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Methodological Approaches to the Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

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KLJUČNE BESEDE: ustvarjalnost, invalidnost, inkluzija, visokošolsko poučevanje, pozitivna klima

POVZETEK – Skozi prizmo izobraževalnih pravic za vse in vključitve vseh udeležencev učnega procesa se kreativno visokošolsko poučevanje šteje za prevladujoče področje. O še vedno premalo ozaveščenem družbenem vidiku inkluzije priča tudi majhna udeležba študentov invalidov v visokošolskem kontekstu. Koristi kreativnega poučevanja kažejo na posebne elemente inkluzije, ki jih je mogoče uporabiti v visokošolskem poučevanju z uporabo kreativnih tehnik. Ta študija predstavlja primer visokošolskega poučevanja, ki bi lahko vodilo k doseganju predpogojev za popolno vključenost z vključevanjem humanističnega pristopa, kreativnih učnih metod, različnih vrst medijev, medsebojnega sporazumevanja ter pozitivnega in demokratičnega ozračja. Rezultati razkrivajo perspektivo univerzitetnih profesorjev, strokovnjakov s sedmih znanstvenih področij, in študentov pedagoških smeri o možnostih popolne inkluzije študentov s posebnimi potrebami v visokošolsko izobraževanje. Pri tem je poseben poudarek dan morebitnim omejitvam in spodbudam, ki lahko (ne) omogočijo ustvarjanje dodatnih predpogojev, pomembnih za doseganje opolnomočenja in vključevanje študentov s posebnimi potrebami.

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ABSTRACT – Through the prism of educational rights for everybody and the inclusion of all participants in the teaching process, creative university teaching is considered to be the dominant field. Insufficient participation of students with disabilities in the university context also testifies to the still insufficiently recognized social aspect of inclusion. The benefits of creative teaching point to specific elements of inclusion that can be applied in university teaching through the use of creative techniques. This study provides an example of university teaching that would lead to the achievement of preconditions for full inclusion through the humanistic approach, creative teaching methods, different types of media, mutual communication, and a positive and democratic climate. The results reveal the perspective of university professors, experts from seven scientific fields, and students of the Teacher Education study program on the possibilities of full inclusion of students with disabilities in university teaching. In doing so, a particular emphasis is placed on the possible limitations and incentives that can make it (im)possible to create the additional preconditions important for the successful inclusion of students with disabilities.

1 Introduction

The global initiative, which has been promoting the principles of inclusive access at all levels of education for years (Milenović, 2011), is considered particularly important in the university context. Inclusive education has been supported by the global initiative to promote the right to education for everybody (UNESCO, 2005), thus making it a priority policy in higher education (Farnell and Kovač, 2010). Inclusive education is on its way to achieve the status of the basic paradigm of the modern educational system (Kovačević, 2010; Bouillet and Bukvić, 2015; Drobnič, 2018), or, as Dyson and Millward (2000) call it, a kind of "organizational paradigm". Insufficient participation of students with disabilities in the university context also testifies to the still insufficiently

recognized social aspect of inclusion (Imaniah and Fitria, 2018). With regard to the importance of inclusive education in Australia, it has been emphasized that the measures promoting inclusive education at the international level, as well as at the level of each country, should be understood within the specific social context in which such people live and most often find themselves in a disadvantage (Armstrong and Cairduff, 2012).

For many years, pedagogues have been emphasizing the importance of the inclusion of persons with disabilities (Romstein, 2010; Vican and Karamatić Brčić, 2013; Romstein and Sekulić-Majurec, 2015; Jurčević Lozančić and Kudek Mirošević, 2015; Martan, 2018), most of them focusing on the teaching process in primary schools (Karamatić Brčić, 2011; Borić and Tomić, 2012; Karamatić Brčić, 2012; Karamatić Brčić, 2013; Rudelić, Pinoza Kukurin and Skočić Mihić, 2013; Vican, 2013; Kudek Mirošević, 2015; Nikčević- Milković and Jurković, 2017; Nikcević-Milković, Jurković and Durdov, 2019). There is still a lack of researchers writing about and researching the topic of inclusion of students with disabilities in university teaching (Merino and Ruiz, 2005), especially in the Croatian context.

Many authors who focus their research topic on inclusion (Bouillet, 2010; Romstein, 2010; Karamatić-Brčić and Viljac, 2018; Zrilić, 2018) often emphasize the importance of distinguishing integration from inclusion. Integration occurs as a contrast to the process of segregation, and inclusion requires a higher level than mere physical involvement in the teaching process. An inclusive approach requires the engagement of all participants in the teaching process, so that all the individual interests and needs of each student, as well as the requirements of educational practice, can be met (Suzić, 2008; Zrilić, 2018). One cannot emphasize a uniform view on inclusion; there are different perspectives that are not always equivocal (Romstein, 2010, p. 85). Two of them stand out in particular, i.e., the individual and the social, which question inclusion (more precisely, its effects) in relation to the life of the individual and society. More recently, there is mention of "reverse" inclusion (Romstein, 2015).

In order to create an inclusive culture, it is important to focus on the attitudes of all those involved in an inclusive educational context, particularly the attitude of the teacher (Emmers, Baeyens and Petry, 2019, p. 140). Studies demonstrated that teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities are positively influenced by their sense of self-efficacy as an experienced teacher (Emmers, Baeyens and Petry, 2019; Hosford and O'Sullivan 2016).

They generally show that most teachers have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of children with special needs in the regular education system; they want to contribute to inclusive education and are open to the idea of further education, as well as to investing in the lifelong learning process (Karamatić-Brčić and Viljac, 2018; Kovačič et al., 2021). It is interesting to observe how first to fourth grade teachers believe that they are more educated and competent for student inclusion, while this is not the case among teachers of higher grades, although both share a positive attitude towards implementing inclusive education, but they deal with these professional challenges differently (Nikčević-Milković, Jurković and Durdov, 2019).

Nevertheless, the results of several other studies (Hemmings and Woodcock, 2011) show that younger teachers feel that their initial education did not sufficiently prepare them for teaching students with different disabilities. Furthermore, there are differences

of opinion between students and teachers regarding inclusion (Bouillet and Bukvić, 2015). In this regard, final-year students, as well as teachers already working in schools, consider themselves less competent to work with students who require certain adjustments in education than first- and third-year students who consider themselves much more competent to do so.

Even though the number of people with disabilities who opt for university studies is on the rise, their success rate, compared to students without disabilities, is lower. The percentage of those who never complete their studies is increasing from year to year, with about 30-40 % of students dropping out of their studies (Consolvo, 2002). The successfulness of one's studies may depend on many other factors, some of which are related to disabilities (Bošković, Ilić-Stošović and Skočić-Mihić, 2017).

It has been emphasized that higher education is needed in the field of inclusion, especially when it comes to universities that educate future pedagogues and psychologists who will need to apply specific competencies in their daily work (Sanahuja, Benet and Raquel, 2020). It has also been indicated that it is very easy to achieve this with the help of an online classroom, through the open online course MOOC (Sanahuja, Benet and Raquel, 2020). That way, attention is drawn to future teachers who will first face such challenges in the education system (García and Gonzalo, 2014). Higher education is considered to be the key to high quality, as well as a direct facilitator of inclusion (León, Ricardo and Gómez, 2007; Low, 2007; Sanahuja, Benet and Raquel, 2020). In order to be more successful, we need to reconceptualize education in the university context so that we can make a significant shift in inclusive education (Outhred, 2011). Studies suggest that inclusive education has become one of the most important factors in reflecting the quality and success of the teaching process (Podmore, Meade and Hendricks, 2000; Moss and Dahlberg, 2008; Romstein, 2015).

Through the prism of equal educational rights and full inclusion of all participants in the teaching process, creative university teaching is considered dominant. The benefits of creative teaching point to specific elements of inclusion that can be applied in university teaching through the use of creative techniques.

Earlier research on creative university teaching shows that by encouraging students' creativity we bring about a democratic social climate, a pleasant atmosphere, the suppression of fear and boredom; we release pleasant emotions and humor; we encourage the development of imagination and divergent thinking (Dubovicki, 2019a; Dubovicki, 2019c; Dubovicki, 2016). For these reasons, creative university teaching is considered a starting point for the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Exploring this issue, we will try to use a new methodological approach in which we plan to carefully explore the opinions of experts from different fields of science, which would provide insight into the current state of inclusion of students with disabilities. Also, it is possible to predict the future (un)successful involvement of students with disabilities in the university context, which has not been sufficiently researched so far.

2 Methodology

The aim of this research was to determine *whether creative university teaching contributes to the better inclusion of students with disabilities*? In order to answer the research question, the following was required:

- *Identify possible restrictions that make difficult/prevent the inclusion of students with disabilities in university teaching, in the opinion of university professors and students of teacher education;*
- *Identify potential benefits that would greatly facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities, in the opinion of university professors and students of teacher education;*
- *Explore possible contributions of creative university teaching to the inclusion of students with disabilities, in the opinion of university professors and students of teacher education;*
- *Determine whether there are differences of opinion between experts from different scientific fields on the inclusion of students with disabilities;*
- *Determine whether there are differences of opinion between experts and students in relation to any question raised.*

Research design and procedures

The research was conducted during the 2019/2020 academic year; it used *two Delphi methods* conducted among experts N = 14, i.e., university professors, and an *interview* conducted among students, N = 61. Students orally agreed to participate in the research voluntarily. It should be emphasized that we were not able to use the same research instrument among students because we do not consider students to be experts in any of these seven areas.

Research ethics

During the research, we made sure to consider the research ethics, and not ask questions that could affect the individual's privacy. Participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the research, and were provided with an appropriate explanation of the research process and its purpose. The research fully guarantees anonymity since the individual results were not stated, nor were the individual values compared; all of the data were grouped together.

Participants

The Delphi method was used in research specifically to select experts from as many different fields of science as possible. The criteria for selecting the experts were primarily focused on including as many scientific fields as possible. Seeing that the Faculty of Education, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek (hereinafter FOOZOS), and the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb (hereinafter UFZG), are faculties in which different fields are represented, including the field of science, an additional criterion was met that contributed to a holistic approach. Social Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Technical Sciences, Biomedicine and Healthcare, Art, and Interdisci-

plinary Areas of Knowledge have been included, so the research could cover as many areas of science as possible, i.e., as many as 7 (Table 1).

Table 1

Experts from different scientific areas

Faculty	*Scientific areas*	*Experts N = 14*
Faculty of Education, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek	Social Sciences	Expert A
	Humanities	Expert B
	Natural Sciences	Expert C
	Technical Sciences	Expert D
	Biomedicine and Healthcare	Expert E
	Art	Expert F
	Interdisciplinary Areas of Knowledge	Expert G
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	Social Sciences	Expert H
	Humanities	Expert I
	Natural Sciences	Expert J
	Technical Sciences	Expert K
	Biomedicine and Healthcare	Expert L
	Art	Expert M
	Interdisciplinary Areas of Knowledge	Expert N

Experts were asked to sign a consent form via e-mail in order to participate in the research; they were familiarized with the Delphi method, and with the problem to be discussed. Prior to the online communication, a preliminary interview was conducted with the experts explaining to them the Delphi method, and the definitions of creativity and inclusion that are the starting points of the research. All experts agreed to participate in the research, and it was agreed that the Delphi method would be implemented via electronic mail. Experts' anonymity was guaranteed so that there was no possibility of influencing one another. In addition, particular consideration was given to respecting four important elements related to research ethics: *competence*, *voluntariness*, *full disclosure*, and *understanding*.

Participants' anonymity is guaranteed by the fact that the paper presents the group opinions of experts, and their names are listed in the table as: Expert (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N) which in no way reveals their identities.

The first Delphi method was performed at FOOZOS, with N = 7 (M = 2, F = 5) experts from seven different fields of science (seen in Table 1); the second Delphi method was simultaneously conducted at UFZG among the same number of experts, N = 7 (M = 3, F = 4), who covered the same scientific fields. This uniformity was very important as we wanted to compare the results at two different faculties and two different universities, as well as the (dis)agreement of experts belonging to the same scientific field.

Ethics were respected at all stages of the research, complying with the principles governing the *Delphi method*.

The second part of the research is related to the implementation of a group, *semi-structured interview* conducted among students of the 2nd year of Teacher Education studies in Osijek (FOOZOS), N = 61. A total of 61 participants were included in the interview (M = 1, F = 60). The average age of participants is 19.92. This sample of students was chosen because all 61 students attended the elective course Creativity in Teaching in the 2019/2020 academic year. For the above reasons, they are the most competent to participate in researching this issue.

3 Results and interpretation

The first part of the research refers to the Delphi methods.

The first Delphi method was implemented at FOOZOS, with 7 experts from seven different fields of science (see Table 1). The selected experts were asked to give their opinions on the following questions:

- Can you list some of the possible limitations that make difficult/prevent the inclusion of students with disabilities in university education and some possible benefits that would greatly facilitate their inclusion?
- In your opinion, does creative university teaching contribute to the inclusion of students with disabilities?

The Delphi method was implemented in 3 rounds because the experts were almost uniform in their answers from the beginning, and there were no major modifications compared to the original answer. In relation to restrictions, experts state that it is necessary to know the student's *type and degree of disability*, as well as the *study program*; for example, for students with impaired vision, the teaching materials need to be adapted to their needs.

"*Additional involvement of teachers in the preparation of supporting materials is essential. Delivering this kind of teaching can certainly have an impact on the dynamics, because it can sometimes slow down the teaching process.*" (Expert C)

The limitations mentioned by the experts primarily relate to: *spatial barriers* at the faculties (ramps, elevators); *didactic and methodological aids*: Braille typewriter, the teachers themselves (insufficient adaptation; unwillingness of teachers to participate in the process of inclusion; insufficient education); *insufficient number of services for use* by students with disabilities at the faculty; and *insufficient number of associations* that work with students with disabilities.

"*Restrictions on the inclusion of students with disabilities in university teaching largely depend on the type of disability and the profession to which such a student is directed. Some forms of disabilities will not significantly affect the participation in classes or subsequent activities in the chosen field of work. But it is precisely this relationship between the type of disability and the future profession that can be a major aggravating element. A student who has difficulties with visual impairment will find it difficult to fully participate in a class that is focused on visual sensations. While such a form of*

impairment may not create difficulties in the field of music education and vice versa." (Expert F)

"*Regardless of wishes and goodwill, objectively speaking, it is very difficult for some study programs, or even impossible, to carry out the inclusion of students with disabilities because of the type of studies, that is, the type of future jobs for which students are being trained. Of course, precedents and exceptions are always possible.*" (Expert D)

According to experts, the *benefits* of the inclusion of students with disabilities are as follows: *equal right to education*; *greater employment opportunities after graduation*; *acquiring specific competencies* for both students and teachers (sign language, Braille, volunteering ...); *strengthening empathy*; *collaboration with various peers*; *strengthening social competencies*; *student "assistant"*, and others.

The last question referred to the opinion of experts *on the contribution of creative university teaching to student inclusion*. All experts (100 %) agreed on the matter, and some of the reasons they listed were: a new approach to learning and teaching, the development of divergent and critical thinking.

"*Creative university teaching certainly contributes, because creativity implies the creation of something new, but also the ability to cope with new situations, so the creativity of teachers is extremely important in facilitating the inclusion process. Creativity is necessary in all segments and in particular teaching, because, depending on the specifics of each subject, the teacher needs to adapt; adjust the preparation, teaching methods and forms of work; find some substitute solutions (substitute goal, curriculum, degree of help, quantity, time, presentation of content, degree of participation and demonstration), so that students with disabilities can participate in all stages of the class. Teachers are also expected to come up with creative solutions to some problems (for example, provide or create a sound ball for students with visual impairment for Physical Education classes; create cards for a student with autism that serve as specific visual-cognitive complementary methods to PECS and TEACCH; provide a space in the classroom where a student with ADHD can go during class to listen to music, solve a puzzle, paint for fractional therapy, or use adult coloring books). Teachers need to be engaging, authentic, and relate content to real life as much as possible through demonstrations, examples, socially useful learning; attract the attention of all students; devise alternative means of communication if the student's speech is incomprehensible, etc.*" (Expert A)

"*I believe that creative teaching contributes to a teaching process that does not exclude students with disabilities. Moreover, any integration of students with disabilities into "normal" teaching in the classrooms, laboratories and training rooms that we have and use on a daily basis, which, as a rule, are not adapted to their needs, certainly requires creative solutions and additional efforts from both students and teachers.*" (Expert D)

The second Delphi method was implemented at UFZG, with 7 experts from seven different fields of science as participants (Table 1). The Delphi method was implemented in 3 rounds because experts were almost uniform in their answers from the beginning, and there were no major modifications compared to the original answer.

The experts named some of the main flaws as follows: material conditions; difficult to attend fieldwork for some courses; large groups of students; monotonous teaching; insufficient education of professors and student representatives; negative attitude of

other students; prejudices; lack of knowledge of a wide range of human behavior modalities and legislation.

"*Legislation – regulations, laws that are not enforceable in reality; e.g., in some colleges there are no enrolment restrictions, but in the future, those students are then unable to find jobs.*" (Expert H)

Kiš-Glavaš (2009) and Barišin, Bednjak and Vuletić (2011) wrote about the rigidity of the education system (especially in Croatia), which mostly impedes rather than promotes inclusion, especially in the university context. They pointed out its incompatibility with market needs, but also the insufficient capacity to continue education at the higher education level, as well as a lack of employment opportunities, as Expert H warned us.

Below are some of the experts' comments in which we can see that the experts are quite focused on the teaching process and on various specific disabilities. Also, possible adjustments were noticed by university professors that are moving in the direction of creating an inclusive atmosphere.

"*Some forms of teaching are held in schools (methodical exercises) and support should be provided during methodical exercises that take into account the needs of students with disabilities (including transportation needs).*" (Expert J)

"*Some of the barriers are large groups and predominantly long hours of sitting in on lectures that are mostly held in the form of frontal teaching, and do not encourage active student participation. The focus of the classes is on visual PowerPoint presentations and auditory presentations (which excludes people with visual or hearing impairments). The availability of literature also represents a huge a problem for blind and partially sighted students.*" (Expert M)

Some teachers perceive *the advantages* of adjusting the existing teaching process to contemporary technologies.

"*As a teacher in the course's IT group, I find it important to allow students with disabilities to use their computers in the best possible way. There are possibilities of using operating systems for facilitating reading, listening to the content on-screen, and using a computer mouse. As far as I know, the Faculty of Teacher Education does not currently have any devices for displaying text from a computer screen in Braille, but I believe that they would be purchased if the need arose.*" (Expert K)

In this section, we can look back at the previous empirical analyses (Pacheco, Yoong and Lips, 2020) which included research on young people with visual impairments and their use of digital technology (social media and mobile devices), all of which were used by this group of students to manage problems. This provided some very significant results in which the visually impaired students used all of the mentioned resources the same way as those without impairments.

The last question also addressed the opinions of experts regarding the *contribution of creative university teaching to the inclusion of students*. Six of the seven experts (85.72 %) agreed on the matter, while one expert had a different opinion which does not completely exclude the possibility of the contribution of creative teaching, but primarily emphasizes multidimensional teaching (see Expert I's comment).

"*I would rather we talked about devised models of multidimensional teaching that would, in addition to academic, scientific and professional elements, also have caring and acting ones. Education is not only focused on instrumental effects; it is even more focused on ensuring a humane and just community of people. No one should remain "outside" of society, because in that case, society does not exist. Education, especially academic teaching, is there to remind us of that obligation.*" (Expert I)

Some of the reasons listed by other experts were: *great contribution to the realization of the set learning outcomes of individual courses*; *contribution to the development of divergent and critical thinking; the implementation of different teaching methods*.

"*The creative approach to university teaching offers many solutions that would certainly help the inclusion of students with disabilities. First of all, because such teaching is aimed at the use of creative and experimental learning methods, thereby broadening the range of approaches and offering new opportunities for students with disabilities, which in this case are applicable to their specific individual needs.*" (Expert M)

"*I suppose that creative teaching can contribute to the inclusion of students with disabilities, because if we apply different methods and ways of working in the teaching process, it is certainly more likely that some of them will be suitable for the capabilities of students with disabilities.*" (Expert N)

The second part of the research is related to the implementation of a group, semi-structured interview conducted among students of the 2nd year of Teacher Education studies in Osijek (FOOZOS), N = 61. The students answered the same questions as the experts. It is important to emphasize that we could not use the same research instrument among students because we do not consider students to be experts in any of the seven areas mentioned above.

The reasons that would *make the inclusion of students with disabilities difficult*, according to the students, are: *the equipment of institutions; possible fear of prejudice from other students; stereotypes; lack of confidence; lack of acceptance, diversity and values; lack of courses in which students could participate freely; lack of learning materials and assistive technologies; insufficient support from peers, professors and other employees*. Students also state that *most professors are not qualified to work with students with disabilities*, and that they feel discouraged from working with them, and may be afraid of the process itself. One part of the students (21.31 %) states that one of the aggravating factors is certainly the *financial* one.

"University education is difficult for students with disabilities because the premises are not adapted to their needs, and even if they are, it is very inconvenient because of the limited space. They also need a teaching assistant to help them move around the building and keep track of classes. The specific problem in our country relates to finances, since there are not enough funds available for teaching assistants and for the materials needed by students. With sufficient resources and materials, the teaching process would be significantly easier, and thus more interesting." (2nd year student of Teacher Education studies, FOOZOS)

Some of the *benefits* that would contribute to facilitating the inclusion of students with disabilities are *assistants*, which would be a relief for both the professor and the student; group work where the student could socialize with others, contribute with ide-

as, join forces in problem solving; *collegiality*; *a helping hand*; *a means of communication between students and the professor, but also with each other*.

"The inclusion of students with disabilities is a challenge for both professors and the students. But nothing is impossible. Initially, there may be prejudice from other students, which might discourage a student with a disability and make them feel less valuable, but this may not necessarily be the case. Every beginning is difficult and so is inclusion, but it is important that everyone accepts the challenge and that they work together to ensure a friendly atmosphere and a trust-based relationship. Assistants would be of great help as they would assist both the student with disabilities and the professors." (2nd year student of Teacher Education studies, FOOZOS)

Interestingly, as many as 78.79 % of students state that inclusion would be easier via a *creative approach* to teaching where the student *could come up with ideas, reach different solutions jointly, and with whose help it would be possible to provide a comfortable emotional and democratic social climate*.

"Creative teaching would contribute the most to the inclusion of students with disabilities – working in pairs, in groups; using various multimedia tools; using creative techniques and workshops. The student would feel accepted, equally important and valuable, and it would be easier for him/her to follow class contents. Through various creative methods, the student with disabilities would be able to express his/her abilities, which would be impossible in a regular teaching process." (2nd year student of Teacher Education studies, FOOZOS)

4 Discussion

Some of the prejudices that a teacher may have toward people with disabilities, which have been emphasized by experts and students, are partly evident in previous research (Ainscow, 1999; Imaniah and Fitria, 2018). Some of the findings of this research, which indicate some of the reasons for having difficulties with the inclusion of students with disabilities, have been confirmed by the results of certain previous studies (Fleischer, Adolfsson and Granlund, 2013; Hosford and O'Sullivan, 2016; Moriña, 2017; Emmers, Baeyens and Petry, 2019)

After the implementation of the two Delphi methods, it has been observed that there were no significant differences in the opinions of experts; moreover, there were no significant differences in the responses of experts from the same scientific fields. From the above, we can conclude that the experts consider the inclusion of students holistically, in the context of university teaching, and less so within their scientific field. Experts point out that the specificity of the subject determines the level and depth of adaptation and preparation for inclusion. The different organization of teaching also contributes to this.

"*The specificity of some courses makes it impossible for students with certain types of disabilities to achieve the learning outcomes assigned to those courses, which also applies to some study programs (for example, kinesiology exercises for students with physical disabilities) or courses related to music (for example, for students with hear-*

ing impairments) and it is necessary to consider possible alternatives to achieving these learning outcomes." (Expert J)

Students, on the other hand, focused more on the overall quality of life and study of students with disabilities, stating that certain problems can also be found in the transportation of people who have difficulty moving or are unable to move at all. Public transport is not adapted to their needs, nor are some buildings. Another problem is the adaptation of literature to blind people. Most often, the only solution to all problems for students with disabilities is a good professor or assistant who would be willing to adapt the content and create an atmosphere in which everyone would feel accepted.

"I think that if the rest of the students accepted disabled persons just as they are, they would immediately feel better and more relaxed; if the students would support them and hope that they could do all the same things they do; if the students respected their opinion as much as the opinions of others; if the students would make sure that they did not feel less valuable and would commend their hard work, thus motivating them that anything is possible... I find that this approach and attitude towards such people can greatly facilitate and improve the process of inclusion." (2nd year student of Teacher Education studies, FOOZOS)

Despite positive perceptions regarding the needs of educational inclusion, it is still not taking place at the level where the needs have been identified in practice. The education systems of countries across Europe and the world recognize the importance of the concept of educational inclusion for overall social development, whereby educational inclusion becomes a requirement of contemporary educational policies (Forlin and Chambers, 2011; Karamatić Brčić, 2012; Jordan and McGhie-Richmond, 2014; Sailor, 2015).

The successfulness of inclusion can also depend a great deal on a new curriculum approach, which would be neither restrictive for the professor nor the student (open curriculum), and which would focus on newer methods, new competencies that are in line with the requirements of contemporary educational reforms (Michailakis and Reich, 2009; Karamatić Brčić, 2012; Zrilić, 2018).

Some of these ideas could also apply to teacher education curricula, since teachers are the ones that will encounter some form of disability in their students at least once during their working lives, and it is important for them to be properly educated in that field.

In doing so, we could follow the guidelines provided by Booth and Ainscow (2011). They proposed the following values: *equity, compassion, trust, honesty, beauty, respect for diversity, non-violence, joy, right, participation, wisdom, courage, love, hope, community and sustainability*. Also, we could follow the guidelines in the form of ideas mentioned by Infante (2010). He suggests some aspects that should be integrated into the training of education professionals, such as: *generating and fostering spaces of critical discussion in teacher training courses*; *coming to a more complex definition and conceptualization of inclusion*; and *seeking new ways to address the evaluation of school performance*.

The challenge of inclusive education in the global university context is often in the focus of interest of contemporary researchers. "However, as more students with disabilities successfully complete their early schooling, the need to move towards inclusive practices within higher education has increased" (Moriña, 2017, p. 3). Focusing on university teaching, it is important to use a holistic approach that provides greater chances

of meeting the interests and needs of students with disabilities, as well as aiming the teaching process and activities towards the student (Matijević and Radovanović, 2011).

The results of this research show the existence of a considerable awareness among all research participants about the importance of the inclusion of students with disabilities. They understand that this is an effort of all participants in the teaching process, but also of external factors that can sometimes be difficult to influence. While listing some of the advantages and disadvantages that make inclusion difficult, research participants mentioned some of the conditions that are important in encouraging creative teaching. They also made suggestions for possible ease of inclusion, stating just some of the key factors for encouraging creativity, such as: *democratic climate*; *the dominance of pleasant emotions*; *stimulating critical and divergent thinking*; *finding new ideas*; *active teaching* (type of teaching in which students are primarily active); *creative problem solving*; *fluency*; *elaboration* and more.

The benefits of creative university teaching, previously identified by numerous studies (Dubovicki, 2013, 2016), overlap with the responses of participants, who clearly state that these benefits are *one of the main prerequisites for encouraging and ensuring the inclusion of students with disabilities*. Also, some of the most important aspects of creativity cited by Torrance (1967) are also mentioned by the research participants: *problem*; *sensitivity*; *flexibility*; *fluency*; *originality*: *ability to create unusual or new ideas or solutions*; *elaboration*; *redefinition*.

If we take this result and add the research results where 100 % of the experts and 100 % of the students emphasized that they believe that *creative university teaching directly influences the empowerment of the inclusion of students with disabilities*, we can say that we have fully answered our research question.

5 Conclusion

This study reveals a gap between the actual needs and the current situation in the area of the inclusion of students with disabilities in university teaching. Also, there is an existing gap between theory and practice at all levels of education, culminating at the university level. In order to change the current state of affairs, it is inevitable to implement, in the current curriculum, a model which contains inclusion as a topic that needs additional space and encouragement from both teachers and students.

At this point, it is possible to ask the following question: do universities that educate future teachers have a sufficient number of experts who are continuously involved in this problem? If not, it is necessary for the universities to make extra efforts to educate their staff, and to ensure the best possible conditions for successful inclusion. Also, given the results of this research, it is evident that the investment in creative university teaching could constitute a pathway that will provide the initial steps for enabling the inclusion of students with disabilities. As proof of that, 78.79 % of students state that inclusion would be easier via a creative approach. Moreover, the research results show that 100 % of the experts and 100 % of the students emphasized that they believe that creative university teaching directly influences the empowerment of the inclusion of students with disabilities.

It is necessary to discuss how shifting university teaching towards an inclusive setting would require designing policies, strategies (especially creative ones), processes, and actions that contribute to ensuring the success of all students.

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Metodološki pristopi pri inkluziji študentov s posebnimi potrebami

Globalna pobuda, ki že vrsto let promovira načela vključujočega pristopa na vseh stopnjah izobraževanja, je za univerzitetno stopnjo še posebej pomembna. Manjše število študentov s posebnimi potrebami v univerzitetnem kontekstu kaže na še vedno premajhno ozaveščanje družbenega vidika vključenosti. Pedagogi že precej dolgo opozarjajo na pomen inkluzije invalidnih oseb (Romstein, 2010; Vican in Karamatić Brčić, 2013; Romstein in Sekulić-Majurec, 2015; Jurčević Lozančić in Kudek Mirošević, 2015; Martan, 2018), pri čemer se večina njih navezuje na pouk v osnovnih šolah (Karamatić Brčić, 2011; Borić in Tomić, 2012; Karamatić Brčić, 2012; Karamatić Brčić, 2013; Rudelić, Pinoza Kukurin in Skočić Mihić, 2013; Vican, 2013; Kudek Mirošević, 2015; Nikčević-Milković in Jurković, 2017; Nikčević-Milković, Jurković in Durdov, 2019). Še vedno je premalo raziskovalcev, ki pišejo o vključevanju invalidov v univerzitetno izobraževanje in ga raziskujejo (Merino in Ruiz, 2005), zlasti na Hrvaškem. Čeprav je očitno, da narašča število študentov invalidov, je uspeh pri študiju nižji v primerjavi s študenti, ki niso invalidni. Raziskovalno in praktično zanimivo je ugotoviti, da se odstotek tistih, ki nikoli ne zaključijo študija, iz leta v leto povečuje in da približno 30–40 % študentov študij opusti (Consolvo, 2002). Iz teh razlogov je poudarjena potreba po visokem izobraževanju na področju inkluzije, zlasti na tistih fakultetah, ki izobražujejo bodoče pedagoge in psihologe, ki bodo morali uporabljati posebne kompetence pri svojem vsakodnevnem delu (Sanahuja, Benet in Raquel, 2020). V zvezi s tem je pozornost namenjena bodočim učiteljem in vzgojiteljem, ki se prvi v izobraževalnem sistemu soočajo s tovrstnimi izzivi (García in Gonzalo, 2014). Vzgoja in izobraževanje na visokošolski ravni veljata za ključ do visoke kakovosti in kot neposredna pomoč pri vključevanju (León, Ricardo in Gómez, 2007; Low, 2007; Sanahuja, Benet in Raquel, 2020). Da bi bili čim bolj uspešni, je navedeno, da je treba ponovno vzpostaviti vzgojo in izobraževanje v univerzitetnem kontekstu, da bi naredili pomemben premik v inkluzivnem izobraževanju (Outhred, 2011). Vse več avtorjev (Podmore, Meade in Hendricks, 2000; Moss in Dahlberg, 2008; Romstein, 2015) navaja, da je inkluzivno izobraževanje postalo eden pomembnejših dejavnikov, ki odražajo kakovost in uspeh učnega procesa. Skozi prizmo pravice do izobraževanja za vse in popolne vključenosti vseh udeležencev v učni proces se kreativno univerzitetno poučevanje šteje za prevladujočega. Prednosti ustvarjalnega poučevanja kažejo na posebne elemente vključenosti, ki jih lahko uporabimo v visokošolskem poučevanju z uporabo ustvarjalnih tehnik. Prispevek predstavi primer visokošolskega poučevanja, ki bi ga vodilo uresničevanje predpogojev za popolno vključitev, s predstavitvijo humanističnega pristopa, posebnih ustvarjalnih metod poučevanja, različnih vrst medijev, dvosmerne in krožne komunikacije ter prijetnega in demokratičnega ozračja. Očitno je, da obstaja razlika med resničnimi potrebami in trenutnimi razmerami na področju vključevanja invalidov v univerzitetno pouče-

vanje. Obstoječi razkorak med teorijo in prakso so opazili na vseh stopnjah izobraževanja s tem, da je bil največji na visokošolski ravni. Da bi spremenili trenutno stanje, je neizogibno uvesti model v sedanji kurikulum posameznih učiteljskih študij, ki vključuje inkluzijo kot temo, ki potrebuje dodaten prostor in spodbudo tako s strani učiteljev kot študentov samih. Tu je mogoče postaviti vprašanje, ali imamo danes na fakultetah, ki izobražujejo bodoče učitelje, zadostno število strokovnjakov, ki se nenehno ukvarjajo s tem vprašanjem. Če temu ni tako, se morajo fakultete še dodatno potruditi pri izobraževanju svojih kadrov in zagotoviti najboljše možne pogoje za najuspešnejšo vključitev. K raziskovanju te problematike smo pristopili z novim metodološkim pristopom za potrebe, ki je bil skrbno načrtovan za preizkušanje mnenj strokovnjakov z različnih področij znanosti, kar bi omogočilo vpogled v trenutno stanje vključenosti študentov s posebnimi potrebami ali pa bi predvidelo morebitne prihodnje (ne)uspešne vključitve študentov s posebnimi potrebami oz. invalidov v visokošolski kontekst. Ta pristop je novost v raziskovanju. Cilj raziskave je ugotoviti, ali prispeva ustvarjalno visokošolsko poučevanje k boljši vključenosti študentov s posebnimi potrebami. Za pridobitev objektivnih rezultatov smo v raziskavi uporabili metodo Delphi, s pomočjo katere smo pridobili mnenja univerzitetnih profesorjev, strokovnjakov s sedmih znanstvenih področij, učiteljev in študentov o možnostih polne vključitve študentov s posebnimi potrebami v visokošolska okolja. Metoda Delphi, ki spada v futurološke raziskovalne metode (danes se v svetu uporablja nov izraz "futures studies"), je metoda, s pomočjo katere ne le lahko ugotovimo obstoječe stanje, ampak na podlagi mnenj strokovnjakov lahko predvidevamo možne prihodnje izzive ali iščemo ideje za ublažitev ali popolno odpravo možnih ovir za polno vključitev študentov s posebnimi potrebami v univerzitetno izobraževanje. Merila, na podlagi katerih so izbrani poskusi v prvi vrsti povezani z zadovoljstvom, zajemajo več znanstvenih področij. Glede na to, da sta Pedagoška fakulteta Univerze Josipa Jurja Strossmayerja v Osijeku in Učiteljska fakulteta Univerze v Zagrebu fakulteti, na katerih so zastopana različna področja znanosti, so bila ustvarjena dodatna merila, ki prispevajo k celostnemu pristopu. Članek torej vključuje strokovnjake z naslednjih sedmih znanstvenih področij: družboslovja, humanistike, naravoslovja, tehničnih ved, biomedicine in zdravja, umetnostnega področja in interdisciplinarnega področja znanosti. Raziskava je bila izvedena v študijskem letu 2019/2020. V raziskavi sta bili uporabljeni dve metodi: Delphi, izvedena je bila med strokovnjaki (N = 14), univerzitetnimi profesorji, in intervju, ki je bil izveden med študenti (N = 61). Pomembno je poudariti, da istega raziskovalnega instrumenta med študenti ni bilo mogoče uporabiti, ker ne štejemo študentov za strokovnjake na katerem koli od navedenih sedmih področij. Strokovnjake smo po elektronski pošti prosili za soglasje za sodelovanje v raziskavi, pojasnili postopek metode Delphi in problem, ki se ga raziskuje. Pred spletno komunikacijo je bil izveden predhodni razgovor s strokovnjaki, v katerem smo pojasnili metodo Delphi ter opredelitve ustvarjalnosti in vključenosti, na katerih temelji raziskava. Vsi strokovnjaki so se strinjali z raziskavo, hkrati pa so se strinjali, da je treba metodo Delphi izvesti po elektronski pošti. Anonimnost strokovnjakov je zagotovljena, tako da ni možnosti vplivanja drug na drugega. Poleg zgoraj navedenega je bila posebna pozornost namenjena spoštovanju štirih pomembnih elementov, povezanih z raziskovalno etiko, ki so kompetenca, prostovoljstvo, popolna informiranost in razumevanje. Anonimnost anketirancev zagotavlja dejstvo, da članek predstavlja skupno mnenje strokovnjakov, njihova imena pa so v študiji navedena z imenom Strokovnjak, ki mu je dodana velika tiskana črka (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M in N), kar nikakor ne more

razkriti njihove identitete. Prva raziskava z metodo Delphi je bila izvedena na Pedagoški fakulteti v Osijeku in je vključevala sedem strokovnjakov s sedmih različnih znanstvenih področij, druga raziskava z drugo metodo Delphi pa je bila hkrati izvedena na Učiteljski fakulteti v Zagrebu z enakim številom strokovnjakov (N = 7), ki delujejo na istih znanstvenih področjih. Ta enotnost je bila pomembna zaradi primerjave rezultatov z dveh različnih fakultet in dveh različnih univerz, pa tudi zaradi (ne)soglasja strokovnjakov z istega znanstvenega področja. Na vseh stopnjah raziskave smo spoštovali etiko in zakone, po katerih se izvaja metodo Delphi. Rezultati raziskave kažejo, da je bilo s pomočjo obeh metod Delphi ugotovljeno, da ni bistvenih razlik v mnenjih strokovnjakov, ni pa bistvenih razlik tudi v odzivih strokovnjakov z istih znanstvenih področij. Iz navedenega lahko sklepamo, da so strokovnjaki na integracijo študentov gledali celostno, v okviru univerzitetnega pouka, in manj v okviru svojega znanstvenega dela. Kar je izpostavil del strokovnjakov, se nanaša na nespecifične oblike poučevanja, s čimer se v celoti strinjamo. Na drugi strani so študentje več pozornosti namenili splošni kakovosti življenja in študiju študentov s posebnimi potrebami, pri čemer so ugotovili pri prevozu oseb, ki se težko premikajo ali se sploh ne premikajo, nekatere težave. Javni prevoz jim ni prilagojen, prav tako nekatere stavbe. Druga težava je prilagajanje literature slepim osebam. Najpogosteje je edina rešitev za vse težave študentov s posebnimi potrebami dober profesor ali asistent, ki bo imel voljo prilagoditi vsebino in ustvariti vzdušje, v katerem se vsi počutijo sprejete. Kljub pozitivnemu dojemanju potreb po izobraževalni vključenosti se še vedno ne pojavlja na ravni, na kateri so bile potrebe opredeljene v praksi. Predpostavka uspešne vključitve je lahko v veliki meri odvisna od novega pristopa k učnemu načrtu, ki ne bi bil omejujoč niti za učitelja niti za učenca (odprt kurikulum) in bi se osredotočal na novejše metode, nove kompetence, ki so v skladu z zahtevami sodobnih reform. Rezultati te raziskave kažejo pomembno zavedanje vseh udeležencev raziskave o pomenu vključevanja študentov s posebnimi potrebami. Zavedajo se, da so za to potrebna prizadevanja vseh udeležencev učnega procesa, upoštevati pa je potrebno tudi zunanje dejavnike, na katere je včasih težko vplivati. Med prednostmi in slabostmi, ki ovirajo integracijo, so udeleženci našteli nekatere pogoje, ki so pomembni za spodbujanje ustvarjalnega poučevanja, in navedli tudi nekatere ključne dejavnike za spodbujanje ustvarjalnosti kot predloge za pomoč pri vključevanju, kot so: demokratično vzdušje, premagovanje prijetnih čustev, spodbujanje kritičnega in divergentnega mišljenja, iskanje novih idej, aktivno poučevanje (poučevanje, pri katerem so učenci predvsem aktivni), ustvarjalno reševanje problemov, tekoče delo, izpopolnjevanje in drugo. Lahko rečemo, da se koristi ustvarjalnega univerzitetnega poučevanja, ki so jih prej ugotavljale številne študije (Dubovicki, 2013, 2016), prekrivajo z odzivi udeležencev, v katerih je očitno, da so te ugodnosti navedene kot eden glavnih predpogojev za spodbujanje in zagotavljanje vključenosti invalidov. Udeleženci raziskave omenjajo tudi nekatere najpomembnejše vidike ustvarjalnosti, ki jih omenja Torrance (1967): občutljivost za problem, prilagodljivost, fluentnost, izvirnost: sposobnost ustvarjanja nenavadnih ali novih idej ali rešitev, ustvarjanje, redefiniranje. Temu dodamo še rezultat. Obstajajo tudi rezultati raziskav, v katerih je 100 % strokovnjakov in 100 % študentov poudarilo pomen ustvarjalnega visokošolskega poučevanja, ki neposredno vpliva na krepitev vključenosti študentov s posebnimi potrebami, in lahko rečemo, da imamo tako v celoti zajete odgovore na naše raziskovalno vprašanje. Na podlagi rezultatov te raziskave je jasno, da je lahko vlaganje v ustvarjalno visokošolsko poučevanje pot, ki bo zagotovila začetne korake pri vključevanju študentov s posebnimi potrebami.

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