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Attitudes Towards Disabled People from Ancient to the Present Times and inclusive education system in Poland

Postawy wobec osób niepełnosprawnych od starożytności do współczesności i integracyjny system edukacji w Polsce

Summary: The main objective of this paper is to present the changes which have taken place in people's attitudes towards the disabled from ancient to the present times. In this paper, I will present the past knowledge and representations of disability that have been fossilized in myths, literature, theatre, folklore, biography, and history. Changes in attitudes towards disabled people will be presented in four groups: attitudes of discrimination and extermination, attitudes of isolation, attitudes of segregation, and attitudes of integration. The last part of the paper will be devoted to the discussion about equal opportunities and the need for the integration of disabled and non-disabled pupils at school.
Keywords: attitudes, disability, discrimination, isolation, segregation, integration

Streszczenie: Głównym celem artykułu jest przedstawienie zmian, jakie zaszły w stosunku do osób z niepełnosprawnościami od starożytności do współczesności. W niniejszym artykule przedstawione zostaną dotychczasowa wiedza i reprezentacje niepełnosprawności, które zostały utrwalone w mitach, literaturze, teatrze, folklorze, biografii i historii. Zmiany postaw wobec osób niepełnosprawnych zostaną zaprezentowane w czterech grupach: postawy dyskryminacji i eksterminacji, postawy izolacji, postawy segregacyjne, postawy integracyjne. Ostatnia część referatu zostanie poświęcona dyskusji o równych szansach i potrzebie integracji uczniów z niepełnosprawnościami i uczniów pełnosprawnych w szkole.
Słowa kluczowe: postawy, niepełnosprawność, dyskryminacja, izolacja, segregacja, integracja

Introduction

The history of attitudes towards disabled people is as old as human beings. Attitudes towards the disabled have been changed from ancient times to the present times - from discrimination and extermination to the integration of disabled ones. Having a clear understanding of where thinking about disability has come from is important to see that underlying negative attitudes and stereotypes have been reinforced by society and religion over many centuries. It is also important to understanding which factors have shaped the prevailing attitudes of Western society today. Before I describe that issue I'll try to explain basic terms such as attitude and disability.

1. Attitudes: their dimensions and factors which are forming attitudes

The term attitude is widely considered in social psychology and sociology. The researches devoted to this issue are conducting from the early 30 of XX century. The term attitude can be defined in many ways for example Attitudes are associations between attitude objects (virtually any aspect

of the social world) and evaluations of those objects)[1] or a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner concerning a given object[2] or an attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related[3]. Polish researcher Bogdan Wojciszke defined the term attitude as a constant tendency to positive or negative disposition to the other people or objects (ideas, things, and events)[4]. This disposition could have been some kind of emotion or some kind of evaluation of attitude's object. Description someone's attitude towards some object needs to put beholder of attitude on the continuum from extremely negative (total rejection of object) to extremely positive attitude (total acceptance of object)[5].

Every attitude has some basic properties such as mark (positive or negative) and intensity (larger or smaller). Other properties are validity, function, scope, and complexity[6]. The greatest part of researches devoted to attitudes characteristic is based on attitude's mark and intensity. Attitudes can be also considered concerning their factorial structure. In connection with the structural definition of attitude distinguishes three components of attitude. Affective component (emotional), behavioral component, and cognitive component. The affective component is based on emotions such as liking or disliking somebody or something, the behavioral component is based on positive or negative behaviors toward the object of attitude

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[1]   I. Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality, and Behavior*, Berkshire 2005, s. 33.

[2]   R. Fazio, *How do the attitudes guide behavior*? W H*andbook of motivation and cognition: Foundations of social behavior*, red. R.M. Sorrentiono, E.T. Higgins, New York 1986, s. 204-243.

[3]   I. Ajzen, M. Fishbein, *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*, New York, 1980, s. 21.

[4]   B. Wojciszke, *Człowiek wśród ludzi. Zarys psychologii społecznej*, Warszawa 2006, s. 79.

[5]   Ibidem.

[6]   T. Mądrzycki, *Psychologiczne prawidłowości kształtowania się postaw*, Warszawa 1977, s.122.

and the cognitive component is based on beliefs and knowledge about the object[7].

The main mechanisms for the formation of attitudes are connected with the tripartite definition of attitudes. The main mechanisms for the formation of attitudes are the acquisition of beliefs about the properties of an object, emotional experiences associated with the object, and our behavior directed at the object.

On the other hand, attitudes can be acquired through social learning, social comparison, and genetic formation- although this idea has got many opponents. Attitudes can be learned. The main mechanism in which we can learn attitudes are classical conditioning, instrumental conditioning, and modeling (observational learning)[8].

2. Disability

As the World Health Organization said disability is a consequence of an impairment. It could be various from physical, organic, mental, emotional to the combination of these. A disability may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime. Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus, disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives[9].

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[7]   Ibidem.

[8]   B. Wojciszke, *Człowiek wśród ludzi. Zarys psychologii społecznej*, Warszawa 2006, s. 79.

[9]   https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability#tab=tab_1 [dostęp: 19.07.2021].

3. History of attitudes towards disabled people

Now when I presented the key findings of terminology related to attitudes and disabilities I can go to discuss the history of attitudes towards the disabled. Attitudes towards disabled people will be presented in four groups: attitudes of discrimination and extermination, attitudes of isolation, attitudes of segregation, and attitudes of integration[10].

Attitudes towards the disabled have been changed with the development of civilization. The attitudes have been shaped by the prevailing at a given stage of historical, philosophical, and social views, religious beliefs, values systems and habits, and customs. Traditionally, in many cultures around the world, people with physical, sensory, or mental impairments were thought of as under the spell of witchcraft, possessed by demons, or they were believed to be sinners, being punished by God for evil- doing by themselves or their parents. According to the views attributed to the Amenemopet (ancient Egyptian prince in XII-XI century BC), people with disabilities- particularly blind and with paralysis of limbs- were the favorites of the gods, and were under their special care. An insult to the disabled person threatened punishment from the gods, who took over the care of the disabled. Special recognition at the court of Egyptian pharaohs enjoyed dwarfs. They were treading with the highest confidence and giving to high offices, honor, and recognition. In ancient Egypt also believed that the deaf is gifted by gods. The ability to speak was taken by gods to prevent them from sinning with words. The deaf were widely respected and revered. Children who were showing other impairments were thrown into the Nile. According to the common belief that anyone who did not know how to read and swim was not a man, so did not deserve to live. In Mesopotamia, according to sources from the pre-5000 years ago, the birth of a disabled child was treated as

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[10]   Y. Hutzler, S. Meier, S. Reuker, M. Zitomer, *Attitudes and self-efficacy of physical education teachers toward inclusion of children disabilities: a narrative review of inter-national literature*, „Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy" 2019, nr 24(3), s. 249-266.

a harbinger of certain misfortunes. People with disabilities could therefore be the envoys of the gods, and as such was surrounded them respect. At the same time, self-mutilation was a common penalty for the offense which had been made (eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth)[11].

In ancient Sparta (circa 900 BC) every newborn child was displayed to the elders' council who judged whether it is healthy or sick. Babies who were considered sick, thrown from the rock Taygetos, because it was thought that they will not be able to contribute neither to defend nor to the development of the state. In Athens, according to the laws of Solon (594 years BC) all people, regardless of origin, were considered equal. The principle of equality was not concerned with the disabled (both physically disabled and the mentally ill), because they were not able to perform military service, and for this reason, they were not useful to the defense of the state. Children with birth defects were doomed to death and starved. Even so respected medical authorities as Asclepius or Hippocrates considered that the hopeless cases (crippled and old people) should have not benefited from medical care. Disability was then understood as a punishment from the gods for offenses committed against them. The person with a disability should seek to propitiate god and his guilt. A similar attitude to people with disabilities was in ancient Rome. Even Seneca believed that it was not anger but common sense which dictates separation (killing) of what is useless, from what is healthy (society). Persons with disabilities whose appearance or behavior may give others cheerfulness were shown as jesters or sold in the slave. Also, members of the Germanic tribes mostly abandoned or killed (drowned) children with disabilities[12].

In the Middle Ages, in the late 1400s, people within societies would ridicule people living with disabilities and viewed them

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[11]   W. Zeidler, *Niepełnosprawność. Wybrane problemy psychologiczne i ortopedagogiczne*. Gdańsk 2007, s. 18.

[12]   M. Zaorska, E. Andrulonis, *Zjawisko ludzkiej niepełnosprawności w aspekcie historycznym i współcześnie*, „Wychowanie na co dzień" 2006, nr 4-5, s. 3-8.

with deep suspicion. In Europe, it was believed that disabled people, especially the mentally ill were possessed by the devil. They were subjected to exorcisms. If that was not helpful mentally ill people were burned at the pyres. Such practices were common in almost all Europe- from Spain to northern Germany. This problem was seen very similarly in Scandinavia. Before the adoption of Christianity Scandinavians widely believed that disabled children were thrown up by trolls and other creatures from the world of mythology, in exchange for healthy human children who have been stolen. The newborns were very well guarded. Who did not watch over their offspring, exposed themselves to direct loss and trouble without end. After the conversion to Christianity, there was thought that newborn babies should be also guarded by the cross and holy water[13].

In the Middle Ages, the first orphanages appeared in Europe. At the same time also homes for the insane were settled down. The asylums functioned based on total isolation and vegetation. There was no space for any activity (work, entertainment). The most important task of such institutions was the separation of mentally disabled people from the rest of society. During the Renaissance in countries that have adopted Protestantism, the issue of childcare and mortals disabilities was entrusted to religious institutions, urban authorities and charitable associations, and individuals under the supervision of the state. The main demands of the Renaissance have become the need to promote the teaching and education of every man according to his talents and mental capabilities. Michael Foucault in his book History of Madness in the Era of Classicism described the changes in the attitude of the society. An example of changing attitudes of the society was making efforts to learn elementary knowledge and to develop basic practical skills of people with disabilities. On the other hand, those who could not be involved in the processes of productivity were convicted to isolation in primitive conditions, offending human dignity. Care of those

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[13] W. Zeidler, *Niepełnosprawność. Wybrane problemy psychologiczne i ortopedagogiczne*. Gdańsk 2007, s. 21.

people most often was taken by charitable institutions, mostly religious[14].

In the time of the Enlightenment situation of disabled people has changed mainly due to the French Revolution. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789) includes progressive principles such as the right to education and social services for every citizen. The breakthrough in the field of psychiatry has been fulfilled by a French physician Philippe Pinel. He issued a new hospital's law (1792), which commanded the release of chains mentally ill and mentally handicapped. He also pointed out that they should be treated as patients. This has started to change attitudes towards people with mental illness and the mentally ill. Pinel, along with his student Jeanne Etienne Dominique Esquirol developed new methods for the management of patients entering the first trial of therapy by working and group therapy. What is worth to said, before Pinel's method mentally ill people were treated by use of enemas and bloodletting [15].

The 19th century saw greater segregation of disabled people. The workforce had to be more physically uniform to perform routine factory operations. Disabled people were rejected. They were viewed as 'worthy poor, as opposed to work-shy 'unworthy poor', and given Poor Law Relief (a place in the Workhouse or money from public funds). Disabled people became more and more dependent on the medical profession for cures, treatments, and benefits[16].

In the last part of the 19th century, a growing number of scientists, writers, and politicians began to interpret Darwin's theories of evolution and natural selection for their interests. Their beliefs could be named eugenics. They believed that the

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[14] A. Siegień, A. Muroch, *Osoby niepełnosprawne – wczoraj, dzisiaj, jutro* w: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności*, red. E. Górniewicz, A. Krause, Olsztyn 2002, s. 299-304.

[15] W. Zeidler, *Niepełnosprawność. Wybrane problemy psychologiczne i ortopedagogiczne*. Gdańsk 2007, s. 19-20.

[16] G. Maio, G. Haddock, *The Psychology of Attitudes and Attitude Change*. Sage Publiactions 2009, s. 84.

only way to improve the quality of the human race is selective breeding. They claimed that people with impairments, disabled, chronically ill would weaken the gene pool of the nation and reduce competitiveness[17].

Increasingly, disabled people have shut away for life in single-sex institutions. What is more, disabled people were sterilized and they had not any right to settle down and raise their own families. Separate special schools and day centers were set up that denied disabled and non-disabled people the day-to-day experience of living and growing up together. That kind of attitude toward the disabled was explained by false doctrine. Mary Dendy, an active eugenicist campaigner in the 1890s, in Feeble Mindedness of Children of School Age, asserted that children classified as mentally handicapped should be detained for the whole of their lives. This led to a Royal Commission on Mental Deficiency, which was taken over by eugenicist thinking. These theories became very influential at a time when industrialized countries, for example, Germany, France, Britain, and the USA were competing to create empires. It was important to empire builders to feel superior to other races. An International Congress in Milan, in 1881, outlawed Sign language, as it was feared that deaf people would outbreed hearing people[18].

In the first half of the XX century, eugenicist ideas, along with charitable initiatives, led to increased institutionalization or sterilization of disabled people. 50000 children with communication and physical impairments and more than 500000 adults were incarcerated in institutions in the first half of the 20th century (many were released in the 1980s). Children with significant learning difficulties were deemed uneducable

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[17] A. Siegień, A. Muroch, *Osoby niepełnosprawne – wczoraj, dzisiaj, jutro* w: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności*, red. E. Górniewicz, A. Krause, Olsztyn 2002, s. 299-304.

[18] G. Maio, G. Haddock, *The Psychology of Attitudes and Attitude Change*. Sage Publiactions 2009, s. 84.

and those with less significant learning difficulty went to educationally sub-normal schools until 1973[19].

In Germany, during Hitler's Third Reich, the policy of eugenics was reached peaks. 140000 physically and mentally disabled adults were murdered in 1939-40 at the hands of the doctors of the Third Reich. The killing of adults was reduced by riots in Germany, led by Archbishop Galen of Munich in 1940, but continued more clandestinely. The killing of disabled children went on until 1945, with over 100,000 dying. These programs were led from Tiergarten, 4, Berlin and so were known as T4. The Nazis carried out the sterilization of hundreds of thousands of people supposed to be loaded hereditary. As a socially useless also determined the mentally disabled, prostitutes, criminals, and people helpless in life. Forced sterilization was only a prelude to other crimes. In 1939, Hitler issued a letter in which he indicated that patients have the "mercy of death." One of the first victims of this program were patients and staff in psychiatric hospitals in Poland occupied during World War II by the Third Reich[20].

From the 1890s, disabled people have struggled for their rights, for human dignity and just to be included. In the 1920s and 1930s, there were hundreds of thousands of First World War veterans with no rights at all in the UK, campaigning for the 'Right to Work' through the National League for the Blind and Disabled. Their merit was the establishment of the first disability movement in the UK through which disabled people organized collectively against discrimination. In the 1920s, unions of disabled war veterans were formed all over the UK. They held strikes to get legislation enacted to ensure their right to employment. As a result, the government brought in a 3% quota system which forced employers to take on registered-disabled

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[19] M. Chodkowska, *Kulturowe uwarunkowania postaw wobec inwalidztwa oraz osób niepełnosprawnych* w: *Człowiek niepełnosprawny,* red. M. Chodkowska, Lublin 1994, s. 111-126.

[20] A. Siegień, A. Muroch, *Osoby niepełnosprawne – wczoraj, dzisiaj, jutro* w: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności*, red. E. Górniewicz, A. Krause, Olsztyn 2002, s. 299-304.

employees. This was replaced by the Disability Discrimination Act in 1996[21].

In the 1990s, disabled activists in the USA campaigned against euthanasia and assisted suicide under the slogan 'T4 Never Again". The last 30 years have seen the growth of the Disability Movement, arguing for an end to segregation, and many parents campaigning for human rights for their disabled children and full integration of disabled children with their healthy peers[22].

Disabled people are still struggling for the right to use public transport, get into buildings, go to school or college with their friends, or get a job. Although civil rights legislation has helped, disabled people still often feel that the dominant culture sees them as different from everyone else because of persisting stereotypes of disability. Anyone can, at any time, become disabled, or develop a physical or mental impairment. Perhaps people's need to distance themselves from this harsh reality makes it convenient to rely on received negative attitudes and historical stereotypes of disability. These stereotypical images are less troubling than accepting the individuality, the joy, the pain, the appearance, behavior, and the rights of disabled people. What disabled people want more than anything else is to be accepted for who they are and to have their rights guaranteed not only in law but also in practice[23] .

Integration- Specifics of Polish integrated education

The term "integration" comes from Latin and means to create a whole from pieces. The concept of integration is the key to the problems of the common existence of able-bodied and disabled people. According to the dictionary definition, integration is

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[21]   G. Maio, G. Haddock, *The Psychology of Attitudes and Attitude Change*. Sage Publiactions 2009, s. 92.

[22]   W. Zeidler, *Niepełnosprawność. Wybrane problemy psychologiczne i ortopedagogiczne*. Gdańsk 2007, s. 25-26.

[23]   M. Westbrook, V. Legge, Pennay, M., *Attitudes Towards Disabilities in a Muliticultural Society*, „Social Science & Medicine"1993, nr 36(5), s. 615-623.

the process of integration, the formation of the whole portion of fine particles, scale[24]. As Anna Nowak said „integration is the next stage of contact of persons with disabilities"[25]. Integration in a broad sense is expressed in such a mutual relationship between disabled with and people without disabilities. In this relationship, they respect the same rights. Integration is also the process of creating identical conditions for a maximum of comprehensive development. In polish pedagogy, integration means the ability to participate in education, fun, and all school activities for disabled children and their healthy peers[26].

According to Agnieszka Sakowicz - Boboryko integration is an expression of belief in the equality of rights for all people. It is assumed subjective treatment of a disabled person, and therefore not only focus on his shortcomings and deficiencies but based on what a disabled person can, on his or her skills to create the opportunities to achieve success in life[27]. Aleksander Hulek, a leader of the Polish special pedagogy, described integration as expressed in such mutual respect for people with and without disabilities. In the process of integration are represented the same rights and the same conditions which are designed for both groups identical to the maximum, all-round development. The integration allows disabled people to be themselves among others. Integration in this sense can be applied to all forms of life of the individual with a disability- family life, education and training, work, leisure, social activities, etc.[28].

4. The inclusive education system in Poland

In Poland, integrated education is also named inclusive education. Inclusive education is a process of teaching and

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[24] *Popularny słownik języka polskiego PWM,* Warszawa 2002, s. 280.

[25] A. Nowak, *Wybrane edukacyjne i prawne aspekty niepełnosprawności*, Kraków 1999, s. 56.

[26] M. Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek, M. Karczewska, *Integracja uczniów z dysfunkcją słuchu z młodzieżą słyszącą*, w: *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w ekosystemie*, red. W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek, Kielce 2005, s. 125-130.

[27] A. Sakowicz-Boboryko*, Integracja dla wszystkich*, „Test" 1996, nr 1, s. 13-15.

[28] A. Hulek, *Uczeń niepełnosprawny w szkole masowej*, Kraków 1992, s. 59.

bringing up children and youth with disabilities in common education. In this process, pupils have got wide support in rising their growth. Integrated education is at the maximum turn children and youth with disabilities to participate in the life of society. In Europe in the '60s, and Poland in the '90s integration was established in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools[29].

In Poland in 2003-2006 remains the constant trend was an increase in the number of children and young people in schools at the level of primary education and basic education while decreasing the number of pupils in special schools. The number of disabled children in kindergartens amounted to 1-1.4% of the total number of children in the kindergartens, and students with disabilities in schools carried 2.9-3.2% of all pupils. In Poland, there are three forms of inclusive education: public schools, integration, and special schools. Inclusive education includes kindergartens, elementary schools, junior high schools, vocational schools, secondary schools, and technical schools[30].

The integrated schools are teaching children with the following disabilities: blind, partially sighted, deaf, hard of hearing, of mental retardation in the mild rate, the chronically ill, with mental disorders, physically disabled, aphasia, with autism and Asperger's Syndrome. Most students with these disabilities attend the inclusive schools at the level of primary education, their number gradually decreases at the secondary school level[31].

The purpose of integration is to enable students with disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in line with their capabilities in terms of school. Regulation No 29 of the Minister of National Education of 4 October 1993 paragraph

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[29]   G. Szumski*, Integracyjne kształcenie niepełnosprawnych*, Warszawa 2020, s. 15.

[30]   Ibidem.

[31]   M. Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek, M. Karczewska, *Integracja uczniów z dysfunkcją słuchu z młodzieżą słyszącą*, w: *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w ekosystemie*, red. W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek, Kielce 2005, s. 125-130.

10 of section 3[32] specifies the number of students in the ward integration. It should be between 15 and 20 pupils, including from 3 to 5 students with disabilities. The Regulation authorizes the Superintendent of Schools in particularly justified cases, to reduce the number of students in the department of integrated classes in an elementary school and integrated schools[33]. Thoese issues are also regulated by Ordinance of the Minister of Natiolan Education of 9 August 2017 on the principles of organization and provision of psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions. In this ordinance are the principles of supporting the development and education of children with special educational needs are indicated[34].

These institutions are not special schools. Integration schools and kindergartens are based on their program approved by the Board of Education. This program should include the organization and substantive concept of working with children. The important role of integration classes meets adequate teaching staff. In these institutions may be additionally employed teachers with special pedagogical training. A special role is played by the teachers called "teacher who gives support", who assist main teachers in the selection of content and methods of working with students with disabilities. Supported teachers also conduct or organize various forms of assistance, both pedagogical and psychological, and revalidation activities and rehabilitation. Both teachers share the responsibility for the progress and learning outcomes of all students. They also collaborate in the planning of the learning process, tailored to the individual needs of each child: social, emotional, and cognitive[35].

The key challenges to the reformed system of integrated education include striving for the universality of education and

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[32]   https://sip.lex.pl/akty-prawne/dzienniki-resortowe/zasady-organizowania-opieki-nad -uczniami-niepelnosprawnymi-ich-33631650 (ostatni dostęo: 21.07.21)

[33]   G. Szumski, *Integracyjne kształcenie niepełnosprawnych*, Warszawa 2020, s. 15.

[34]   https://prawo.vulcan.edu.pl/przegdok.asp?qdatprz=akt&qplikid=4384 [dostęp: 21.07.21].

[35]   M. Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek, M. Karczewska, *Integracja uczniów z dysfunkcją słuchu z młodzieżą słyszącą*, w: *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w ekosystemie*, red. W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek, Kielce 2005, s. 125-130.

the availability of school buildings and educational institutions for all students, free use of facilities and equipment. The system should also be open. The primary postulate is to be satisfying the educational needs of children. The implementation of the education should be adapted to the pace of development of the child. Emphasis is also placed on the early identification of problems and to support the development of a child by an organized psycho- pedagogical activity. The curriculum should be adapted to the individual needs of the child, in addition to theoretical knowledge should also include guidelines for the acquisition of personal resourcefulness and social skills. Teaching methods should be tailored to the needs of children with particular emphasis on active teaching methods. The education of children with special educational needs to be made in preparation for independent living including the outplacement adapted to the requirements of the labor market. The system aims to provide a fair and speedy case-positive diagnosis: focusing on the child's strengths, indicating its potential for development. The aim is also to create an openness and work in partnership with the child's parents[36].

According to Janina Wyczesany and Agnieszka Kukułka goal of inclusive education is to prevent separatist tendencies, segregation, isolation, discrimination of persons with disabilities. Developing positive social-emotional bonds between non-disabled and disabled peers creates the right conditions for the existence of an ideological community (systems, values, norms) and common interests in solving the problems posed by life. The ultimate goal, whether it's inclusive education and integration in general is to enable people with disabilities to lead a normal life, under such conditions as the rest of society[37]. According to Beata Mendry, the fundamental objectives of the integration are to allow disabled people to lead a normal life, provide access to

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[36]   A. Maciarz, *Z teorii i badań społecznej integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, Kraków 1999, s. 86.

[37]   J. Wyczesany, A. Kukułka, *Idea integracji w nowych strukturach edukacyjnych - szanse i zagrożenia*, w: *Dylematy pedagogiki specjalnej*, red. A. Rajewska, J. Baran, Kraków 2000, s. 88-102.

all levels of education and make full use of the cultural values and forms of active recreation[38].

According to Jadwiga Bogucka, an inclusive education system to be effective must be based on several principles. The first of these principles is the humanization of education. Under the concept of the humanization of education, the author understands the respect for differences and individuality of each child. It is also important in working with a child to keep in mind that education and learning are not a kind of training. It serves as a helper in the development process. This means that teaching and educating not trying to influence the pupil in such a way that resembled the pattern chosen in advance or that the whole process proceeded according to a rigid scheme, which involves the acquisition of such conduct and no other result. Work with the child is to be a support for the development of him or her. This development has to take place with full respect for their needs, interests. The role of the school is to help the child in shaping their individuality and not hammering it in a rigid schema. Humanizing education simply means the fullest possible understanding of the desires and aspirations of the child and encourages him to develop assistance in meeting these needs. The next principle to achieve effective integration is to make changes in the methods and way of teaching. This has to rely on the departure of generic forms of children's activity. Changes should be based on innovative, creative, activation of the potential of children[39].

The changes in the curriculum are also important. Jadwiga Bogucka advocates moving away from treating the curriculum as an oracle declaring the manner of teaching. She encourages us to treat the curriculum as proposals serving primarily the development of multi-activity students. The author also suggests that the achievements of children diagnosed are based primarily on qualitative research methods. A special role is here to use

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[38] B. Mendry, *Integracja – za i przeciw*, „Wszystko dla szkoły" 1998, nr 1, s. 8-9.

[39] J. Bogucka, *Uwarunkowanie procesu integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych z ich zdrowymi rówieśnikami*, „Szkoła Specjalna" 1990, nr 4, s. 110-115.

the observational method. This is reflected in "descriptive assessment." The child has to be assessed not by equating the other children but by reference to himself, comparing current performance to previous results of work of the child. It gives a guarantee to grasp and appreciate the progress of children with disabilities[40].

Inclusive schools fulfill organizational functions, revalidation, and social problems arising from the specifics of their ongoing educational activities. The organization includes the creation of appropriate conditions in institutions. Under the concept of appropriate conditions conceals both adequate teaching facilities, teaching staff, as well as the elimination of architectural barriers and organization infrastructure. Revalidation is associated with the restoration of persons with disabilities to physical, mental, and social functioning. This includes both common to all children and individualized specialized methods and means of work. The social function of inclusive schools is manifested in the creation of a social environment conducive to learning and building community among participants in the educational process[41].

The well-being of disabled children in public integration schools depends on many factors. The most important is the knowledge and commitment of teachers, who by appropriate means and methods adopted to the needs of the child, will support children in their development and education. The primary objective of inclusive education is to create the optimal conditions for the development of every child. Most disabled children benefit from inclusive education. The most important benefits are better prepared for later life in different social groups, development of a more adequate self-esteem, increase educational aspirations and life aspiration, increase motivation to achieve the maximum possibility of success in various fields

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[40]   J. Bogucka, *Uwarunkowanie procesu integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych z ich zdrowymi rówieśnikami*, „Szkoła Specjalna" 1990, nr 4, s. 110-115.

[41]   A. Maciarz, *Z teorii i badań społecznej integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, Kraków 1999, s. 88.

of life[42]. Inclusive education has also benefited healthy children who take part in it. The most significant benefits are: shaping the attitudes of tolerance and respect not only for the disabled but in general the differences also learning in natural and spontaneous assistance weaker development of positive personality traits such as sensitivity, kindness, openness to the needs of others[43].

Inclusive education is the best way to shape proper attitudes towards the disabled. Inclusive education is very helpful in giving knowledge to healthy children and adolescents with the hierarchy of values, understanding, and perception of basic human rights, according to which all are equal, all have the right to be different, to lead a normal life, learning and work[44].

To sum up, integration implies the recognition of the rights of each social group to participate fully in social life. Striving for full integration of the disabled in society is substantially linked to education. Due to inclusive education, disabled people learn how to live in society. Moreover, also people without disabilities learn how to respect other people. In addition, they know how to be helpful and fair. It is a kind of mutual exchange.

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[42]   M. Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek, M. Karczewska, *Integracja uczniów z dysfunkcją słuchu z młodzieżą słyszącą*, w: *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w ekosystemie*, red. W.Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek, Kielce 2005, s. 125-130.

[43]   Ibidem.

[44]   G. Fairbrain, S.Rairbrain, *Integracja dzieci i młodzieży o specjalnych potrzebach edukacyjnych: wybrane zagadnienia*, Warszawa 2000, s. 18.

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