

THE INCLUSION OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS: THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Abstract. Participation of at least 95% of children between the ages of 4 and the mandatory school age in high-quality preschool programs represents an important contribution to the achievement of the Europe 2020 strategy. Slovenia is not far from achieving this objective; however, if we consider participation in preschool programs from the perspective of the entire population of preschool children and the realisation of children's rights, we note that nearly a quarter of children – among them (at least in the wider European area) the most disadvantaged – have not realised the right to education. We studied the awareness of the importance of ensuring access to preschool programs for *all* children on a representative sample of 106 Slovenian preschool principals by means of quantitative pedagogical research. The results show a high percentage of disadvantaged children in the preschool areas and in the preschools themselves; on the other hand, only a low percentage (only one-third) of preschools collect data about disadvantaged children and implement preschool programs for them; only one-fifth of preschools implement preschool programs for disadvantaged children. In order to act responsibly and enable all children the right to education, we must start devoting greater attention to identifying and including disadvantaged children in preschool programs.

Key words: disadvantaged children, children's rights, preschool programs, preschool, social responsibility.

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INTRODUCTION

Preschool education in the challenges of social change

In the last two decades, the field of preschool education has been marked by different challenges and findings, including changed social situations (decline in birth rates, increase in the share of the elderly population, different family structures, migration), and the resulting need to develop social capital and the full potential of an individual (Vonta & Gril, 2014).

Important impulses for the development of preschool education arise from the findings in neurobiological science on the development and functioning of the brain (Blakemore & Frith, 2005; Brain Waves Module 2: Neuroscience: implications for education and lifelong learning, 2011; Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2007; McCain & Mustard, 1999; McCain, Mustard & Shanker, 2007; Russell, 1990; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Shore, 1997), research findings on the impact of quality preschool education programs on child's development, especially if children come from deprived or disadvantaged areas or backgrounds (Bennett, 2008; Grunewald & Rolnick, 2007; Marjanovič-Umek & Fekonja, 2005; Schweinhart, 2007; Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004), and the realisation of international goals in the field of respect for and observance of human and children's rights (Evans, 2008; Young, 2007). Vonta (2010) emphasises that the indicated has brought an entirely new validity and thus a new mission to the field of preschool education.

Social changes, especially population aging and increased unemployment in the labour market, require increased employability of women, and an increased number of births in all the member states of the European Union (hereinafter: the EU) (Peeters, 2008). According to Esping-Anderson (2002, as cited in Peeters, 2008: 27), women's employability represents one of the most important measures in the fight against social exclusion and poverty, the consequences of which affect an increasing number of people in the EU. In 1992, the European Commission proposed that all EU member states develop measures to enable men and women to more easily reconcile family and job obligations in order to increase the proportion of women's employability (Peeters, 2008). A higher proportion of children enrolled in preschool programs also contributes to this; therefore, ten years later (2002) the Barcelona European Council adopted that 90 percent of children between the age of 3 and entry into primary school, and a minimum of 33 percent of children younger than 3 years must be enrolled in preschool programs by 2010 (Presidency Conclusions, 2002: 12).

Although in 2010, Slovenia exceeded the objectives adopted in Barcelona in 2002 (Slovenia: A dynamic family policy to improve work-life balance, 2014), due to which it is ranked among only six EU Member States that have managed to accomplish this (European Commission, 2013: 10), the imple-

mentation of two basic conditions that contribute to the fight against social exclusion and poverty – the employability of women and increased enrolment of children in pre-school education – still remains questionable. Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), we explicitly stress that efforts must be made to ensure the greatest possible inclusion of *all* children in preschool education programs. This was particularly highlighted by the United Nations (2006) in the document *Implementing child rights and early childhood*, in which special attention was paid to providing access to pre-school education, especially for the most vulnerable children (children living in poverty, children of minority groups and children from migrant families) (United Nations, 2006: 11), since they are usually not involved in any form of organised preschool education or make use of these services to a lesser extent (Bennett, 2012; EACEA, 2009; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014; Lazzari & Vandenberg, 2012; PISA 2012 as cited in European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat, 2014).

High-quality preschool programs are considered to be an important contribution in achieving the two headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy (European Commission, 2010):

- (1) Reducing early school leaving below 10 percent,
- (2) Reducing the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million (European Commission, 2011).

In order to achieve this, it is *inter alia* necessary to achieve at least 95 % enrolment of *all* children between the ages of 4 and mandatory school age in high-quality preschool programs (Strategic Framework – Education & Training 2020, 2015). The European Commission (2013) also emphasises that in the efforts to achieve this objective, it is of the utmost importance to be aware that we will not achieve this goal unless we enable access to preschool education, including financial accessibility, to all social groups (p. 12).

Investing in early child development and preschool programs for disadvantaged children

McCain, Mustard and Shanker (2007) determine that there is irrefutable and conclusive evidence of the importance and impact of investments in early child development. The authors state that well-financed and integrated programs for preschool children and their parents improve the cognitive and social functioning of all children. If the preschool education programs are properly connected to the labour market, healthcare and social services, they can contribute to additional effects, such as increased maternal employment, less poverty in families, improved parenting skills and greater cohesion within families and society. High-quality preschool programs are not only beneficial for children and their families, their contribution is important for the basic functioning of society (McCain, Mustard & Shanker, 2007).

If we together succeed in preventing the loss of developmental potential that affects millions of children before the age of five throughout the world, due to a lack of investment and lack of resources, we can break the cycle of poverty and begin establishing justice in society (Grantham-McGregor, 2009). This can be achieved by investing in preschool education, which is according to the experts “the shortest way to break the recurring cycle of poverty” (Vonta, 2009: 128), but only under the condition that preschool education is embedded in solid social policies within different sectors and accompanied by a broader cultural and political commitment to democracy, children’s rights, solidarity and equality (OECD, 2006).

If we wish to reduce or eradicate poverty, and ensure that children and adults can participate effectively and productively in society by the end of the 21st century, we must be successful in persuading nations, policy makers and investors that providing appropriate child care from the very beginning of their lives and support to the environment in which they grow up and spend the first years of life is a necessary precondition for any and all future successful social changes (Arnold, 2004: 2). However, we must first face the challenge of how to improve access and enable children from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in preschool education programs (Leseman & Slot, 2014).

In the study – the results of which are presented below – we consider the investment in preschool children and in preschool programs in terms of the efforts of all the relevant stakeholders to ensure the best conditions for the comprehensive development of *all* children, which can be achieved by ensuring the inclusion of *all* children in high-quality preschool programs. The investment is not only considered to be a financial investment and financial incentive, but a set of efforts of various stakeholders from different fields (e.g. education, health, social security, employment (parents), etc.) and at different levels.

In this article, we are focused on investing in early child development and preschool programs for disadvantaged children in terms of education. When using the term “disadvantaged children”, we tend to comply with the classification of the OECD Directorate for Education (OECD, 2006: 98), where category C – children with special educational needs – includes children whose special educational needs arise primarily from socio-economic, cultural and/or linguistic factors. These children have a common background, generally recognised as disadvantaged, which the education strives to mitigate or overcome. In this group, the OECD (2006) includes children at risk of poverty, Romani children, migrants and others. In the context of our research, these are disadvantaged children due to family social situation, Romani children, children with a migrant background (in our case, children whose parents are immigrants due to poor economic conditions in the environment from which they emigrated, refugees or representatives of minority cultures (Frederickson & Cline, 2010)) and other disadvantaged children.

We consider “preschool programs for disadvantaged children” to be shorter programs for disadvantaged children (legally defined duration from 240 to 720 hours per year); activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in preschool (e.g. fairy tales, sports activities, creative workshops, etc.); activities for disadvantaged children who *are* already enrolled in preschool (e.g. activities to promote learning a second language, home visits, etc.); other preschool programs for disadvantaged children (participants in the survey were asked to state what those other programs are).

Purpose of the study

In Slovenia, the proportion of children enrolled in preschool programs is relatively high, and even though we are close to achieving the EU objective (95 percent enrolment of 4 year old children and older by 2020), the data raises questions, especially when we consider the involvement of children in preschool from the perspective of the entire population of preschool children (76.8 % enrolment), and start from the perspective that considers the inclusion in preschool programs as the realisation of children’s rights (Vonta, 2010): this means that one fifth of children (23.2 %) failed to realise the right of inclusion in preschool programs. As indicated by Vonta (2010), this immediately raises a series of questions, such as: *Why don’t these children realise the right? Who are these children? How are these children provided for? Does anyone take care of them? Are they identified by anyone? Do these children have equal opportunities regarding inclusion in preschool programs?*

These questions become even more important on recognising the fact that preschool education services are least used or are not used at all by ethnic minority children, children from single-parent families and other socially vulnerable groups who are not involved in preschool education programs (EACEA, 2009: 76). In this regard, we wished to explore how well the Slovenian preschools are aware of the importance of providing access to quality preschool programs *for all* children. For this purpose, we collected data on disadvantaged children and data on preschool programs for them.

METHOD

The article presents part of the results of a broader research project (Jager, 2015) that studied the attitude of preschool principals, preschool staff and representatives of local communities towards implementation of preschool programs for disadvantaged children. In this article, we focus only on the results in connection with the topic (title of the article) that were obtained on a representative sample of Slovenian preschool principals (29.94% of all preschool principals in Slovenia) by means of quantitative pedagogical research.

Participants. Preschool principals were selected in the sample using the stratified random sampling method. Preschools listed in the record on educational institutions and educational programs (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2015) were divided into twelve statistical regions according to the location of operation; from each statistical region we randomly selected an appropriate number of preschools for the total sample of 120 preschools (33.9% of all public preschools on 5 November 2013) so that the sample proportion of preschools in each statistical region corresponded to the proportional share of all preschools in the same region with respect to all preschools in Slovenia.

The questionnaire was sent to 120 preschool principals by regular mail and was completed by 106 preschool principals in all 12 statistical regions of the Republic of Slovenia, of which 101 were women and five were men. The participants were 30 to 60 years old ($M=47.36$; $SD=7.21$); 43.27 percent of them are employed as principals, 46.15 percent are employed as principal assistants, and a tenth (10.58%) are employed in other managerial positions.

Instruments and data analysis. For data collection, we used questionnaire that contained three sets of questions. Only the sets of questions relating to data on disadvantaged children and preschool programs for disadvantaged children are relevant for the present article.

Data was collected through open-ended and closed-ended questions, and through assessment scales. In the case of closed-ended questions and assessment scales (data, relevant for this article), data were analysed with the SPSS (version 21.0) software. We used basic descriptive and inference statistical analysis.

RESULTS

Data on disadvantaged children

Data on the disadvantaged children in the area of the preschool. Four-fifths of the principals ($N=85$; 81.73%) answered that there are disadvantaged children living in the area where the preschool operates. One tenth ($N=12$; 11.54%) believed that there are no disadvantaged children in the area where the preschool operates; 7 principals (6.73%) did not know whether there are any disadvantaged children living in the area where the preschool operates.

Only 62 preschools (61.39% of all preschools) are interested in (they collect information about) the disadvantaged children who live in the area in which preschools included in the survey operate. Other preschools ($N=39$; 38.61%) do not try to obtain data on disadvantaged children in their area, because they obtain it from others ($N=11$); because they are not able to obtain this data since it is confidential ($N=7$); because principals believe that other bodies and institutions should provide for / be interested in disadvantaged children ($N=6$); because they are only interested in the children who are al-

ready enrolled in the preschool ($N=4$); because they believe that there is currently no need to be interested in disadvantaged children ($N=3$), and because disadvantaged children are already enrolled in the preschool ($N=3$).

The principals who are interested in the disadvantaged children who live in the area of preschool operation ($N=62$) indicated that they most often obtain information on disadvantaged children from the social work centre ($f=51$; $f\%=82.26$), founder/financier ($f=28$; $f\%=45.16$), health centre ($f=22$; $f\%=35.48$) and elsewhere ($f=21$; $f\%=33.87$), most often “external sources” (other organisations in the area).

The data on disadvantaged children enrolled in preschools. According to the answers of the principals, disadvantaged children are enrolled in four-fifths of preschools included in the study ($N=84$; 80.00%). Almost one fifth of the principals believe that disadvantaged children are not enrolled in their preschool ($N=19$; 18.10%), two principals do not know whether disadvantaged children are enrolled in their preschool or not (1.90%).

Most commonly the principals obtain the data on disadvantaged children by representatives of the social work centre ($N=83$; $f=65$; $f\%=78.31$), i.e. from so-called “external sources”. Disadvantaged children are also identified by preschool staff ($N=83$; $f=57$; $f\%=68.67$), or the data is directly provided by the parents of a disadvantaged child ($N=83$; $f=50$; $f\%=60.24$). The answer “the data is provided by other children’s parents” was only selected by little less than a fifth of the principals ($N=83$; $f=15$; $f\%=18.07$), and 14 principals obtain the data from other sources ($N=83$; $f=14$; $f\%=16.87$).

The data on preschool programs for disadvantaged children

Preschool programs for disadvantaged children who are or are not (yet) enrolled in preschool are carried out in only one third of the preschools included in the study ($N=34$; 33.01 %). Only 23 preschools provided data on preschool programs for disadvantaged children that are being implemented; the data is shown in Table 1.

Activities for disadvantaged children who are not enrolled in a preschool. We were also interested in the principals’ opinion on whether the preschool should carry out any activities for disadvantaged children who are not enrolled in a preschool. Almost two-fifths of the principals (from $N=99$) had no opinion ($N=18$; 18.18%) or believe that preschools do not need to carry out activities for disadvantaged children who are not enrolled in a preschool ($N=19$; 19.19%). The principals also agree less with the statement that the preschool is obliged to provide preschool programs for disadvantaged children, even if they are not enrolled in preschool ($N=105$, $M=2.35$; $SD=0.11$) (the principals expressed their (dis)agreement using a 5-point scale, where 1 means: I strongly disagree, and 5 means: I strongly agree).

Table 1: Types of preschool programs for disadvantaged children and the number of preschools in which they are being implemented

Types of preschool programs for disadvantaged children	The number of preschools that implement preschool programs for disadvantaged children			
	N	f	%	% _{ALL}
Activities for disadvantaged children who <i>are</i> enrolled in preschool	23	23	100.00	21.70
Other *	23	12	52.17	11.32
Activities for disadvantaged children <i>are not</i> enrolled in preschool	23	10	43.48	9.43
Shorter program for disadvantaged children	23	1	4.35	0.94
Total	23	46	/	/

Note. 23 principals answered this question. Because they had the opportunity to choose more than one answer, the total number (46) is higher than the actual number of principals who answered the question.

%_{ALL} – the share of preschools that implement preschool programs for disadvantaged children in respect of all preschools in the sample (106 preschools).

* – Individualisation of educational work, empowerment of parents, second language learning, high-standard programs (courses – free of charge), events in preschool, courses (rollerblading, swimming, skiing etc.) ($f=2$), additional professional support, learning about cultural heritage, enriched and additional activities, the Strengthening Families program, the exchange of books and clothes, sports training, visits of the librarian.

On the other hand, we note that the principals agree more with the statement that activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in preschool should be carried out by preschools rather than other organisations in the area, e.g. social work centre, associations, NGOs, etc. ($N=105$, $M=3.24$; $SD=0.14$) (the principals expressed their (dis)agreement using a 5-point scale, where 1 means: I strongly agree, and 5 means: I strongly disagree).

DISCUSSION

We note that disadvantaged children live in the area of at least 81.73% of preschools included in the study; however, only 61.39% of preschools are interested in them (collect information about them in order to support their development, to support parents in their parenting etc.). We wonder what the situation is with those (disadvantaged) children in the approx. one fifth of locations (maybe even more, because these are only the principals' estimates) where preschools are not interested in them.

The principals' answers to the question: why are they not interested in disadvantaged children in their preschool area, are also alarming. Among others, they argue that these children are already enrolled in preschool. It can be concluded that what is happening outside the preschool – because the data clearly shows that not all children are enrolled in preschool or other preschool programs, and it is likely that not all disadvantaged children are enrolled in a preschool – is of no concern to principals and preschools. It should be noted that we do not reject care in a family environment, because conditions for a stimulating learning environment also exist within the family. However, in most cases, disadvantaged children are faced with a combination of negative conditions, including a potentially negative impact due family conditions (Arnold, 2004; Hart & Risley, 2003). It is important for children who come from disadvantaged, less stimulating family environments to be enrolled in preschool as soon as possible (at a young age), since preschool of a high quality has a positive impact on a child's development, learning and success in further education (Burchinal, Roberts, Riggins, Zeisel, Neebe & Bryant, 2000; Lamb & Ahnert, 2006; Loeb, Fuller, Kagan, Carrol, Carroll & McCarthy, 2003; Marjanovič Umek & Fekonja Peklaj, 2008; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000; Zupančič & Kavčič, 2007).

Given that principals most often seek information on disadvantaged children in the area from so-called "external sources", we note that in connection with the identification of disadvantaged children, who are not enrolled in preschool, preschools tend to "rely" on external sources rather than their own, internal source, which raises the question of the extent that preschools endeavour to recognise and identify disadvantaged children.

Regarding the identification of disadvantaged children who *are already* enrolled in the preschool, we also note that the principals most often obtain information on disadvantaged children from so-called "external sources". Preschool teachers also play an important role in identifying disadvantaged children who *are already* enrolled in preschool and, given that they are the ones who spend the most time with children enrolled in preschool, we would expect a higher proportion of these answers. However, we should also note that the teachers' competence highly affects identification of disadvantaged. Questions on what future teachers learn in connection with this topic in the course of their studies, and what are the options for inclusion in further education and training programs on this topic, have already been raised in Slovenia and call for a change in study programs (Jager, 2013; Vonta & Gril, 2014) and the programs of further education and training (Meke, 2014).

In relation to determining disadvantaged children who *are already* enrolled in preschools, the following is also a matter of concern: the answer "the information is submitted by other children's parents" was only selected by less than one fifth of the principals. This could mean two things: that disadvantaged children and families are (*still?*) discreet and outwardly imperceptible, or that other parents do not want to be involved and/or prefer to remain

anonymous, as a “disclosure” that a child is disadvantaged could indirectly imply additional obligations and responsibilities for “the one who revealed the information” – which is something individuals do not want to bother with or be exposed to. This indicates, to some extent, what sort of society we live in.

In relation to preschool programs for disadvantaged children who are enrolled or are not (yet) enrolled in preschool, we note that they are being implemented in only one third of the preschools included in the study (33.01%). In comparison to the proportion of principals who answered that disadvantaged children live in the area in which the preschool operates (81.73%), and the proportion of principals who answered that disadvantaged children *are* enrolled in their preschool (80.00%), this represents a huge gap, which confirms the results on the principals’ opinion with regard to the implementation of preschool programs for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in preschool. Almost two-fifths of the principals do not know or believe that the preschool is not obliged to implement activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in the preschool. The principals also agree less with the statement that the preschool is obliged to provide preschool programs for disadvantaged children, even if they *are not* enrolled in the preschool. Given that disadvantaged children are enrolled in preschool education programs to a lesser extent (Bennett, 2012; EACEA, 2009; European Commission /EACEA/ Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014; Lazzari & Vandenbroeck, 2012), in accordance with the opinion of the European Commission (2013): if we do not enable all social groups to access preschool education, including financial accessibility (p. 12), we are far from achieving at least 95 percent enrolment of all children between the ages of 4 and mandatory school age (Strategic Framework – Education & Training 2020, 2015).

The data from *The increase in social and cultural capital in areas with a Roma population* project (Komac *et al.*, 2010) also confirms the fact that very few preschools decide to implement activities for (disadvantaged) children who *are not* enrolled in the preschool and that the recognition of the importance of these activities in Slovenian preschools is really low. Out of 12 preschools that were included in the project, only three implemented activities for children who are not enrolled in preschool and their parents (Jager, 2013b).

A similarly low percentage of preschools that implement activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in preschool was also determined in our study; these activities are being implemented by only 21.70% of all the preschools covered by the survey. Nevertheless, 62.63% of the principals are aware that preschools should also implement activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in the preschool, and they more or less agree with the statement that activities for disadvantaged children who *are not* enrolled in preschool should be implemented by preschool rather than other organisations in the area. However, the mere awareness of the need to implement preschool programs for disadvantaged children and to recognise the respon-

sibilities imposed onus by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), especially in the Preamble and Articles 28 and 29, is not enough. Practical actions for specific children are required here and now. It is necessary to do more than just open the door (Key Principles of a Quality Framework, 2014: 27). Efforts should be made to:

Offer different, shorter and continuous programs /.../, which must include all children who are not enrolled in the preschool programs (full-day and half-day), and stimulate social and integration processes in the earliest stages and at the same time communicate to the minority and majority population that we care for all children (Vonta *et al.*, 2011: 155).

CONCLUSION

We believe that in the context of the rapid social changes that surround us, and in the efforts to adapt to the changes that are reflected both in the society we live in and in preschool classrooms, the principals play a vital role. They are the ones who should develop preschools in the direction that will enable teachers in their classrooms and preschools at the institution level to adapt to these changes. However, the principals cannot answer all the questions. At this point, there is a need to develop a competent system (Urban, Vandebroek, Peeters, Lazzari & van Laere, 2011) that will help ensure access to quality preschool education and equal opportunities for all children at several different levels. It is not enough for the enrollment of all children in quality preschool programs to be promoted only at the level of preschool education institutions; this idea should be internalised by everyone who is (in) directly connected to preschool education: policy makers, local funders (the founder), management of preschools and institutions that train professional workers and providers of preschool programs (Vonta, 2013).

We should all strive to promote the implementation of commitments defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and not to see children merely as future adults but to ensure their well-being and enable them to participate *here and now*, which is a key condition for successful learning (Vandebroek, 2011). In accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), a child must be seen as an active member of society with the right to be heard, and must be able to participate in the processes that concern him/her, and thus preschool education programs should not be seen as something that (re)shapes a child's future but as a partner when striking out on an uncertain path (NESSE, 2009: 50). The key is awareness and the commitment to include *all* children in the preschool education programs, which we must start paying more attention to in the Slovenian area if we wish to claim that we guarantee the right to quality education for *all* children and that we behave as responsible citizens towards the most vulnerable.

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УКЉУЧИВАЊЕ СОЦИЈАЛНО УГРОЖЕНЕ ДЕЦЕ
У ПРЕДШКОЛСКЕ ПРОГРАМЕ: ДЕЧЈА ПРАВА
И ДРУШТВЕНА ОДГОВОРНОСТ

Анстракт

Учешће у предшколским програмима високог квалитета најмање 95% деце старости од четири године до прописаног узраста за полазак у школу представља важан допринос у реализовању Стратегије Европа 2020. Словенија је веома близу достизања овог циља. Међутим, ако посматрамо учешће у предшколским програмима имајући у виду целокупну популацију деце предшколског узраста и остваривање дечјих права, примећује се да готово четвртина деце (међу њима –бар на ширем подручју Европе – је највише социјално угрожене деце) није остварила право на образовање. Циљ истраживања био је да испитамо ставове директора предшколских установа из Словеније о томе колико је важно обезбедити приступ предшколским програмима за сву децу. Узорак је репрезентативан и чини га 106 директора. У раду је примењена квантитативна методологија. Резултати су показали да постоји велики број социјално угрожене деце предшколског узраста, али је проценат ове популације деце висок и у самим предшколским установама. С друге стране, само мали проценат (једна трећина) предшколских установа прикупља податке о социјално угроженој деци и примењује предшколске програме који су им намењени; само петина предшколских установа примењује предшколске програме за социјално угрожену децу. Да бисмо се понашали одговорно и како бисмо обезбедили свој деци право на образовање, неопходно је да посветимо већу пажњу идентификовању социјално угрожене деце и њиховом укључивању у предшколске програме.

Кључне речи: социјално угрожена деца, дечја права, предшколски програми, предшколска установа, друштвена одговорност.

Ернея Ягер
ВКЛЮЧЕНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНО НЕОБЕСПЕЧЕННЫХ ДЕТЕЙ
В ДОШКОЛЬНЫЕ ПРОГРАММЫ: ДЕТСКИЕ ПРАВА
И ОБЩЕСТВЕННАЯ ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ

Резюме

Включение в дошкольные программы высокого качества хотя бы 95% детей в возрасте от четырех до семи лет представляет важную составляющую в реализации Стратегии Европы 2020. Словения находится близко к достижению данной цели. Однако, если наблюдать участие в дошкольных программах всей популяции детей дошкольного возраста и осуществление прав ребенка, заметно, что почти 25% детей (среди них – хотя на территории Европы в более широком смысле – преобладают дети из социально недостаточно обеспеченных семей) не осуществили право на образование. Цель предлагаемого исследования – выявить позиции директоров дошкольных учреждений из Словении о том, насколько важно обеспечить подход дошкольным программам для всех детей. Корпус отличается репрезентативностью, он составлен из 106 директоров. В работе нашла применение качественная методология. Результаты показали, что существует большое число социально недостаточно обеспеченных детей дошкольного возраста, однако, процент данной популяции является высоким и в самих дошкольных учреждениях. С другой стороны, лишь небольшой процент (одна треть) дошкольных учреждений собирает данные о социально не обеспеченных детей и применяет дошкольные программы, предназначенные для них; лишь 20% дошкольных учреждений применяет дошкольные программы для социально не обеспеченных детей. В целях ответственного поведения и обеспечения всем детям права на образование, необходимо посвятить больше внимания выявлению социально не обеспеченных детей и их включению в дошкольные программы.

Ключевые слова: социально не обеспеченные дети, права ребенка, дошкольные программы, дошкольное учреждение, общественная ответственность.