

Abstracts

Introduction

Experiencing disability at school: between representations, principles and actions

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Abdeljalil Akkari, Jean-Claude Kalubi

The introduction to this issue on the experience of disability at school is based on eight contributions from countries or education systems across four continents. The article addresses the tensions and paradoxes of the school experience for pupils with disabilities. Despite significant progress, particularly in terms of legislation and regulation, various challenges remain – in the management of integration and inclusion tasks on a daily basis, in the adaptation of teaching tools and methods, and in the development and evaluation of intervention plans. The experience of disability at school varies according to the type of disability, sociocultural context and social representations. It is linked to the actual practices implemented by the school, the family or the community, and how they aim for school integration and social inclusion. It raises the issue of what measures and forms of support are required for the actors involved at grassroots level.

How to respond to the increase in students with special education needs in Japan

Aoi Nakayama

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Following the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the United Nations, a committee of the Ministry of Education advocated an inclusive education system in Japan. Nowadays children with disabilities have a choice of regular classes, instruction through both regular class and special needs class, special needs classes, or special needs schools, depending on their needs and wishes. The number of children in special needs classes and special needs schools is increasing, and this paper will discuss the background of this increase and the conditions necessary for inclusive education in Japan based on case studies from Kansai region.

Special needs students in vocational education in France

p. 71

Mélissa Arneton, Line Numa-Bocage

The situation of pupils with special educational needs in the context of the French inclusive school model remains a live social issue. This article focuses on their schooling in vocational education settings. It presents ways in which teachers working in vocational training or adapted vocational education make use of available institutional means to take into account the special needs of their pupils. Examples are drawn from the authors' practices as trainers of teacher trainers. They discuss the heuristic value of investigating disability situations from the angle of student diversity in order to accompany the transformation of professional practices.

The Teacch method and the management of autism in the Democratic Republic of Congo

p. 81

Joachim Mukau Ebwel

Children living with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in the Democratic Republic of Congo are cared for through the implementation of the Teacch method within special education institutions and in their families. This article focuses on manner in which special educators and parents have taken this method on board. It shows how teachers implement certain techniques inspired by the Teacch method to enable children with ASD to learn new behaviours. The article examines the benefits this method presents for special educators, the children themselves and parents, and highlights the difficulties of implementing it in the classroom and at home.

Hearing impairment in Canadian schools: Conditions for change

p. 91

Rosly Angrand, Jean Gabin Ntebutse, Elyse Proulx-Cullen, Céline Yon

This article discusses the changing world of disability in Canada. In particular, it presents the school experience of children living with hearing disabilities. It highlights the relevance of questioning this complex issue, as many children find themselves in a critical situation and suffer from social prejudice, interaction problems, difficulties of mutual comprehension among peers, etc. The article recalls the history hearing impairment expertise in a country where service provision has undergone a major transformation in line with other priorities in education, as well as in health and social. It provides keys to understanding the issues and challenges related to the inclusion and social participation of students. Finally, the article suggests ways of analysing the processes to support the development of pupils' skills.

On the road to inclusive schooling: the transformation of school practices in Bulgaria p. 101

Anelia Garbacheva, Christina Fidosieva

Since the early 1990s, Bulgaria has been implementing an inclusion policy at an accelerated pace. Regardless of their differences or disabilities, all pupils are affected by these major reforms. However, the implementation of such changes remains a daily challenge. This article discusses experiences with intellectually deficient students. It focuses on principles of action, presents the services offered in schools and highlights progress, as well as obstacles and challenges. Finally it considers adjustments introduced in teachers' initial and in-service training.

Training of specialised teachers to support pupils with disabilities in Italy p. 109

Anna Pileri, Roberto Dainese

Italy was the first country to create special schools and to put an end to the experiment of differentiated classes for pupils with special needs. This article looks back on key aspects of the historical and cultural journey of integration and inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Italy. In particular it considers the issue of support teachers and inclusive classroom management, which is still threatened by certain positions, representations and stereotypes in relation to complex disabilities. These aspects are discussed in the light of an analysis of the results of focus groups held as part of a research-training project. Despite the creation of specialisation courses in many universities, the recognition of the specialised support teacher is still not a given.

Schooling and disability in indigenous rural contexts in Mexico p. 119

Dalia Peña Islas

The United Nations (UN) World Report on Disability (2011) estimated that 15% of the world's population has some form of disability, and that 54 million indigenous people are in this situation. Data on indigenous people is scarce, simply because few countries have reliable statistics concerning them. In this context, this article presents research on the state of Hidalgo, Mexico, and the relation to disability that is constructed there. It presents the legislative framework, the situation in indigenous schools and special education services, as well as the experience of a teacher in an indigenous area.

Practices and prospects of inclusive special education in Zambia p. 129

Robert Serpell, Dabie Nabuzoka

This article describes the current institutional arrangements and practices of education for children with special needs (CSN) in an African country and reflects on the degree to which they address the felt needs and aspirations of children with various types of disability and their families. Three broad strategic approaches are presented: (1) specialised instruction of CSN by professionally trained educational practitioners to ameliorate or compensate for functional disabilities; (2) social inclusion of CSN in mainstream schooling; (3) community-based support for the development of CSN towards full social participation. A sample of local studies are reviewed, highlighting cases of positive impact, areas of dissatisfaction, and recommended directions of change for public policy and professional training.

Implementing inclusion for pupils with disabilities in schools: the action of civil society
An interview with Sandra Boisseau p. 139

Abdeljalil Akkari

Humanity & Inclusion is an international solidarity organisation that works in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflicts and disasters. It supports people with disabilities and vulnerable populations, especially children and young people, in sixty-three countries. Inclusive education is one of its areas of intervention, with the aim of advancing the right to education for all children. This interview focuses on the implementation of its projects for the inclusion of students with disabilities in schools in different regions of the world, the position of parents and other stakeholders, methods of intervention and the impact of the NGO's projects and actions on inclusive education.