



Capacities of Early Childhood Education Professionals for the Prevention of Social Exclusion of Children

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Models of Response to Educational Needs of Children at Risk of Social Exclusion in Early Childhood Education and care (ECEC) institutions

The project is aimed at investigating obstacles, and possibilities (chances) which limit or support the availability of quality ECEC for children at RSE. This paper is part of that project.



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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

01 Educational inequality

- structural, intentional or non-intentional obstacles, leading to unequal access to different segments of the system of education or to achieving different success within it
- consequence of a person's background, social conditions, and other factors which lie beyond personal responsibility
- these obstacles can lead to two types of exclusion from education:
 1. physical exclusion from education of socially vulnerable individuals
 2. exclusion from a meaningful educational process or insufficient connection with it

Educational inequality is closely related to the concept of social exclusion, which can be prevented in early and preschool age.



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

02 Risk of social exclusion of children in early years

- a multidimensional construct including economic, social, cultural, health and other aspects of disadvantage and deprivation that can exert a negative influence on the development of a child, either individually or in combination
- consequence of a person's background, social conditions, and other factors which lie beyond personal responsibility

03 Inclusive education

- an important component of social inclusion
- refers to education providing mutual (cooperative) learning for all children in order to enable and empower their full participation in the learning and culture of a community, also providing adequate support in fulfilling their individual educational needs



CONTEXT AND AIM OF THE RESEARCH

ECEC IN CROATIA

- represents the initial level of the education system
- it is not compulsory for all children
- it is divided into two educational cycles:
 1. the nursery cycle (6 months to 3 years) and
 2. the kindergarten cycle (3 to 7 years)
- **The National Curriculum for ECEC (2015):** →

THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH

- is to help understand the capacities of ECEC professionals to participate in the prevention of risks of social exclusion of children of early and preschool age on an example from Croatia
- puts the child at the center of the educational process and considers their personality which needs to be understood and respected
 - it is expected that ECEC should guarantee the realization of equal rights for all



METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

to provide insight into different perspectives of ECEC professionals about RSE in children and the possibility of its prevention, based on the personal professional experience of the participants

Sample: 10 ECEC professionals; **Data collection:** Semi-structured interviews

How do you experience inclusive education and RSE?
What are your experiences with children at RSE and members of their families? How do you personally contribute to the prevention of social exclusion of children in the institution they are employed?

Examples of questions



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INTERPRETATION OF DATA: STEPS

1.

READING THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

2.

INDEPENDENTLY CLASSIFYING THE IDENTIFIED WORDS AND PHRASES INTO MORE GENERAL TOPICS IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY THE PARTICIPANTS' KEY MESSAGES AND IDEAS

3.

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIZATION OF DATA INTO MEANINGFUL UNITS ACCORDING TO THE IDENTIFIED TOPICS

4.

COORDINATING THE CATEGORIES AND THEIR MEANING AMONG THE RESEARCHERS



THE MAIN TOPICS

1.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

2.

INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

3.

CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS

4.

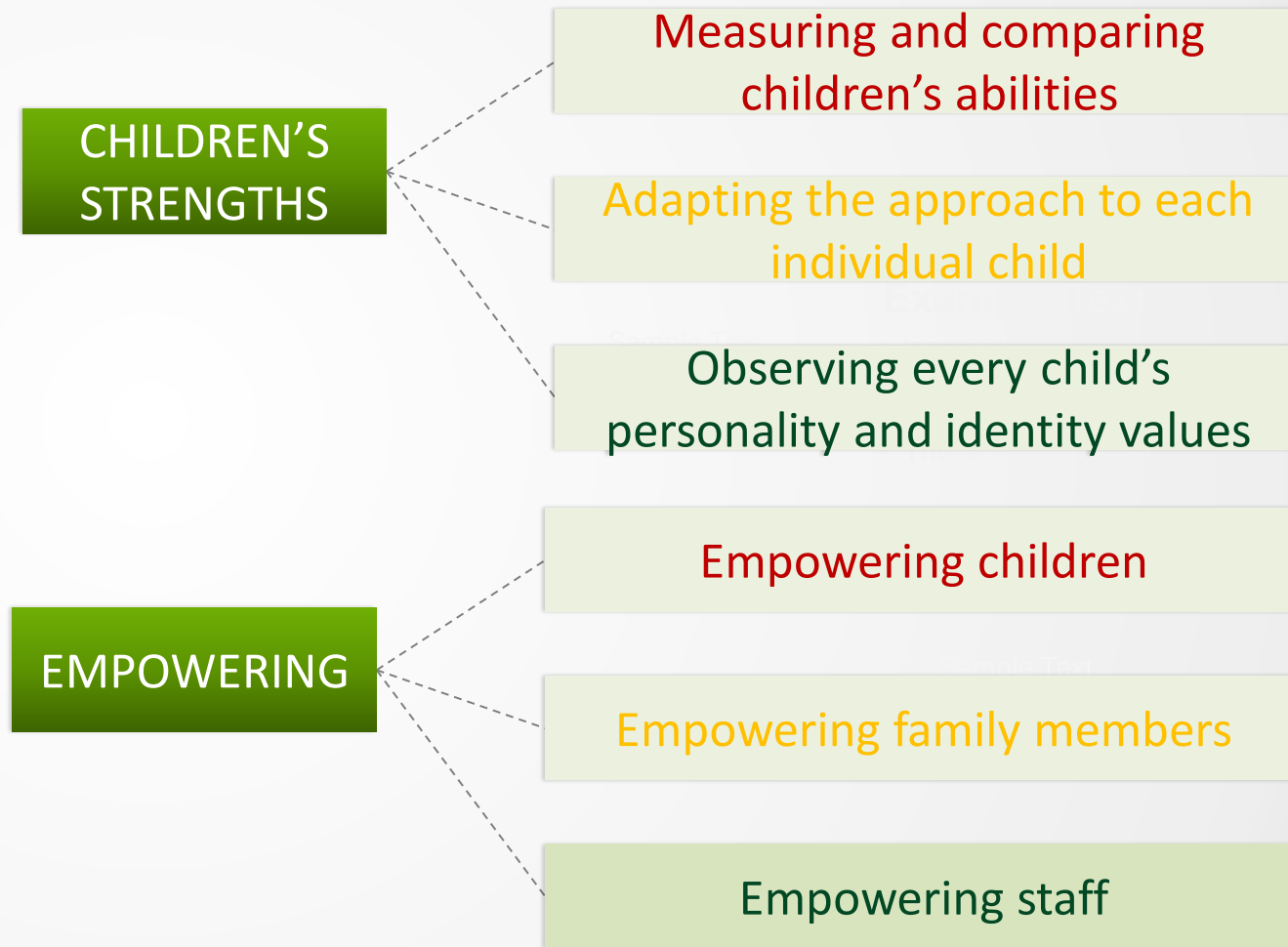
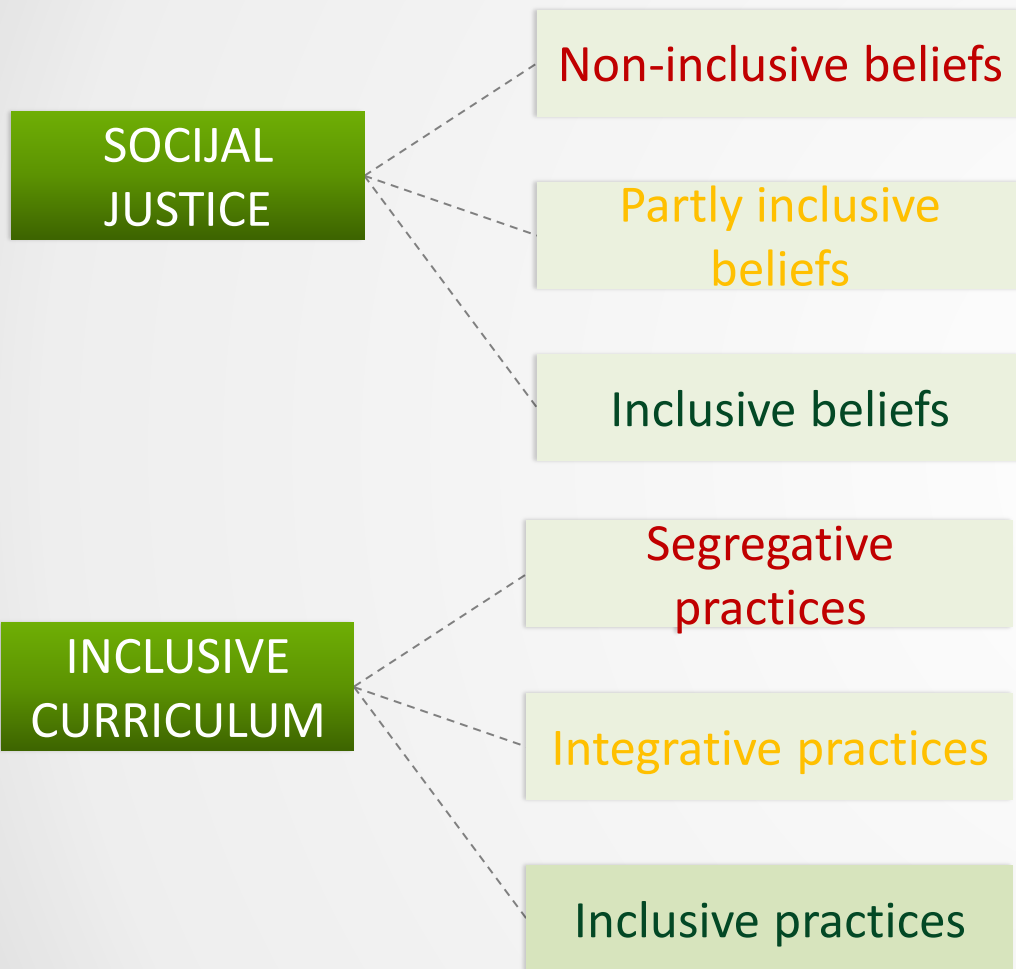
EMPOWERING



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RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, the analysis of the answers provided by ECEC professionals about how they understand and experience prevention of RSE in children of early and preschool age has pointed to significant differences among them.
- ECEC professionals who understand and promote an inclusive model of education are rare in our sample.
- The formal recognition of a right appears not to guarantee its application in practice.
- The gap between policy recommendations that highly support inclusive education and obstacles still exists in Croatian ECEC.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

MORE INFORMATION:

www.morenec.hr



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