taken into account: Croatian language/language expression and Croatian culture and history. Each part of the program is divided into thematic areas. Within every theme, educational attainments are defined, attainments for every language skill, communication patterns, keywords and expressions are also defined. In the *Decision* lexical and grammatical development are briefly described and guidelines for the assessment of language knowledge are again given, as well as the definitions of the language level for the Croatian language. The *Decision* is a valuable document which systematically approaches the problem of teaching the Croatian language for international protection seekers. An individual approach to participants is preferred, while accepting their differences.

Regulation on implementing preparatory and supplementary classes for students who do not know the Croatian language, and on teaching language and culture of students' countries of origin

The next document which regulates language rights of asylum seekers and asylees is the *Regulation* which was put into action in 2013. It should be mentioned that it was put into action based on the *Primary and Secondary School Education Act*. Therefore, the *Act* also applies to the context of regulating language rights of asylum seekers. In the part that concerns the education of students who do not know Croatian well, it is defined that the education of these students will be enabled under the same terms as for citizens of the Republic of Croatia and in accordance with

Croatian law. In this *Regulation* insisting on equality is obvious and can be seen in the previously mentioned documents, the *Declaration* and the *Convention*. The children of citizens of the Republic of Croatia who come back from abroad can belong to the category mentioned, as well as family members of citizens of member states of the European Union, members of minorities, children of foreigners whose family members have the right to stay or reside in the Republic of Croatia (Article 3). Preparatory or supplementary classes will be organized for the efficient inclusion of this category of students.

The *Regulation* prescribes the Croatian language assessment process when entering the first grade or when a student is enrolling in school and it defines that preparatory or supplementary classes that are conducted by the school in accordance with competent authorities. Furthermore, it is defined that the person who teaches Croatian as a second language must be equipped for the job. It is interesting that this *Regulation* has a decision that can be compared with the *Regulation* from 2008. It is in Article 9 of the *Regulation* which determines that for students whose mother tongue is Serbian, Montenegrin or Bosnian there is no need to organize Croatian classes. This kind of formulation is undoubtedly more precise because of the previously mentioned reasons.

Regarding the mother tongue and culture of the students' country of origin classes, they are conducted according to the program of the state member of the European Union in accordance with the Ministry, based on the agreement of both sides. Therefore, this form of linguistic and cultural education is enabled only to those students, whose mother tongue is one of the languages in the European Union states: children outside the European Union who enter the Croatian educational system are not included in the regulation in regard to the language of students' origin. The assumed number of classes in the framework of preparatory classes is seventy, one class to two classes daily. If the student does not pass the assessment, he/she attends the program again.

Decision on the Learning Program of the Croatian language, history and culture for asylees and foreigners under subsidiary protection for inclusion into Croatian society

The *Decision* from 2014 is the last document which will be analyzed. This *Decision* complies with the *Decision* from 2012: The *Decision* from 2014 has basically the same goals as the one from 2012. It should be mentioned that the difference between decisions is seen when considering the assumed knowledge level. By the end of the program, a participant will gain H1.0 level of knowledge which corresponds to A1.0 according to ZEROJ (2005). However, both decisions enable a participant to be even more successful if he/she knows some Slavic language. Moreover, the *Decision* determines program duration in the period from four to nine months depending on the number of classes. As mentioned, due to all particularities it is not possible to determine the exact number of classes, the least permitted number is 280, meaning thirty classes monthly.

The first program unit is mandatory and seventy classes are prescribed for it because it is an introduction to Croatian language and it assumes no knowledge of Croatian (cf. *Regulation* 2013), and for other units thirty classes are prescribed. The *Program* consists of eight units and all language skills are equally represented together with the multiculturality. The *Decision* also brings the guidelines for teaching, creating the teaching materials, assessment and evaluation. After the reference list which is used in program creation, each unit is described together with learning outcomes, language skills, most common words, etc. The *Decision* from 2014 describes the program of the Croatian language in detail, and it presents a positive step in the context of the prescribed number of classes and the level of language proficiency.

COMPABILITY OF LEGISLATION AND THE ACTUAL NEEDS – CONCLUSION AND GUIDELINES

Generally speaking, the legal framework which regulates the rights of asylum seekers and asylees (therefore children who belong to that group too) is formed in a way that enables the protection of a vulnerable group in accordance with international regulations, declarations, conventions and democratic and socially aware practices of Western European countries. Of course, there are parts in which legal framework can (and should be) improved. On the other hand, there is bigger problem, that is putting regulations into action and enabling the target group consummation of the ensured (language) rights.

ZEROJ and language rights

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages was published in Croatia in 2005 (English version has been available since 2001). The purpose of ZEROJ/CEFRL was to describe the level of knowledge of foreign languages students. In the documents mentioned in the text only A1 level was listed. However, ZEROJ divided levels of language knowledge in A (Basic user), B (Independent user), C (Proficient user). Each level has two sublevels: A1 (Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage); B1 (Threshold), B2 (Vantage); C1 (Effective operational proficiency), C2 (Mastery). There are also levels betweenn: A2+, B1+, B2+. Considering that the Croatian program participants prescribed by previously mentioned documents acquire competences on A1 level, it is considered people who can successfully understand common expressions and basic phrases, introduce themselves and others, ask questions about personal data and can talk to speakers who speak more slowly, clearly and who are willing to make understanding easier (cf. ZEROJ 2005).

The first question that is implied when considering the described level concerns its sufficiency in the context of child's interaction in school. Bearing in mind, the fact that Croatian is for migrants, just a surrounding language (which certainly

encourages the language acquisition), the requirements of communication in school, which includes all subjects, largely go beyond the competences that the attendant acquires at the end of the course. Besides that, taking the exam at the end of the program is considered to be sufficient to enter the educational system of the Republic of Croatia. This is questionable from the reason mentioned before, it is interesting to connect that to the fact that for enrollment into university one must have passed the B2 level exam, so called second B2 (Jelaska 2014a). Therefore, on a B2 level is a user who (ZEROJ 2005) understands main theses of a complex text about concrete and abstract topics, including discussions in that area, a user who is capable to communicate fluently and spontaneously, which includes communication with native speakers without putting much effort in it from both sides, can produce a detailed text about different topics, explain viewpoints and list advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, there is a discrepancy in decisions and needs. Of course, for enrolling into primary school, especially in lower grades of primary school, the language knowledge on a B2 level is not necessary. Although, A1 can be considered insufficient as well.

The problem is also realizing the rights to learning the language of the country where a child asylee is coming to and the number of prescribed classes. If we compare the number of classes sufficient for a certain level of knowledge in a foreign language, seventy classes may seem sufficient. However, that number varies from language to language, that is, from one language situation (language biography) to the other. It refers to the fact that the language acquisition is influenced by numerous factors which are listed here and in documents. In spite of that, it is prescribed by the regulations and decisions, that the attendant will gain sufficient competence within the prescribed number of classes. That fact is, in the context of children asylees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq or countries in the North of Africa can be problematic, especially when taking their mother tongues and language biographies into account. As mentioned in the introduction, it is about the genetic distance and structural differences of the languages to consider when speaking about Croatian language acquisition. More time and classes are needed than has been prescribed by the legal framework.

Level A0

Regarding differences between Croatian and the mother tongues of children protection seekers, a certain pre-level can be added to the number of classes. Something similar is determined by the *Decision* in 2014 where H1.0 level is mentioned, which corresponds to ZEROJ's A1 level, but due to the specificity of the individual case, can differ from it in a way of lower knowledge of Croatian than it is on A1 level.

In order to illustrate the problem, an example of Croatian as a second language class will be considered, from a group that came to Croatia on a study visit (mostly it concerns students of graduate and postdoctoral studies) from Egypt, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Algeria and others. They were in a four-week class,

having four to five hours of classes in order to learn Croatian on an A1.1 level, as was the case with Portuguese, English, German, French and other speakers. Applying the same teaching methods and taking the highly motivated attendees into account, nominative and accusative, present, perfect and future tenses were taught in prototypical cases; students had the opportunity to present themselves and show their interests, but they had great difficulties in pronunciation and understanding.

The previous example shows that there is a need for redefining the level of language knowledge in regards to speakers of unrelated languages to Croatian. Therefore, the number of classes should also be reconsidered. The problem could be solved by forming a level before A1, and in the cases of (children) asylees from areas they are coming from at the moment, could be differed from other asylum seekers (but from other attendees as well). In this way, specific needs of the groups attendees would be identified, which undoubtedly affects the work content, methods, approaches, etc.

Course difficulties

Potential and real, theoretical and practical Croatian learning difficulties concerning asylum seekers have been previously indicated. Although the law enables asylum seekers to have language rights, in practice, there is a deviation. By this we mean two issues: absence of the course and organization of partially acceptable courses.

All documents recognize the importance of the language in the context of the integration (potential) of immigrants in the society. Still, the practice of organizing Croatian language courses does not follow the significance should have. It refers to the fact that in the practice there is no temporary (basic) or continuous language education for asylum seekers (cf. Podboj 2016). Croatian language courses are led by volunteers (in the terms it is permitted) in Zagreb and Kutina (*ibid*.) As Podboj mentions, and legislation too, the absence of courses, disables and makes it difficult for children and adult inclusion into the educational system, specifically for adults, inclusion in the job market and society in a wider sense. One should bear in mind that this is about a group effected by traumatic and pre/postmigration events (*ibid*.)

The absence of the course is the worst possible scenario, it concerns the asylums everyday life. On the other hand, the organization of the courses which are not organizationally, personally, methodically or in any another way acceptable. In that sense, the teaching of Croatian as a second language, additional development is still necessary (which is predicted by the legal frame. Currently, attendants are in groups of different origins, different mother tongues, and different motivations, among other problems. A similar problem occurs also in teaching Croatian to non-asylees: there is not a large chance of having a homogenous group of course attendants, who have the same level of knowledge, the same mother tongue and similar parameters, which does affect the language acquisition. The problem gets more complex when it comes to the vulnerable groups like asylum seekers, and especially children.

In the end, one should be aware of the fact that children who enter the Croatian educational system and go outside the borders of European Union, are not entitled to lessons in the mother tongue of the country of origin. This regulation can be found discriminating: it mistreats children immigrants from European and non-European countries. It is possible that the regulation is like this for practical reasons (for example, personnel and financial because the class is financed by the state member of the European Union which ensured personnel and the like), but that should not be the reason for the deprivation of rights to non-European citizens.

Examples of good practice – immigrants in society

It is mentioned that the volunteers conduct the courses. These are people who take their free time to help people in need. In spite of the valuable efforts, the problems of learning the language of the receiving country should be institutionalized. It is well known that these courses are conducted by the Center for Peace Studies, Public Open University *Kutina*, Public Open University *Velika Gorica*, Volunteer center, Red Cross and others.

In the context of the implementation of the regulations, the inclusion of 28 children immigrants into the Croatian educational system in Primary School *Gustav Krklec* in Zagreb should be mentioned. Program implementation and enabling the seekers of international help (especially children) consume their rights is essential in the process for their successful integration into Croatian society. Children are the group that should be paid most attention, because children asylum seekers are focused on other children. According to that, language is important for them in order to gain positive experiences and encourage the connection to the environment and Croatian society in general.

Considering that some regulations connect immigrants and national minorities (e.g. *Regulation on the implementation of preparatory and supplementary classes*), it is interesting to discuss briefly the relation between the two groups. In the case of a greater immigration rate, there is a question about the status of immigrants in Croatian society. In this sense, the paper confirms the viewpoints of Tatalović and Jakešević (2016) which Berbić Kolar and Gligorić also take into account (2017). Tatalović and Jakešević articulate the position according to which, the status of existing minorities will not be questioned due to a national consensus, which was built in decades. Besides that, Croatia can and should use the precious experience of the integration of national minorities in the context of inclusive relations towards the asylum seekers and asylees, especially towards the most vulnerable group – children.

CONCLUSION

Seeing migrants as a heterogeneous group whose identity has many layers because of the lack of direct experiences, is mostly (negatively) discursively orien-

tated (Berbić Kolar and Gligorić 2017), a number of difficulties can be identified which can be caused by their inclusion into Croatian society. Therefore, asylum seekers are an especially vulnerable group, a group that is afflicted by trauma, from culturally and linguistically, very different environments and they have found themselves in a situation of necessary inclusion into an unknown society.

Language is an important element of every identity. In that sense, language perhaps has a crucial role in the inclusion of asylum seekers into Croatian society, especially with children going into the educational system. The legal frame that regulates (children) asylum seekers and asylees' rights consists of a number of documents which, in principle, enable immigrants their rights, create and define language classes and mechanisms of achieving the set goals.

Although Croatian legal regulative in the context of language rights articulation can be seen as satisfactory, there is a number of difficulties, mainly in the realization of the guaranteed rights: courses are either not held or are held in an inefficient way, that is not in accordance with the law. Besides that, the number of classes is also questionable and the unsuitability of defining language levels, etc. Considering that, language is a key instrument in including an individual into the community, and the importance of enabling language teaching and learning should be emphasized.

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Professional paper

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SPECIFICITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN FYR OF MACEDONIA

Abstract

Accessibility of education implies the creation of systemic parameters and other conditions that will enable accessibility of education to all children. Inclusion in the educational system and the changes that exist within, is aimed towards full inclusion of children with special education needs. The development of children with special education needs requires circumstances where the educational activities are well organized. Education and upbringing of children with special education needs involves significant changes in terms of the curriculum. For this purpose, the FYR of Macedonia implemented a series of changes in the educational system for successful inclusion of children with special education needs, following the example of other EU countries. The aim of this paper is to advocate the adequate support for children with special education needs by the educational system, contributing to social acceptance of the child by peers and establishing a sense of belonging, better emotional control and socialization of children with special education needs.

Keywords: children with special education needs, inclusion, support, education, curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Education of the children with special educational needs is characterized with a great number of specifics that should be accepted during their education. These specifics being factors that can be observed from individual and social points of view. Individual factors are determined by the characteristics of the particular child who is under pedagogical influence. It involves a particular child's abilities, interests and potentials. As far as social factors are concerned, at first glance, it seems like inclusion in education suffers from several barriers, such as inadequate curriculum adaptations and absence of social resources (including financial support), which makes inclusion in education formidable. The mentioned factors determine the main characteristic of inclusive education, which is consisted of the correction of the direction of the overall curriculum activities. Thus, it is necessary that curriculum is prepared in accordance to a particular child's abilities.

Review of curriculum adaptation showed that special schools and special classes for children with special education needs existed as such in the 19th century in USA and gradually increased during the 20th century all over the world (Wright & Wright, 2004). However, many early special education curriculums were designed within private schools and in-state residential institutions. Good, public special education programs were rare and difficult to access. For most children, special education programs were simply not available due to its expensive nature. The consequence of this approach has been the systematic placement of children, according to type of disability, in residential institutions, so that they can grow and develop with support, and are protected from general society. During 1980's, in FYR of Macedonia emerged the medical model, within which, special schools were organized. This led to the practice of segregation of very significant numbers of children with medium and severe disabilities – they have been placed in residential schools, transferring as they got older to adult institutions where they would spend the rest of their lives. Invariably these facilities each catered to large numbers of children, segregated from their families and communities. A variety of institutions existed, including infant homes, hospitals, special institutions (boarding schools) ran by the ministry of education, boarding homes for the children with severe and multiple disabilities, operated by social services, and children's homes administered by the health department. Children with milder learning disabilities were typically disregarded altogether or sent to special schools with a remedial curriculum, where they were unlikely to receive appropriate support for their needs. Those who were deemed 'uneducable' were sent to institutions or confined to the home. Children who did stay in their families had little chance of interaction with their peers. This was the practice for a long period of time in FYR of Macedonia, until the fall of the Communist regimes some 20 years ago.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES IN FYR OF MACEDONIA

In our country, the current conceptual structure of the education of children with special education needs is regulated and integrated into the Law on Primary Education, Law on Secondary Education, Law on educational inspection, and other strategic documents, based on the highest legal act – the Constitution. In the Constitution, in terms of economic, social and cultural rights governing the right to education, it states "Everyone has the right for education. Education is accessible to everyone under equal conditions". The education of the children with special education needs is regulated by a law for primary, secondary and higher education. The actual conceptual set of the education of the disabled children and the youngsters with special education needs could be presented as:

- The utter aim of the education of the children and the youngsters with special education needs is the same or similar to that of the regular population.
- The education of the children and youngsters with special education needs is organized in special institutions and schools, special classes in the regular schools, as well as in the regular classes together with their peers.
- The mandatory primary school refers to the children and youngsters with special education needs, except for those with moderate and severe disabilities in the psychological development, for whom there is also organized an educational process, program and are adapted to their individual capabilities and needs.
- The curriculum and the programs are adapted to a different extent, according to the degree and the type of disability.

Even though the children with special educational needs represent only a smaller part of our school population, there is a growing body of data in Macedonia suggesting that around 30% of the children at school have some problems while learning. The inclusion of the disabled children at school requires formations of inclusive teams that includes members such as: the pedagogue and psychologist, experienced teachers and parents of children with risks who work together with all the teachers in the school in finding out solutions and ways to satisfy the child's needs. This team of professionals and parents could offer support in classroom management and including curriculum adaptations. The main goal of this collaboration is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a particular child with special educational needs, such as:

- What the student knows and what he can do;
- What interests the student?
- Existing experiences;
- Ways in which the student learns easily;
- What the student does not know and what he can't do;
- Areas to be developed in the student.

The inclusive education teachers are the best choice for leading the inclusive teams, because of their training, preparations, and understanding of the needs of the students who face difficulties. There is great probability that the dialectologists for special educational needs could find children who have concrete disabilities in their development (Johnstone, 2010).

EMERGING NEW PRACTICES OF INDIVIDUALIZED CURRICULUMS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Education is an important area that needs to be the initiator and implementer of the idea of inclusion of children with special educational needs. If we look at the past, we can say that today greater attention is paid to the education of persons with disabilities and ensuring their full development in line with scientific developments and knowledge about their options. Today there is a more humane and more open attitude toward children with special educational needs. An important task in this regard has been regarding educational institutions, which are obliged to carry out the inclusion in a real and substantial sense, within mainstream settings. To educate children with the knowledge that we are different and we all have the same rights to a dignified life and to exercise their rights represents a fundamental task of educational institutions (Lazor, Markovic & Nikolic, 2008). Nowadays, inclusion has become a global trend in education that requires the involvement of and collaboration between different educational and non-educational professionals (such as pediatricians, social workers etc). Specifics of the education of the children with special educational needs are determined by many disciplines, among which are, pedagogy, psychology, rehabilitation, these have the most significance.

An interdisciplinary approach to inclusive education sets individualized curriculums which would enable them to involve themselves in the working life.

Individualized curriculums lead to development of one's autonomy and independence, social and personal stability, and participation in social relations. Prerequisites for this practice are:

- availability of education for all children,
- individualization and differentiation of the educational processes,
- use of different methods of teaching
- connection between the education and real life,
- self-advocacy activities within class,
- facilitation of peer-interaction, and peer-support on daily basis, etc.

In accordance to this, FYR of Macedonia organizes an educational system for children with special educational needs into four types of curriculums:

1. Special education in special schools,

2. Special education and special classes in public schools,
3. Mainstream education, and
4. Inclusive education.

The first and second are basically remains of old segregation practice in which children had to adapt to the school, the curriculum is normative oriented and in the center of the educational process. The third form of curriculum can be interpreted as a transitional form to inclusive education. It is characterized with the placement of child with special educational needs within mainstream settings but still with insufficient adaptation of teaching methods and assessments. Therefore, during the last twenty years The Ministry of Education of FYR of Macedonia introduced inclusion to mainstream education. The main difference between mainstream and inclusion is the individual approach, i.e. personalized curriculums which allow children with special education needs to fully participate in the educational process. The inclusion is based on the beliefs that every human being has equal rights and possibilities no matter of individual differences. In an inclusive state every person is accepted as a human being. In inclusive education all the children are different and the school and the educational system should be adapted so that they can meet the needs of the students as well as the disabled children, and the others. That is an educational system for all the children, for all individual needs that children should have.

Inclusion of the marginalized children in the educational process is a long-term process. But the attitude of the educational system in general is still negative towards inclusion of disabled children in the regular teaching process; there is not still a sole attitude for the inclusion of the disabled children and a unique platform of implementation of the curriculum for this category of children (Allen & Schwartz, 2000).

To achieve full inclusion, schools need support from diverse social factors, such as parents, families, politicians and local community members. The most significant factor for children's achievement is cooperation with parents and other family members. Together with teachers and other experts, parents actively participate in the development of the full potential of children with special educational needs. They provide opportunities for growth, presenting their experiences and thereby affecting the progress of their children in the period of education. Partnership relations that are formed between parents, teachers and school staff can greatly contribute to the progress of children with special needs. (Carroll & Florin, 2003). The inclusive model of education would help the teachers to improve their professional competences in the sense of better recognition of the particular child's needs, and the common developmental needs of the children. The teachers get a chance for a more complex approach toward the work and with that, more quality education.

In the classrooms, individualized curriculums can actually provide a miniature model of the democratic relationships embedding:

- Positive changes in attitudes within schools towards diversity,

- Educating all children together and leading to greater social cohesion,
- Deconstruction of stigma of disability,
- Development of friendly peer-relations,
- Development of peer-cooperation,
- Obtaining the classroom focus on the social process, not the achievement *per se*.

As far as inclusive education is concerned, there are numerous benefits for students with special educational needs (Hansen, 2012). For example, some of them are:

- Gives a sense of belonging
- Increased social interactions, relationships and networks
- Greater access to general curriculum
- Warm and caring friendships
- Involves in identity as a marker of community
- Development of personal principles
- High degree of autonomy and independence.

Benefits of inclusion for their peers:

- Development of respect for others with diverse characteristics
- Development of sensitivity toward owns' limitations
- Increase in abilities to help others
- Development of capacity for empathy.

Benefits of inclusion for adults and teachers:

- Helps adults appreciate the diversity of society
- Helps adults recognize fully all students with strengths
- Creates an awareness of the importance of direct individualized attention
- Teaches collaborative problem-solving skills
- Develops teamwork skills
- Acquire different ways of perceiving challenges as a result of being part of a multi-disciplinary team.

Benefits of inclusion for the communities:

- Promotes the civil rights of all individuals
- Supports the social value of all individuals
- Teaches socialization and collaborative skills
- Prevents emergence of negative social behaviors

CONSLUSION

Following the example of the other countries worldwide, the FYR of Macedonia introduced inclusion of children with special educational needs in the mainstream educational process. The starting point of the educational process is that the right of education is a right for all the children including the ones with special educational needs. In the preparation of the curriculum it is considered the way of their education, through which all their capabilities would be supported. The prerequisites of individualized curriculum within inclusive education, are teachers who have confidence in their ability, knowledge, and skills. Therefore, preservice teacher education has a responsibility to both the teachers and their students, to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared for the task of educating all students within the regular education classrooms.

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WHAT IS KINDERGARTEN FOR? THE PURPOSE OF EARLY EDUCATION PERCIEVED BY PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

Abstract

Quality of early education is a two-dimensional concept, and it refers to structural quality and process quality. While the structural quality is concerned about materials and organization of activities, daily routines, adult – child ratio, and life-long learning of preschool teachers, the process quality puts an emphasis on adult-child interaction, peer interaction, and program orientation of early education. To find out which dimension is more desirable for preschoolers and their parents, absurvey was conducted among preschool children and their parents in Osijek-Baranya county. Overall 37 preschool children (17 boys and 20 girls, average age 6 years) and 37 parents (35 mothers, and 2 fathers, average age 35 years) participated: children were interviewed, and parents were given questionnaires. Qualitative analysis revealed the presence of discrepancies between preschoolers and their parents, i.e. adults are mostly oriented towards structural dimension, especially routines such as feeding, sleeping, safety etc., and preschoolers are focused on processes, especially peer interaction. When parents assess processes in preschool, they are more concerned about adult-child interaction and relationship with preschool teachers, followed by peer-interaction. Quite the opposite from their parents, children are oriented toward peer interaction, and they perceive relationships with adults as form of control and outside regulation, and less important for them. This indicates that preschool teachers are in-between these perceptions and expectations, suggesting that the quality of early education has many standpoints from which it can be observed.

Key words: quality of early education, parental expectations, adults-children relationships, peer interaction, preschool teachers' roles

INTRODUCTION

Although present over 4 decades, preschool education and kindergartens still draw attention of scholars and practitioners, when it comes to its purpose. When speaking about preschool education and its main purpose, Bahle (2009) argues that its main goal is primarily oriented towards the needs of parents, as a support service during everyday life, especially work. Due to its orientation towards parents, preschool education is seen as a question of quality of family life in generally, and less as a question of a right of children, or as a question of quality of education.

When it comes to quality in education, it is often scrutinized within two main dimensions: (1) processes i.e. interaction and activities, especially learning and teaching, and (2) structure, i.e. number of enrolled children, adult-child ratio, program structure, formal level of education of preschool teachers, and materials (Espinoza, 2002; Mashburn i Pianta, 2007). The question is, which dimension has more significance for quality of experience of children? To answer this question, Mashburn and Pianta (2007) conducted a survey and found out that there are differences between parents' and preschool teachers' perceptions of quality of early education: preschool teachers interpret quality in terms of curriculum and organization (time schedules, materials, space and furniture, and overall quality of pedagogical environment), while parents interpreted quality merely as the location of kindergarten (whereas is kindergarten in the nearby of their home or work place), and flexible opening hours. The general conclusion of these authors is that quality has different indicators, varying from perspectives. Similarly, Pramling Samuelsson and Pramling (2008) found that perception of early education quality is indeed under the influence of a particular perspective. For instance, parents are oriented towards learning, while the role of play is vague to them, and preschool teachers are more oriented towards play and its pedagogical potentials for learning (ibid.). However, Olson and Hyson (2005), stress that parents' perceptions and expectations depend on the leading significant life circumstances of the particular family. I.e. there is no unique model of family support, and preschool teachers should be prepared for various expectations from parents. Researching parental expectations, Somer, Pramling Samuelsson and Hundeide (2010) found that parents of three-year old's expect that preschool teachers teach their children autonomy, and to support them during self-regulation. This suggests that parents are aware of the long term benefits of early education. Due to this expectation, parents wish for high-quality kindergartens, where preschool teachers can meet their children's needs.

As far as childrens expectations are concerned, there is absence of continuous research with young children. However, some authors (Moss and Petrie, 2002; Cunningam et al., 2004; Alanen, Brooker and Mayall, 2015) have researched children's expectations and perspectives. For instance, Cunningham et al. (2004) has interviewed three and four-years olds, and found out that children expect more time for play and exploration activities, and freedom to choose partners for these activities. Similarly, Alanen, Brooker and Mayall (2015) found children wished less adult control over them, which adults interpret as care for children. These findings

suggest a dual nature of expectations when it comes to parents and children. Children's perspective is oriented towards non-structured activities such as play, exploration of immediate surrounding, and freedom to organize activities (especially play) in accordance to their own wishes, and not in accordance to a time schedule in classrooms. In that context, preschool teachers should practice non-directive involvement. However, parents expect a higher level of structure in learning, suggesting that preschool teachers should be involved in a more directive manner. From their point of view, it is a prerequisite of long-term benefits of early education. So, how should preschool teachers should structure their practice – should they be oriented more towards children's expectations or towards parents' expectations? The answer is given by Moss and Petrie (2002), who explain that kindergartens are spaces, not places or services for children. As they state, services are providing fragmented activities due to limited resources (time and materials), so activities in services are mostly directed into a small number of aspects of everyday life such as teaching self-service and learning specific every-day skills. Children's spaces, as Moss and Petrie (2002) vividly describe, are environments in which children construct interpersonal relations (social space), crate values and culture (cultural space), and exchange perspectives (discursive space). In children's spaces, the emphasis is on reciprocal actions of children, and therefore preschool teachers and parents should support children efforts to actively participate in classrooms.

Findings in literature suggest that the perception of early education quality depends on personal experiences, expectations, needs and one's interpretations of indicators of quality. Since expectations and perspectives of children and adults are different, and in accordance to preschool teachers' positions of "in-betweeners", it is important to find out more about dimensions of early education quality from the perspective of adults and children.

METHODS

Participants

Overall 37 parents and 37 preschool children participated (17 boys and 20 girls). In average, parents were 35 years old (min=27; max=44), and children were 6-years-olds (min=4; max=7). Children were interviewed, for which parents gave written permission. As far as the formal level of parents' education is concerned, 65% had high school diplomas, 8,1% bachelor degree and 27% master degree. There were 30% of unemployed parents, 16% parents had part-time jobs, and 54% had full-time jobs. Both, rural and urban areas were included in this survey: 54% parents were living in rural areas, and 46% parent were living in urban areas.

Instrument

Parents were given a questionnaire which consisted of three parts: socio-demographic data, parental perception of purpose of kindergartens, and parental assessments of cooperation with preschool teachers. The Cronbach alpha for the questionnaire was .70. Children were interviewed with a structured interview. Their answers were recorded and later coded.

The goal of survey

The goal of this survey was to get an insight into views of parents and children regarding kindergarten. The main purpose was to find out whether there are differences in expectations of parents and children.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Parental perceptions of purpose of kindergartens

Parents suggest that the main reason for enrolling their children in early education is full time employment of both parents (21.6%), socialization (27%), and provision for school (10.8%). It is interesting, when talking about socialization, parents explain and describe particular behaviors such as independence during meals, toilette-training, etc., not as peer interaction. It looks like they don't see socialization as a process of constructing relationships with others, yet merely as self-independence for everyday (biological) living.

Parents stress the learning as the main purpose of kindergarten (48.6%), following by protection and safeguarding of children (29.7%), and fun (21.6%). This suggest that parents are dominantly oriented towards educational aspect of kindergartens.

Next, parents were given several statements about kindergarten, and parents were assessing their level of agreement in a 6-point Likert scale (1=fully don't agree; 2=mostly don't agree; 3=partially don't agree; 4=partially agree; 5=mostly agree; 6=fully agree). There was not a neutral value, so parents had to take either more positive or more negative orientation.

Table 1. Parent's assessments about kindergartens

Statement	%					
	Fully disagree					Fully agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6
When it comes to kindergarten, the most important thing is to keep my child at safe place, and well protected.	-	-	2.7	2.7	2.7	**91.9**
When I come to kindergarten, I want to know if my child had its meal and sleep.	5.4	5.4	5.4	21.6	29.7	**32.4**
I want to know everything that happens to my child in kindergarten.	-	2.7	2.7	24.3	21.6	**48.6**
When my child mentions friends from kindergarten, I know these children.	-	2.7	21.6	18.9	**29.7**	27.0
I know other parents and I am in contact with them.	2.7	5.4	16.2	**54.1**	16.2	5.4
I know how preschool teachers work and I know their competences.	2.7	5.4	13.5	**35.1.**	24.3	18.9
I understand how kindergarten is organized and how it functions.	-	-	-	13.5	29.7	**56.8**
I know the themes and activities in which my child participate daily.	-	-	8.1	18.9	21.6	**51.4**
The information about my child provided by preschool teacher on my way out from kindergarten is sufficient.	-	2.7	16.2	10.8	**37.8**	32.4
Relationship between my child and preschool teacher is more important than its relationship with peers.	5.4.	10.8	**35.1**	29.7	13.5	5.4

Parents' assessments suggested that parents prefer safety, followed by pedagogical activities and quality of relationships with adults and peers. In most cases parents know and understand how kindergarten is organized and how it functions. Also, they see relationships with adults as more important than the quality of peer interaction. This suggests that parents perceive kindergarten as safe place built upon trust between parents and preschool teachers.

Further, parents assessed their personal involvement in the kindergarten activities and processes.

Table 2. Parental assessment of own involvement in kindergarten

Statement	%		
	Each day	Sometimes	Rarely, almost never
I talk with my child about kindergarten activities and experiences.	**91.9**	8.1	-
I follow pedagogical activities in the classroom.	24.3	**59.5**	16.2
I talk with preschool teacher about my child.	32.4	**67.6**	-
I exchange ideas and experiences with preschool teacher.	21.6	**56.8**	21.6

As parents suggest, they talk with their children about kindergarten activities and experiences on a daily basis. Also, they follow pedagogical activities, talk to preschool teachers about their children, and exchange ideas and experiences from time to time. Interestingly, 21.6% of parents rarely, almost never, exchange ideas and experiences, and 16.2% of parents claim they almost never follow pedagogical activities in classroom. It means that some parents don't feel the need to construct a dialogue with preschool teachers and don't need to be more involved into their children's social life, making it more difficult for preschool teacher to establish partnership with parents.

As far as extra-curricular activities are concerned, a majority of parents don't have the needs for additional services in kindergarten (46%). Yet, some parents expressed the need for workshops for positive parenting (16.2%), additional processional support from a speech therapist, special education teacher and psychologist (5.4%), and 32.4% of parents would like free-of-charge sports activities (which in Croatia parents usually pay around 15 euros/month). Although parents were given an opportunity to express their own views and needs regarding additional support and activities in kindergarten, they were focused on expenses. It looks like kindergarten service is still too expensive for them, reflecting a low economic status of families in Croatia. In that context, parents were asked to answer about their obligations towards kindergarten and preschool teachers. Parents see their obligations mostly as financial, i.e regular payment for service, and least as involvement in educational activities in kindergarten.

Children's perception of purpose of kindergartens

Children were interviewed during April 2016. The questions were divided into three categories: emotional experiences of kindergarten, perspectives on activities in kindergarten, and perspectives on interpersonal relations in classrooms.

As far as the emotional context of kindergarten is concerned, children are pleased with kindergarten, and all of them like to go to the kindergarten. The reasons

why they like to go to the kindergarten are: fun and play (43.2%), positive emotional relationships with peers (24.3%), sense of welcome in classroom and good relationship with preschool teachers (18.9%), and toys and other didactic materials in classrooms (13.5%). Children's responses suggest that they are oriented towards the processual dimension of quality, i.e. activities and emotional relationships with others.

When asked about preferred activities in classrooms, children particularly like physical activities (outdoors and indoors), building blocks and construction games (Lego), and symbolic play with peers. Interestingly, whenever they described the type of activity, they said the names of the other involved players, i.e. with whom they play. It could be said that children are sharing the activities, rather than solely conducting activities.

When asked about dislikes in kindergarten, children don't like conflicts and exclusion (13.5%), academic activities such as (pre)reading and (pre)writing exercises (18.9%), tiding up classroom after play (8.1%), and afternoon nap (13.5%).

Also, children were asked to describe the preschool teachers' main task in classroom. According to children, preschool teachers' obligations are: helping and assisting children during the peer interaction (43.2%), caring and safeguarding (21.6%), teaching (13.5%), monitoring and regulation of children's behaviors (13.5%). As it can be seen, a majority of children perceive preschool teachers as assistants and helpers during the peer interaction, suggesting that children trust their teachers, and rely on them.

At the end, children were given an opportunity to recommend to their teachers what to do more often. Answers were: be involved more often in children play (62.1%), to teach something new and to conduct experiments together with children (21.6%), to buy some new toys and games (8.1%), and to get some rest or to go on vacation (8.1%). The most desirable activity is involvement in play, which is in Croatia rarely possible due to inadequate adult-child ratio, and classroom routines based upon traditional curriculum. Although the National curriculum for early and preschool education (MZO, 2014) emphasizes the need for experimental learning in the classroom, and self-actualization of children as long-term outcome, the politics at the local levels are preventing such goals with low material investments. Thus, policy makers and stakeholders at the local levels should reconsider their responsibilities and competencies when it comes to early and preschool education.

CONCLUSION

The qualitative analysis revealed some differences in perception of purpose of kindergartens perceived by parents and their children. Parents see kindergartens as places of protection and safeguarding, and less as place where peer relationships are constructed. Opposite of that, children perceive kindergartens as places where

peer interaction is constructed, and as places of fun and play. Basically, children don't care much about routines such as feeding and sleep, they even dislike like them. It is understandable due to social roles defined by biological processes, i.e. adults' care for children is pillar for child's well-being. The younger the child is, the routine care activities are more present.

Results showed that children and parents differ in the perception of the purpose of kindergartens. Parents are oriented towards care and routines, which belongs to the structural dimension of educational quality. On the other hand, children are oriented towards peer interaction, which belongs to the processual dimension of quality of early education. These findings indicate the presence of preschool teachers' multidimensional actions: they have to balance between social and individual expectations, which sometimes can be very demanding and stressful. The key to achieve both, and to fulfill these expectations as much as possible, is preschool teachers' continuous reflection and self-reflection upon relations between their own practice and their own expectations. I.e. preschool teachers are key to the quality of early education, regardless of formal organization and material condition of a particular classroom.

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From Preface

Education in agendas, politics and policies at a global level, has been recognized as both a, civil and human right. At this point, there are a vast amount of documents supporting this claim, yet a recent declaration on education, specifically *Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all* explicitly suggests that "education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights" (UNESCO, 2015, iii). In that **context, education is a right** *per se*, and pillar for other rights in regards to one's well-being. This dual nature in educational rights sometimes leads to misinterpretations, indicating the need for interdisciplinary research which could contribute to emerging social dialogues between individuals (parents, children, teachers etc.) and societal structures, especially politics and law. Therefore, in the last 10 to 15 years, scholars have increasingly shown interest for research in the educational arena, with emphasis on the children's **perspective, concluding that children's rights in an educational setting are** question of quality of life, not just of particular child, but quality of life of its family, and society in general. In the heart of the educational arena are, children and teachers, which make their interpersonal relationships fundamental quality issues. Relationships with peers, teacher and children interaction, relationship between teachers as co-workers, and quality of partnership with parents and local communities are contexts in which **children rights come to life, i.e. education is a real-life context in which** children can exercise their rights. To contribute to this issue, Faculty of Education in Osijek and Ombudsman for Children Croatia have prepared a monograph "Children's rights in Educational Settings".

Editors